

# Once Upon a Time

*We were thrilled by the end results. Loved the songs, which were readily learnt by all ages.*

*Children were enthusiastic about characters and storyline from the beginning.*

*Extremely positive feedback from community and audience.*

*Ideal show for mixed ages.*

*Thank you.*

Brightwater School

*The choice of this play turned out to be an inspired one, because it was such a delight to stage it. We included every child from grade 3 to grade 6. Large cast opportunities and large chorus opportunities. Teachers, students and families alike continue to rave about 'Once Upon a Time', about its funny dialogue, its wonderful range of musical numbers and the enthusiasm and talent of our students, which were showcased to such effect in this very clever musical.*

*Thanks to the writers.*

St Mary's College

*Our performance of 'Once Upon a time' was a smashing success.*

*I have now produced 3 of your musicals and they have all been wonderful.*

*Thank you for writing such fantastic material for primary school children.*

Good Shepherd School, Plumpton

*Thanks for writing great music and a script kids can relate to. It is exciting as the endless rehearsals continue, to watch the unique magic of each show develop. You know the process is well underway when lines from the script start appearing in normal conversation, when parents come to school complaining that the 'bleep' 'Imagination' song has been going around in their head all night. You know that success is assured when the interpretation/creation of the script/music/scenery become the personal/collective responsibility of all those involved.*

*Your material has been the impetus and for this we thank you.*

Bimbaden Hts PS

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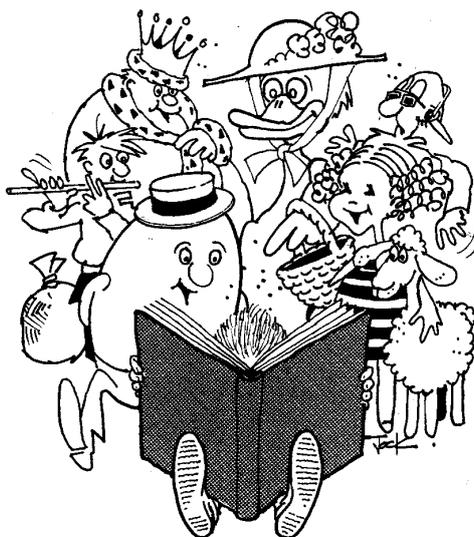
**Bushfire Press**

# ONCE UPON A TIME

a rock fable

book by Lynne Bartlett, Mark Leehy & Kevin O'Mara

music & lyrics by Mark Leehy & Kevin O'Mara



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- *APPLICATION FOR PERFORMANCE of **Once Upon a Time** should be made to the publisher and acknowledged before rehearsals commence.*

# Production notes

## Synopsis

Once Upon a time, in Nursery Town, MOTHER GOOSE had gone on a holiday to visit the Man in the Moon. MAYOR HUMPTY DUMPTY takes the opportunity to 're-structure' Nursery Town and make it more efficient. Policies are passed and timetables established. There will be no more frivolous, chaotic goings on in Nursery Town. No more people jumping over candlesticks, cats playing fiddles or dishes running away with spoons. Order will be established. The shopkeepers are pleased, but some like MARY, MARY, JACK HORNER and THE DOCK TWINS are not so sure.

As HUMPTY is opening the new Nursery Town Mall, OWL arrives with a grave concern. JACK & JILL enter, carrying a cardboard BARBER BLACKSHEEP, LITTLE BOY BLUE carries in a cardboard COW, PETER PUMPKIN EATER'S wife carries a cardboard PETER – even KING COLE has found his FIDDLERS THREE turned to cardboard. With so much order, the magic is beginning to fade in Nursery Town. Children are ceasing to read the rhymes and one by one the characters are turning to cardboard ... and CAPTAIN BOREDOM is out of the cage. And this time he has a ZOMBIE ARMY.

MOTHER GOOSE returns, with the not-too-bright GOOSEY GANDER. She is shocked to find what has been happening in her absence and orders the immediate dismantling of the mall. She is going to put some fun back into Nursery Town.

Meanwhile, CAPT BOREDOM and his SERGEANT are with the ZOMBIE ARMY wondering how to get themselves a spy. In wanders GOOSEY, whom they mislead and charm with a cap and badge. He is now their unwitting spy, reporting on the goings-on in Nursery Town.

