



Little Match Girl

by Helen Gard

PantoScripts Perusal

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Character/ Cast needed for The Match Girl

9 main characters plus chorus and little fairies

Set in Victorian times

Villagers (chorus) 4 speaking parts but can add or combine as many as you like

Pattie Cake The Dame – Grandma of Kitty and mother of Clara – male

Fairy Cake The Fairy Godmother – female

Sleazy Comedy duo – work for Robin Banks – male or female

Dross Comedy duo – work for Robin Banks – male or female

Billy Badass Kitty's cruel step father and Clara's unkind husband – male

Clara Kitty's mother and Billy's wife – kind and gentle – female

Kitty The Little Match girl – good and kind – female - older teen

Robin Banks The Baron – landlord to Clara and Billy – male

Sandy Banks Robin Banks's son – in love with Kitty

Hugh Chopper The woodcutter – Small part – can double up as chorus – male

(The Little Fairies are in Act 1 only so if very young can leave at the interval or can be included as village children if you wish them to be in the chorus.)

Fairy Dust Fairy helper to fairy Cake – female child

Fairy Liquid Fairy helper to fairy Cake – female child

Fairy Sparkle Fairy helper to fairy Cake – female child

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Act 1 Scene 1

Overture plays ending with Small Pleasures...

Opens in a Victorian street market- all villagers on stage in the dark... Lights come up and we see the little match girl – Kittie- side stage- sitting on the floor- bare feet and rags for clothes. FG is on but disguised as a villager.

Other villagers bustling about selling wares etc.

Music intro playing softly under next few liners

Villager 1: It's a raw, cold day and I've hardly sold a thing.

Villager 2: Times are hard, no one has any money left after Christmas and everything's going up in price.

Villager 1: Yes, eggs have already gone up!

Villager 2: That must have surprised a few chickens.

All laugh

Villager 3: You've gotta laugh, better than crying.

Villager 4: Laughter's one of the small pleasures left to us.

Villager 3: No-one can take away our small pleasures ...

SONG 1: Onstage Company

Villager 1: Nothing like a good sing song to cheer us all up.

Enter Dame...

Pattie: And that was nothing like a good sing song, if I may say so.

FG: Do you have to come here and make everyone sad again?

Pattie: Well you'd be sad too if you knew what's been happening at our house.

Villager 2: It's hard to look on the bright side when you have nothing.

Villager 3: At least we're not as poor as that little match girl over there.

Villager 4: She's sat there all day and barely sold one match.

Pattie: That's my lovely grand daughter

Villager 1: It's a crime, that's what it is. Leaving a poor child to sit on the streets on New Year's eve. No shoes and only rags for clothes.

Villager 2: And that Baron Banks...he's making us all poorer as each day passes. He's putting up all the rents.

Villager 3: Oh, he ain't so bad, he gave me an extension on me rent last month.

Villager 4: I don't know about the rent, but an extension on the 'ouse wouldn't go amiss. Ours is so small. You can't swing a cat in it.

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Pattie: That's lucky, you don't have a cat.
Ooooh, didn't see you lot there...let me introduce meself... I am Patricia Cake...my friends call me Pattie cake. My dear daughter Clara, lost her husband and has married again. But it's not a happy marriage...no it's not. Her new husband is a bully. His name is Billy Badass...It should be *Bully* Badass if you ask me.

And if that's not bad enough, it wasn't long after I had lost my poor dear husband, too. *He* worked himself to death, oh yes he did. He developed a terrible cough. I used to rub his back with special grease to make him feel better.

FG: What happened?

Pattie: He went downhill really fast...I miss him so much, you know. (*Takes out a large spotty hanky and blows her nose very loudly*) He was working his way through the seven ages of man but never made it to the 7th.

FG: Seven ages of man?

Pattie: Yes the seven ages are: spills, drills, thrills, bills, ills, pills, and wills. So unfortunately, as he never made it to the 7th which was wills...he left nothing to me or me daughter Clara...But he was a good man, my husband. He even used to ring the church bells until he was sacked for dropping a clanger.

Do you know, that before Billy came on the scene, we were a very happy family unit. Me, my daughter Clara and Kitty, my granddaughter. Her name Kitty, means 'Pure of Heart' you know, and she really is such a lovely girl.

FG: Excuse me dashing off, but I think I might be able to help.

FG goes over to Kitty and speaks to her quietly before exiting stage right. Kitty gets up and follows.

Pattie: She's now been sent out on the streets to make money for him, *Billy*, to spend on booze.