Meanwhile, in order to put some fun back into Nursery Town, HUMPTY has organised the Nursery Town Olympics, with the Candlestick Jump, the Egg & Spoon Race and other events. But cardboard characters continue to turn up. MOTHER GOOSE arrives with OWL. They have a plan. They will trap CAPTAIN BOREDOM by letting him think they have all turned to cardboard and allowing him to take the throne. But to make the plan work, they need to lure him. Just then, GOOSEY wanders in, with his cap and badge. MOTHER GOOSE immediately realises that he has been duped by the CAPTAIN and offers him the position of AMBASSADOR, a post that comes complete with a chain of office (donated grudgingly by HUMPTY). GOOSEY goes off to set up the meeting with the CAPTAIN and the folk of NURSERY TOWN prepare their trap.

BOREDOM and the ARMY enter Nursery Town to find nothing but cardboard cutouts. He takes the throne, but as he does, the Nursery Folk come from behind the cutouts and turn them around to reveal bars on the other side. They encircle him and he is trapped. They place him in a playpen.

With such a burst of imagination and unexpected events, the excitement and fun has suddenly come back to Nursery Town and all of the cardboard characters come to life. Children are reading the rhymes again, HUMPTY has learned about the value of play, imagination and spontaneity and GOOSEY has learned the folly of letting ambitions cloud judgement. This calls for a Royal party in Nursery Town.

**CAST**  
**MAJOR CHARACTERS**  
**(in order of appearance)**

<b>LITTLE BO PEEP :</b>	Scatter-brained, looks for sheep, carries shepherd's "crook".
<b>WEE WILLIE WINKIE :</b>	Town crier. Public Service Type. Carries clipboard. Can ride skateboard, scooter, or roller skates.
<b>MARY :</b>	Contrary. Does not approve of Mayor's ideas.
<b>LAMB :</b>	"Baa's" a lot.
<b>HICKORY DOCK :</b> <b>DICKORY DOCK :</b>	Speak in unison.
<b>HUMPTY DUMPTY :</b>	The Mayor of Nursery Town. Benevolent, well-meaning Bureaucrat. Wears chain of office, and has track suit for Scene IV if required.
<b>JACK HORNER :</b>	Cheeky school boy with large pudding.
<b>OWL :</b>	Wise old bird. Has large "Once Upon a Time" book.
<b>MRS PUMPKIN EATER :</b>	Down to earth. Wife to Peter.
<b>OLD KING COLE :</b>	Grumpy old Soul. Rides a "Hobby Horse".
<b>CAPTAIN BOREDOM :</b>	Cool, hip dude. Dresses in outrageous "rap threads".
<b>PRIVATE DORK :</b>	Thick as a brick. Always out of step. Member of Zombie Army. Has tissue fragments on T-shirt.
<b>SERGEANT :</b>	A British "Sergeant-Major" type.
<b>GOOSEY GANDER :</b>	Feather brained fowl. Gullible. Would like responsibility but is clearly not cut out for it.
<b>MOTHER GOOSE :</b>	Impatient but caring modern mother

**MINOR CHARACTERS**  
**(in order of appearance)**

PETER PIPER	TOM TUCKER	SPRUIKER
MARJORIE DAW	POLLY	SUKIE
ROSIE	BAKER	JACK
JILL	LITTLE BOY BLUE	KING'S FIDDLERS
JACK BE NIMBLE	THREE BLIND MICE	MS MUFFETT
SPIDER	BARBER BLACKSHEEP	PETER PUMPKIN EATER
BUTCHER	CANDLESTICK MAKER	BABY BUNTING
SIMPLE SIMON		

**PLUS**

**ZOMBIE ARMY :** "MEGA BLACK SHEEP" t-shirts, tracksuit pants in disrepair, moccasins.

ASSORTED NURSERY TOWN CHORUS OF SINGERS AND DANCERS.

## **SONGS**

Once Upon A Time  
You Gotta Get Organised (Humpty's Song)  
The Zombie Shuffle  
It's Hard to Be a Mum Today (Mother Goose's Song)  
Zombie Sound-Off  
I'm In Charge (Goosie's Song)  
Imagination  
Zombie Sound-Off Reprise  
Welcome to the Show

## **SCENES**

**I** HUMPTY DUMPTY  
**II** MOTHER GOOSE  
**III** THE ZOMBIE ARMY  
**IV** THE NURSERY TOWN OLYMPICS  
**V** IMAGINATION

## **THE SET**

*There are two basic sets:*

**SET ONE :** "THE NURSERY TOWN SHOPPING MALL" can be represented by a series of shopfronts, stalls or barrows at the back/sides, made of boxes or cardboard cutouts. Alternatively, a backdrop or flats could be used. This set should represent conformity and lack of imagination and must be easily removed by cast on stage (end Scene II). At the rear of stage on a podium is the King's throne.

**SET TWO :** "OLD NURSERY TOWN" This set is the old, familiar, Nursery Town. It can be a back drop or flats, or simply a collection of nursery rhyme icons, such as Humpty's Wall, a well, the Old Woman's Shoe, a tuffet, town clock, haystack, crooked house, mulberry bush, a see-saw, Mary Contrary's garden. Set two is brought on as set one is removed at the end of Scene II. The King's throne remains.

## **PROPERTIES (PROPS)**

**SCENE I :** Large "ONCE UPON A TIME" book, peppers, buns and flowers etc. for shopkeepers, Bo-Peep's shepherds' crook, Willie's bell or whistle, ribbon, scissors, Jack's pudding, cardboard cut-outs: Barber Blacksheep, Boy Blue's Cow, Peter Pumpkin eater and King's Fiddler.  
**SCENE II :** Mother Goose's luggage, cardboard cut-out : Baby Bunting  
**SCENE III:** Sergeant's note-book and pencil, apple core, cap and badge (labelled "No.1")  
**SCENE IV:** Little Boy Blue's Klaxon, Humpty's whistle, Willie's stopwatch, measuring tape or trundel wheel, score cards 7, 8, 9, 2, white canes and sunglasses for Three Blind Mice, candlestick, Muffett's bowl, spoon, drink bottle, towel, egg and spoon.  
**SCENE V :** Cardboard cut-outs of Humpty, King Cole, Little Boy Blue, Wee Wille Winkie, Owl, Mary and Lamb (together), Ms Muffett and Spider (together) and Jack Horner.  
NOTE: these cut-outs have prison bars on reverse side. Cloak and hat for Captain Boredom, playpen.

## **SPECIAL EFFECTS (F.X.)**

**SCENE I :** Trumpet Fanfare  
**SCENE II :** Sheep baa-ing  
**SCENE IV :** Trumpet Fanfare

## **MUSIC**

The music can be played by solo piano or the instrumental backing CD. All special effects are included in their correct position on the instrumental backing CD.

## ONCE UPON A TIME

### SCENE I HUMPTY DUMPTY

SET ONE : NURSERY TOWN

CURTAIN OPENS

LIGHTS UP HALF

ON STAGE ARE SHOPKEEPERS (PETER PIPER, TOM TUCKER ETC.) STANDING IN FRONT OF SHOPS/STALLS AND A CHORUS OF NURSERY TOWNSFOLK IN VARIOUS POSITIONS (AS IN A MAGIC TOY SHOP). ALL ARE FROZEN

OWL ENTERS (CARRYING "ONCE UPON A TIME" BOOK) FROM UPSTAGE P.S. WANDERS BRIEFLY THROUGH TOWNSFOLK. MOVES TO DOWN STAGE CENTRE. SPOT ON OWL

OWL: *(Opening book and reading)* Once upon a time, far, far away in the land of Nursery Rhymes there lived .....

ALL SING

### SONG: ONCE UPON A TIME

SPOT OFF. LIGHTS UP FULL

DURING INSTRUMENTAL INTRODUCTION CHORUS COME TO LIFE, OWL MOVES P.S.

THIS SONG CAN BE ACTED OUT IN FRONT OR TO THE SIDE WITH A MAIDEN, HANDSOME PRINCE, DRAGON ETC.

SONG ENDS

CHORUS FREEZE. OWL MOVES CENTRE STAGE

OWL: But all was not well in the land of curds and whey.