Audience Ahhh

Is that the best you can do? It's much worse than that!

In fact she's over there now...Oh she's gone...probably got to get ready for scene 1.

Let's take you to our house and you'll see what I mean...Oh, and when you see Billy Badass, just boo him will you? He thinks he's such a big shot and he seriously needs taking down a peg or two.

Lights down ...all exit

Front Of Curtain?

Enter comedy duo Sleazy and Dross. Dross has a large teddy with him.

Sleazy: Hello boys and girls! I'm Sleazy and he's Dross.

Dross: Oh hello boys and girls, didn't see you there.

Sleazy: He's not very observant!

Dross: Oh yes I am.

Sleazy: Oh no you're not, is he?

Audience participation

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- Dross:** Oh, have it your own way.
- Sleazy:** Why have you always got that teddy with you?
- Dross:** Because, I love him! I've had him since I was a baby.
- Sleazy:** So you only got him yesterday?
- Dross:** That's rather a mean thing to say. I've had him since I was zero years old.
- Sleazy:** Zero years old?! There's no such age.
- Dross:** Oh yes there is!
- Sleazy:** Oh no there isn't!
- Dross:** Well how old are you the day you are born? You're not *one* yet are you?
- Sleazy:** I suppose not.
- Dross:** You have to grow for a whole year to become one year old so when I was just born and when I got my teddy, I was zero years old.
- Sleazy:** And you *STILL* take your teddy everywhere with you.
- Dross:** Yes I do! I love him! I bet other people out there have teddies or dolls that they still love, even though they're older than zero.
- Sleazy:** Put your hand up if you still take your teddy or doll out with you? Put up your hand if you have one with you.
- Dross:** See, I told you so.
- Sleazy:** Well, you'll have to put your teddy down when we go to the pub this evening.
- Dross:** Will I?
- Sleazy:** Definitely! Everyone will laugh at you if you take him out for a drink.
- Dross:** Oh dear, I hadn't thought of that. Who will look after him for me?
- Sleazy:** Ask the children here...they'll keep an eye out for him, won't you everyone? Put up your hand if you'll keep, an eye out for teddy.
- Audience 'Yes' and hands up etc**
- Dross:** That's very clever! I can't take either of my eyes out, can you Sleazy?
- Sleazy:** You *are* stupid Dross... it's a turn of phrase...'to keep an eye out.'
- Dross:** I don't understand... (*talking to the audience*) Anyway, if I put him here at the side of the stage, do you promise you'll look after Teddy? I don't like leaving him alone. If you see anyone going to touch him will you all shout out for me? Shout, "Step away from the bear!" Let's have a practise...
- Sleazy:** You walk away Dross and I'll pretend to go and pick up the bear...

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*They do this and get audience to shout, "step away from the bear.." etc
Banter with them I can't hear you.... Is that the best you can do? Etc.*

Dross: Well done everyone, I feel happy leaving him here, now that I know you'll look out for him.
Come on Sleazy, let's go and fetch Billy Badass and go for that drink.

Sleazy & Dross: Bye children, bye Teddy.

Exit left

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Scene 2

Inside house where Billy Badass, Pattie, Clara and Kitty live... Clara on stage dusting... Enter Billy

Billy: Where's my supper? I've been waiting for at least 10 minutes. I expect food on the table when I come home!

Audience Boo

Clara: Sorry Billy, I'm doing my best but I have only just returned from working in the market, selling what little trinkets I have left... I have to do that since I have no other income.

Billy: So where's Kitty? – Lazy young girl...She should be here helping you to prepare the house and the supper for me.

Clara: But Billy, dear, you know that you sent her to sell matches and she has been sat there all day. As far as I know she hasn't had much luck. After all, it is New year's eve and most people are at home preparing a party or the like.

Billy: Well, she'd better come home soon. I want some money and some matches. You need to light me a fire, it feels cold in here. You are a useless housewife! No food on the table, no fire lit for me!

Audience boo

Billy: *(To audience)* Who do think you are? This is none of your business so keep your noses out of it. *(To Clara)* Why haven't you got my meal ready?

Clara: I'm sorry Billy but you haven't given me any housekeeping money for food or fire wood. I can't just magic it up! There's no magic money tree in this pantomime.

Billy: Stop your whining and go fetch me some food, **now!** Here's some money and mind you bring me the change. I need that for meeting with my friends at the local Inn after supper. I shall go and rest while I'm waiting. Wake me when it's ready!