THE SHOPKEEPERS IMMEDIATELY CALL OUT, IN SING SONG VOICES:

PETER PIPER: Pickled peppers, pickled peppers.

TOM TUCKER: Tuck in at "TUCKERS TUCK SHOP".

SPRUIKER: Twinkle - Twinkle, you're a star.

MARJORIE  
DAW: See - saw at Marjorie Daw's.

POLLY: Carrot cake and tasty bites at Polly and Sukie's.

ROSIE: Dial - a - daffodil at Ring - a - ring - a - Rosie's.

**BAKER:** Hot cross buns, hot cross buns.

**MARY AND HER LAMB, TOGETHER WITH THE DOCK TWINS (HICKORY AND DICKORY) AND JACK HORNER HAVE GATHERED TOGETHER DOWN STAGE CENTRE AND ARE TALKING TOGETHER UNHAPPILY**

**LITTLE BO - PEEP ENTERS O.P. WITH SHEPHERDS' CROOK AND WANDERS AROUND, ENDING UP BY MARY'S GROUP, WHOM SHE ADDRESSES**

**BO - PEEP:** Excuse me! Excuse me! - has anybody see my sheep?

**ALL:** No!!

**LAMB:** Baa!

**LITTLE BO - PEEP EXITS O.P.**

**ENTER WEE - WILLIE - WINKIE O.P., THE TOWN CRIER ON SKATEBOARD OR SCOOTER, BLOWING WHISTLE**

**WILLIE:** Yowsuh, Yowsuh, Yowsuh ..... Gather round.

**THE SHOPKEEPERS AND TOWNSFOLK GATHER ROUND, WHILE MARY, LAMB, DOCK TWINS AND JACK HORNER MOVE SLIGHTLY DOWN STAGE P.S.**

**WILLIE:** Are we all ready for the BIG DAY?

**ALL:** Yes Willie!

**WILLIE:** Have we all got a clean hanky?

**ALL:** Yes Willie!

**WILLIE:** Have we all been to the toilet?

**ALL:** Yes Willie!

**WILLIE:** And most important . . . have we all got our watches?

**ALL:** (*Consulting various time pieces*) Yes Willie.

**WILLIE:** Good. At precisely 10.30 A.M., the Mayor - will open the Nursery Town Mall.

**ALL:** (*Except for Mary and her group*) Hooray!

**WILLIE:** Rosie . . .the ribbon?

**ROSIE AND SUKIE STRETCH THE RIBBON BETWEEN TWO TOWNSFOLK ON EITHER SIDE OF STAGE**

**WILLIE:** (*Taking scissors*) After the Mayor's speech, there will be a fifteen minute break for morning tea. After which we will follow timetable B until the lunch bell, when we will return to the normal timetable, unless of course it rains ..... in which case we will go to a Wet Day Timetable ..... and sing

**ALL:** (*sing-song*) "Rain, rain go away".

**WILLIE:** Any questions?

MARY: *(Raising hand)* Yes.

WILLIE: *(Consulting watch)* Make it quick then Mary.

MARY: Why have we got all these timetables?

WILLIE: *(Checking watch)* Policy, Mary. It's the new policy.

LAMB: Baa.

WILLIE: Any other questions?

DOCK TWINS: We have a question.

WILLIE: *(Ignoring them)* Good, I'm glad that's settled. Are we all ready? ..... Heere's HUMPTY!

**HE LEADS EVERYONE IN APPLAUSE AS HUMPTY ENTERS O.P., BLOWING KISSES AND WAVING ETC. AS WOULD A GAME SHOW HOST ON TELEVISION**

HUMPTY: Thank you, thank you, thank you. I love you all *(Goes to Willie shakes his hand)*  
Thank's Willie. *(Picks Mary's lamb up and kisses it)*

LAMB: Baa!

HUMPTY: *(Humpty goes centre stage and silences applause with "Cut" motion)* Is everybody happy?

ALL: *(Except for Mary and her group)* YAY!

HUMPTY: Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls ..... sheep and mice ..... and all you good folk of Nursery Town. Today is indeed an important occasion.

ALL: *(Except for Mary and her group)* HOORAY!

HUMPTY: My good friends, this fine new Mall is a shining example of what can be achieved by putting our heads down, shoulder to the wheel, our nose to the grindstone, our . . .

WILLIE: *(Looking at watch and Interrupting)* But we couldn't have done it without the leadership of someone like you, your Humpship *(To all)* How about it folks? Let's hear it for the Honourable H. Dumpty! Hip, hip...

ALL: *(Except for Mary and her group)* Hooray!

WILLIE: Hip, hip...

ALL: Hooray!

WILLIE: HIP, HIP !

HORNER: Boo!

ALL: SHOCK! HORROR!

WILLIE: Did I hear a "Boo"?

**HORNER RAISES HAND SHEEPISHLY. STICKS THUMB IN MOUTH**

**WILLIE:** Go to your corner!

**JACK DOES SO**

**MARY:** Excuse, Mr. Mayor

**HUMPTY:** Yes Mary?

**MARY:** We are very concerned.

**HUMPTY:** (*Impatiently*) What! About the mall?

**MARY:** It's not just the mall, it's all these rules and regulations.....

**LAMB:** Baa.

**MARY:** It's no fun anymore.

**HUMPTY:** Fun ..... Fun ..... There's a lot more to life than having fun.

**DOCKS:** But this place is SO regimented, it's almost like a ..... an ARMY CAMP.

**HORNER:** Or ..... worse still - a SCHOOL.

**LAMB:** Baa.

**ALL:** Mumble mumble, rhubarb rhubarb.

**HUMPTY:** Oh, dear, oh dear ..... that's no good.

**HE PLACES HANDS BEHIND BACK, PACES, THINKING - STOPS**

Unhappy people in Nursery Town .....

**MARY:** This place used to be SO exciting.

**DOCKS:** Yeh.

**HUMPTY:** Exciting? Exciting? This place was ..... CHAOS! ..... People jumping over candlesticks .....cats playing fiddles ..... dishes running away with spoons ..... The place was totally out of control ..... All I have done ..... is introduced a little ORDER.

**ALL:** Here, here!

**DOCKS:** (*Interrupting*) But we liked Nursery Town the way it was.

**HUMPTY:** (*Shocked*) You can't be serious.

**MARY:** It was a beautiful town.

**LAMB:** Baa!

**ENTER OWL P.S. CARRYING LARGE BOOK. MOVES TO STAND BESIDE HUMPTY**

**HUMPTY:** What! A broken down old shoe, ..... a well with a half drowned cat, a dangerous brick wall.

**OWL:** Humpty, Humpty, I must speak with you - urgently.

HUMPTY: (*Waving Owl aside*) Not now, Owl.

OWL: But it's very important.

HUMPTY: (*Impatiently*) Later Owlie.

WILLIE: (*Clapping hands*) Places everyone! (*Hands scissors to Humpty*) It's time ..... to officially open the Nursery Town Mall.

#### HUMPTY CUTS RIBBON

ALL: HOORAY for Mayor DUMPTY!

HUMPTY: My friends, this is only the beginning. We must MAXIMISE our potential, and MINIMISE our wasted time ..... in other words ..... ORGANISE!

ALL: HOORAY!

HUMPTY LEADS THE ASSEMBLED THROG (EXCEPT MARY'S GROUP, WHO MOVE DOWN STAGE P.S.)

### SONG: HUMPTY'S SONG (YOU GOTTA GET ORGANISED)

#### SONG ENDS

WILLIE: (*Ringing bell*) Alright, alright - mornings tea's over.

MARY: We didn't HAVE morning tea.

WILLIE: That's not my fault. I just follow the schedule..... (*To all*) Come on, come on. (*He shoos people back to shops/stalls etc.*)

OWL: Humpty, please ..... I MUST speak to you.

HUMPTY: Make it brief, Owlie.

ENTER JACK AND JILL CARRYING CARDBOARD CUT-OUT OF "BARBER BLACK SHEEP"

JACK & JILL: Hey, - look at THIS !

ALL: (*Frozen in horror*) GASP! It's BARBER BLACKSHEEP!

DOCK TWINS: What happened to him?

MARY: (*Touches the cut-out*) He's turned to cardboard.

ALL: OH, DEAR, WHAT CAN THE MATTER BE?