Clara: And to think that you once went down on one knee for me.

Billy: I was tying my shoelaces!

Exit Billy left and Clara right. Enter Pattie stage right:

Pattie: There, you see, what did I tell you? He's nothing but a mean and lazy man. He doesn't work to earn money, any money he does make is through gambling at the local Inn. He has two partners in crime as well. They're afraid of him and do anything he tells them to do. People say that he actually has some evil powers. He must have used those to attract my poor Clara. There's no other reason for her to have married him, is there? Well, is there? I can't hear you!

No, I think not. Now the two rascals, his so-called friends, are Sleazy and Dross. They actually work for the Baron...Robin Banks...he owns all the property around here. Talk of the devils...

Enter Sleazy and Dross...

Pattie: Well look who it is...and we were just talking about you two.

Sleazy: So glad you weren't wasting your time.

Dross: We've come to fetch Billy...we're off to the local to sink a few pints and see in the New year.

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- Pattie:** Are you now? Well you'd better go and wait at the Inn, he's sleeping, idle oaf that he is.
- Sleazy:** No, let's have a drink here while we wait.
- Pattie:** Oh no you don't. We have very little since Billy has become *the man of the house* and I use that term loosely. He never brings home any money and demands food when he arrives. He's a useless waste of space.
- Dross:** No money? He won *loads* of money last night at the Inn, playing cards. In fact he fair wiped me out.
- Sleazy:** Yes, he's a very clever card player.
- Pattie:** Or a very nasty cheat!
- Dross:** I hadn't thought of that! Do you think he's a cheat, Sleazy?
- Sleazy:** I don't know... (*addresses the audience*) Do you think he's a cheat?
- Pattie:** (*Encouraging the audience*) Oh yes, he is! Isn't he, everyone? And now he's treating my daughter and Granddaughter very badly and I can't just stand by and watch it happening.
- Enter Billy**
- Billy:** What's all this noise about, can't a man rest in his own home for goodness' sake? Oh it's you causing all the trouble is it, Mother cake?
And what is it that you can't stand by and watch?
- Pattie:** Your bad treatment of my lovely Clara and poor little Kitty, you great big banana!
- Billy:** How dare you speak to me like that!
- Pattie:** Like what?
- Billy:** Calling me a banana!
- Pattie:** How come that, "*You're a peach*" is a compliment? But calling you a banana is an insult? Anyway, I can't stand by and watch while you treat my Clara and Kitty so badly.
- Billy:** That's no problem, you don't have to stay and watch...get out of my house before I throw you out and don't think you can come back.
- Pattie:** I'm glad to go, I don't want to stay in this house while you're here. There's been nothing but trouble since you married Clara. You're a nasty, mean man, isn't he everyone?
- Audience...Oh yes he is!**
- Billy:** Oh no I'm not! You lot are driving me insane!
- Pattie:** Well, you haven't got far to go then...(she bursts into tears)
- Sleazy and Dross join in with the 'oh no he isn't' but eventually forget which side they're on and start joining in with the oh yes he is...at which point Billy clips them around the ear and they come to their senses.*
- Re-enter Clara carrying fire wood...Pattie is crying into a large spotty hanky...**
- Clara:** Mother, what's happened, why are you crying?

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Pattie: It's your husband, that Bully... Billy Badass...he's throwing me out into the street!

Clara: Oh no, surely he isn't?!

Billy: Oh yes I am and there's nothing you or anyone can do to stop me. Sleazy, Dross, escort Mother Cake out to the street. Clara, go and get her belongings and throw those out onto the street after her.

Clara: But Billy, I can't do that, she's my mother and I love her.

Billy: If you think I look like someone who cares, then you are mistaken.

Audience Boo

Pattie: I can't think why you ever married him!

Sleazy: It was the longest sentence...

Dross: What was the longest sentence?

Sleazy: 'I do.' Get it?

Dross looks bemused and shakes his head

Billy: Don't just stand there, throw her out like I told you to!

Dross: But it ain't right to treat a woman like that, is it?

Sleazy: No, I don't think so, do you? *(addressing the audience)*

Audience 'NO!'

Billy: *(shouting)* Don't question my authority, just do as I say. *(Clips them around the ear again)*

Sleazy: But we don't work for you!

Dross: No, we works for Robin Banks, the Baron.

Pattie: Don't worry, I'll leave of my own accord. I know where I'm not wanted.

Clara: No, mother, please don't go, Billy don't do this!

Clara is clinging to his sleeve begging him not to do this, he shrugs her off as Pattie leaves stage right.