LAMB: Baa.

OWL: This is what I was trying to warn you about.

HUMPTY: What do you mean?

OWL: The magic is fading.

ENTER LITTLE BOY BLUE, O.P. WITH HORN AROUND NECK, AND

**CARRYING CARDBOARD CUT-OUT OF COW**

**BLUE:** Look what I found in the cornfield.

**ALL:** SHOCK, HORROR!

**HUMPTY:** Oh, dear! Oh dear!

**LAMB:** Baa.

**ENTER PETER PUMPKIN EATER'S WIFE (MRS. P.), O.P., CARRYING CARDBOARD CUT-OUT OF PETER**

**MRS. P.:** Hey, you lot - get a load of Peter.

**ALL:** SHOCK, HORROR!

**HUMPTY:** I don't understand. What's going on?

**MRS. P.:** Dunno. Woke up this morning and there he was - stiff as a board.

**HUMPTY:** This is dreadful. We must DO something.

**MRS. P.:** Oh, I dunno. I prefer him this way. He doesn't answer back.

**HUMPTY:** What is HAPPENING?

**F.X.:** TRUMPETS

**ALL:** The KING!

**ENTER KING COLE, O.P., RIDING HOBBY HORSE ACCOMPANIED BY TWO FIDDLERS, CARRYING A THIRD, CARDBOARD FIDDLER**

**HUMPTY:** Good morning, your merry highness.

**KING:** Knock it off, Dumpty. (*Indicating cardboard fiddler*) Alright - who's been fiddling with me fiddlers three then?

**OWL:** I'm afraid your highness that if we don't act swiftly **THIS** (*Walking to and pointing at Cardboard Cutouts*) will happen to us all.

**KING:** Cut the rhubarb, Owl ..... What's going on?

**ALL HOLD UP CARDBOARD CUT-OUTS**

**HUMPTY:** It's not MY fault.

**KING:** Oh, shut up Humpty before I have you poached. (*To Owl*) Owl.

**OWL:** It is my belief Your Majesty, that **THEY** are no longer reading us.

**KING:** (*Walks to centre stage and points to audience*) WHO's not reading us?

**OWL:** The children.

**KING:** That's preposterous!

**LAMB:** Baa.

**HUMPTY:** I don't understand.

MRS. P.: It's obvious you blimp! It's the RHYMES, they're changing.

MARY: I told you. We're not fun anymore.

DOCKS: And one by one we'll all turn into cardboard!

HUMPTY: There'll be no one left.

KING: And Boredom will reign over Nursery Town.

CAPTAIN  
BOREDOM: (Off stage O.P.) You said it, babe.

HUMPTY: What was that?

KING: I KNOW that voice.

HUMPTY: Oh no ..... it CAN'T be.

MRS. P.: (*Nonchalantly*) I think it is.

KING: Dumpty - the CAGE!

OWL: (*Moving P.S.*) It's too late.

**ENTER CAPTAIN BOREDOM P.S. RUNNING TO CENTRE STAGE**

CAPTAIN: Free at last! Free at last, babe.

ALL: SHOCK, HORROR!

SHEEP: (*High pitched*) Baa!

KING: Who let you out, Captain Boredom?

CAPTAIN: Well, trendsetters, like, you ALL did. Think about it ..... and get USED to the idea. 'Cause there's gonna be some changes. This turf is gonna be MINE ..... I can see it now ..... "BOREDOM TOWN" ..... can you DIG IT?

KING: You won't get away with this, Boredom.

CAPTAIN: Like - don't lay them cornball lines on ME, Fancy Pants. 'Cause I'm one hip dude who's ready to rock and ROLL.

**CAPTAIN BOREDOM LEADS THE ZOMBIES IN:**

**SONG: THE ZOMBIE SHUFFLE**

**SONG ENDS**

CAPTAIN: So, what's been going down, your Kingship? Your fiddlers are looking a little ..... thin on the ground. Ha! Ha! Ha!

HUMPTY: This isn't happening. This isn't happening.

CAPTAIN: Oh yes it is. Like the bird said - No-one wants to read you ..... You're BORRRRING. And as you fade into the sunset my army gets stronger. (*To Zombies*) Ain't that right, troops?