Audience is booing led by Pattie as she storms off.

Pattie: *(shouting over her shoulder)* What did I tell you everyone? I was right wasn't I?

Clara calls after her

Clara: Don't worry mother we'll sort something out!

Billy: Ha, that's what you think!

Enter kitty

Kitty: Mother, why are you crying?

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Clara: Your step father has thrown out your dear grandmother.

Kitty: No, surely not! But why?

Billy: Because I can! This is my house now and I will have who I want living under my roof and I don't want old Mother Pattie Cake! And watch yourself girl or you'll be the next one to go! There's a perfectly good workhouse down the road.

Clara: Billy, please!

Billy: You can stop your whining, too. Baron Banks is arriving tomorrow to collect our rent. So, Kitty, how much money have you made?

Kitty: Hardly any, step-father. I sat there in the cold all day but no one was interested. They were all busy preparing for their NY's Eve festivities.

Clara: You are able-bodied, you could go and earn some money and yet you send poor kitty out to work.

Billy: That's because she needs to learn the value of money. I'm not handing it to her on a plate. Women! Useless the lot of you! Now get me some supper and light a fire before I really lose my temper!

Everyone boos as he exits stage left.

Sleazy: I know something that will cheer you up Clara.

Sleazy goes over to Teddy and attempts to pick him up ...Hopefully audience will shout "step away from the bear."

Dross: Leave it Sleazy! *(and chases him off stage)*

Clare: *(Sighs)* How was your day, my dear?

Kitty: Rather unusual mother, actually.

Clara: Oh, why?

Kitty: Well, I had sold a very few matches and an old lady approached me. She said she was hungry and had no money for food so I gave her some of mine, little as it was.

Clara: So kind, my dear.

Kitty: But then she said something strange...She said, "Your kindness will be rewarded in the fullness of time." I told her that I did not give to receive and she said, "That's precisely why you *will* be rewarded."

Clara: I wonder what she meant...

Billy shouts from offstage...

Billy: Is my supper ready yet?!

Clara: Don't mind him, my love, we'll sort something out. He'll be in a better mood once he's eaten. We're family and we can overcome anything as long as we stick together. Let's ask the audience to join us in a song to lift our spirits.

Song 2 :

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Scene 3

Opens in the market place again...Kitty stage right sitting down with matches to sell. Other vendors as for prologue

Pattie centre stage

Pattie: There, what did I tell you...nasty piece of work that Billy, never a kind word for anyone. Spends all his money on drinking and gambling. Well Robin Banks will be round to collect the rent tomorrow and you can bet your life Billy will have spent it all.
Now I have to find somewhere to live and it ain't gonna be easy...
I'm a hard worker so I'll soon earn a crust but as for somewhere to live...

(points to a man in the audience) You've got a kind face...would you think of taking me on? I'd cook and clean for you...I really would...and if you needed I could help out in other ways...I cook the most delicious stew and dumplings...I do...
I'm unspoilt goods. I've only had the one husband and I was faithful to him.
You can laugh but I know a woman who's had 16 husbands...4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer.

So what do you say? No??? What's wrong with you?...Huh! You're looking a gift horse in the mouth ...never mind...there's plenty more eligible men out there who'd be pleased to have me, I'm sure! Put your hand up if you'd like to have me... Don't all rush at once...

Interrupted by an old woman in a cloak, who is the fairy godmother in disguise

FG: Now Pattie, what's this I hear? You are offering yourself to any Tom, Dick or Harry? This won't do at all.

Pattie Well, I've got to find meself another home now that nasty Billy Badass has kicked me out of the house. To think I ran that house once and let my poor Clara live there with her first and lovely husband. Now Billy has married her and treats us all like dirt. He pretends *he's* master of the house.

FG: That's not good at all.

Pattie: And he sends poor Kitty out to work when he could work himself. Look, there she is, cold and miserable...she sits there all day, every day. She's a lovely girl...do you know what kitty means? *(to audience)* You tell her, I've already told you. Let's see if you were paying attention... Well go on tell her...

Audience "Pure of soul"

Pattie: That's right. pure of soul...well that's her to a T.

FG: I have spoken to her and she indeed has a kind soul. As for you, Pattie Cake, I have an old wood cutter's lodge in the forest that is empty right now. You can stay there for a while, whilst we sort out this mess with Billy Badass.

Pattie: What makes you think you can do that...we've all tried. Even if you ask him nicely he's mean and will never do anyone's bidding but his own. My poor Clara...