**SARGE:** Well, YOU heard the Captain - ain't that right?

**ZOMBIES:** (*In monotone*) Yo, Bro, totally mondo.

**CAPTAIN:** And when you're all like ..... totally flat; I get the big chair.

**KING:** (*Running with Hobby Horse up to throne and sitting*) Oh, no you won't, Boredom. We'll find a way to stop you.

**BOREDOM:** (*Moving to King and poking him in chest*) OH YEAH! LISTEN, BROOMSTICK COWBOY! It'll take something pretty COOL to trick ME back into the cage THIS time. (*To Zombies*) Let's split.

**SARGE:** Well, YOU heard the Captain. Squad, Left TURN!

**ZOMBIES TURN LEFT AND SARGE MARCHES THEM OFF**

**SARGE:** One - two, one - two, one - two.

**THEY EXIT P.S.**

**CAPTAIN:** See ya round like a record, gang.

**EXITS**

**ALL LOOK AROUND AT EACH OTHER IN BEWILDERMENT**

**ENTER BO - PEEP O.P.**

**BO - PEEP:** Excuse me! Has anybody seen my sheep?

**ALL:** NO!!

**BLACKOUT**

**END SCENE I**

## SCENE II

MOTHER GOOSE

LIGHTS UP

ENTER GOOSEY GANDER, UPSTAGE P.S.

GOOSEY: *(In sing - song voice)* Halo - oo there!MOTHER: *(Enters upstage P.S., carrying luggage. Walks to downstage centre)* It's SO good to be home. *(Puts down luggage)* I never sleep soundly in a strange bed. *(Feels her back)*

GOOSEY: Mother.

MOTHER: I know I'm back early. *(Wagging finger at audience)* But we ALL know what they get up to when mother's away.

GOOSEY: Mother!

MOTHER: What is it Goosey?

GOOSEY: Are you SURE we're in the right place?

MOTHER: Goodness Gracious me! What on EARTH has been going on?

GOOSEY: *(Walking around)* I didn't know we had new shops in Nursery Town.

MOTHER: Shops - SHOPS! I don't believe it. They've turned Nursery Town into a ..... TRASH and TREASURE Market.

GOOSEY: Oh, ace - can I have my pocket money?

MOTHER: Certainly not.

ENTER BO - PEEP O.P.

BO - PEEP: Excuse me, has anyone see my ..... *(Noticing Mother Goose)* MOTHER GOOSE! You're back early!

MOTHER: WHAT has been going on Bo - Peep?

BO - PEEP: *(Seriously)* I don't know, Mother. They keep running away from me.MOTHER: *(Irritated)* I don't mean your SHEEP, child. I mean ..... what's happened to Nursery Town?BO - PEEP: *(Brightly)* Yes, isn't it wonderful? Mayor Dumpty is so clever.

MOTHER: Mayor Dumpty, MAYOR DUMPTY! I should never have left him in charge.

GOOSEY: Yeh - he always falls down on the job. Heh, heh - get it? He always ..... *(Mother gives Goosey a withering look)* Sorry.MOTHER: Still - who else WAS there? The King's useless. All he thinks about is his pipe, his bowl, and those HIDEOUS violin players. *(Goosey cups hands to ears, miming the effect of the fiddlers on his nerves)*

F.X.: BAA, BAA.