FG: Never mind. You come with me now and I'll show you the way to the woodcutter's Lodge.

Pattie: That's very kind, but why are you doing this and who are you?

FG: Let's just say that I am no stranger around here and I will help put things right wherever I can.

They walk towards stage right exit as they say these next two lines.

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Pattie: This is good of you, what did you say your name was?

FG: I didn't, but come this way...

Exit Stage R... FG and Pattie...enter Dross and Sleazy stage left

Dross: Well, I don't know about you Sleazy, but I thought Billy Badass was particularly nasty last night, throwing out poor old Pattie. I mean if it wasn't for her, he wouldn't be in that house himself.

Sleazy: Are you getting soft Dross? Better keep that to yourself if so, as Robin Banks will sack you.

Dross: No, I'm not getting soft but I *am* getting rather sick of Billy cheating at cards, and he orders us around like we work for him.

Sleazy: Well, that's true. I've never been too keen on him and he left me penniless last night! (*pulls his pockets inside out to show that they are empty.*) Do you think you could lend me some money or I'm going to go hungry today.

Dross: Lend you money? I'm not going to get caught like that again, you already owe me money from last week. Ten pennies it was!

Sleazy: Do I?

Dross: You know you do!

Sleazy: Well, if you lend me some money, I'll pay you back what I owe you from last week.

Dross: (*Looks bemused*) Oh right...OK. How much do you need?

Sleazy: Well about 20 pence would do it. Then I can give you interest on the loan as well.

Dross: That's mighty generous of you. Here you go, here's twenty pence. (*Gives him 20 coins*) But I want my last week's loan back now and with interest!

Sleazy: Of course, here you go. (*starts counting one coin at a time into Dross's hand*) One, two, what time is it?

Dross: 5 O'clock

Sleazy: 5 you say? Right (*carries on counting*) six, seven, what time did we leave the Inn last night?

Dross: 10, I think.

Sleazy: Oh, 10? (*carries on counting*) eleven, twelve. There you go, your ten pennies back and 2 pennies interest.

Dross: Thank you Sleazy. Now you only owe me the twenty I've lent you today. Don't forget!

Sleazy: No worries Dross, I'll earn that back for you by gambling tonight.

Enter Robin Banks with his son Sandy

RB: What are you two idle numbskulls doing here? You should be working!

Dross: Yes boss, sorry boss.

Sleazy: Well boss we was just talkin' about Billy Badass and saying what a cheat he is. Do you know that he's thrown out old Pattie Cake.

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Dross: Yes, onto the streets.

RB: Well, I didn't think he'd thrown her into the dust bin.

Dross: It ain't right though is it boss? She's a good woman.

RB: She was certainly a better payer when *she* rented the house. Since Billy Badass has been there, it's been real trouble getting rent from him. Talking of which, it's rent day today. I'll be paying him a visit later on. I'm taking Sandy with me...he's in training as he'll take over from me eventually, won't you Sandy?

Sandy: (*nervously*) Errrr... Yes dad, I suppose I will.

RB: (*To the audience*) He lost his mother when he was young.

Dross: That's rather careless of him.

Sleazy: Stupid! (*hits Dross around the head*)

RB: You just need to learn to add up and to stick up for yourself... He's a good boy but not very bright. Heart of gold though, like his mother had. God rest her soul.

Sandy: I *am* trying dad. I did my maths homework last night.

RB: Good boy.

Sleazy: I know a bit about maths...

Dross: Oh?

Sleazy: Yes, an eight and a zero were out walking together and the zero turns to the eight and says, why do you pull your belt so tight? (*falls about laughing again*)

Dross: I don't understand that.

Sandy: Neither do I.

Sleazy can't stop laughing, Robin Banks clips him around the ear...

RB: Don't worry son, it's just a stupid joke...Now, Sleazy, Dross, get yourselves away and start collecting the rent, but leave Billy Badass to me. I'll go there this eve with Sandy.

Dross: Yes Boss, right boss.

Sleazy: You'd better go before 8.00 o'clock or 'e'll be down the pub drinkin' the rent money away. He drinks Like a fish.

Dross: What do fish drink? Surely not the water they swim in...Yuk!

They exit stage left

Sandy: Oooh, look father, Is that Kitty over there? She's so pretty, isn't she?

RB: Takes after her mother, Clara. She's a lovely woman too.

Sandy: I'd like to help her out...She's been so poor since her father died and Clara married Billy Badass. Can we give her a few pennies, please?