- BO - PEEP:** I think I hear my sheep calling. (*Begins to exit*)
- MOTHER:** Bo-peep, fetch Wee Willie Winkie.
- BO - PEEP:** Yes, Mother. (*Exits O.P.*)
- MOTHER:** I've always had my doubts about that egg.
- GOOSEY:** Er ..... (*A scheme beginning to hatch*) ..... I suppose this means there's a vacancy in the Mayor's office.
- MOTHER:** (*Not listening to Goosey*) Wouldn't you think a mother could have a little well - earned holiday - without having to come back to all THIS?
- GOOSEY:** Of course (*Preening*), I know some one who'd be IDEAL for the job.
- MOTHER:** (*Not listening*) I've half a mind to go back.
- GOOSEY:** (*Still trying*) Good looks, intelligent.
- MOTHER:** (*Sigh and smile*) The Man in the Moon is such a gentleman.
- GOOSEY:** But most important - a born leader.
- MOTHER:** Dear, dear, dear.
- GOOSEY:** Yes siree - I'm your bird. Of course - I'll need a cap and a badge.
- MOTHER:** What ARE you talking about, you foolish feather - brained gander?
- GOOSEY:** (*Disappointed*) Oh, er ..... nothing, Mother. Just an idea.
- ENTER WEE WILLIE WINKIE O.P.**
- WILLIE:** Oh ..... Mother Goose, ..... you're back early. We're not expecting you till 9:45 tomorrow.
- MOTHER:** Never mind your schedule, Willie. What has that over - stuffed, egg done to MY Nursery Town?
- WILLIE:** It's like this. We'd been under - utilizing our skills, failing to reach our potential and wasting too much time. Mayor Dumpty showed us how to organise our infrastructure and maximise our natural resources.
- MOTHER:** (*Gently*) Willie?
- WILLIE:** Yes, Mother?
- MOTHER:** What ARE you talking about?
- WILLIE:** (*Scratches head*) Er ..... I dunno
- MOTHER:** I thought as much. Summon the townspeople.
- WILLIE:** Right away, Mother ..... Yowsuh, yowsuh, yowsuh (*Etc.*)
- EXITS O.P. RINGING BELL**
- GOOSEY:** (*Still trying*) Of course ..... there's always ..... ASSISTANT Mayor.
- MOTHER:** Goosey?

GOOSEY: Yes, Mother.

MOTHER: Shut up.

GOOSEY: I take it the subject's closed, then.

**MOTHER GLARES AT GOOSEY**

**PRINCIPAL NURSERY TOWN FOLK ENTER FROM EITHER SIDE,  
FOLLOWED, IF DESIRED, BY CHORUS**

KING: (*Embarrassed*) Mother, heh, heh ..... you're back early ..... er ..... what a lovely surprise.  
(*Aside to fiddler*) We're in the you - know - what now.

MOTHER: Tell me, Cole; were you aware of these ..... (*Indicating*) ..... RENOVATIONS?

KING: (*Abruptly*) Well it wasn't MY idea.

**HUMPTY BEGINS TO BACK INTO TOWNSFOLK**

MOTHER: Humpty?

HUMPTY: Yes, Mother?

MOTHER: Explain yourself.

HUMPTY: I'm not exactly sure how to put this. It was going so well until .....

**ENTER JACK AND JILL O.P. CARRYING A CARDBOARD CUT-OUT OF  
BABY BUNTING**

JACK & JILL: Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor!

MOTHER: Goodness gracious! Baby Bunting! What HAS been going on?

HUMPTY: We seem to have a problem, Mother.

MRS P.: I keep telling you. It's the RHYMES.

MARY: We're no fun anymore, Mother.

JACK: And we'll all end up as flat as tacks.

MOTHER: (*Paces*) So ..... HE'S OUT then?

KING: Yes, Mother.

MOTHER: Has he made an appearance yet?

MARY: He certainly has.

OWL: It gets worse, Mother.

MOTHER: Is that POSSIBLE?

OWL: He now has an army.

MOTHER: I see ..... (*Paces*) ..... Well, you really HAVE made a job of it, haven't you, Humpty?

- HUMPTY: Is ..... is it ..... is it ..... SERIOUS?
- MOTHER: Well ..... let me see ..... Nursery Town has become a sideshow, .....everyone is turning into cardboard ..... Captain Boredom has escaped after nine hundred years behind bars ..... not bad for your first day on the job, Humpty.
- HUMPTY: *(Dejectedly)* Oh.
- KING: I don't suppose we could use my army?
- MOTHER: YOUR army couldn't scramble an egg.
- MARY: What are we going to do, Mother?
- MOTHER: Well, firstly we are going to put Nursery Town back the way it WAS. And then, we're going to start having FUN.
- ALL: *(Excitedly)* YES, MOTHER.
- TOWNSFOLK REMOVE SET ONE (NURSERY TOWN MALL) AND BRING ON SET TWO (OLD NURSERY TOWN) UNDER MOTHER GOOSE'S SUPERVISION, WHILE HUMPTY DRAWS WILLIE ASIDE DOWN STAGE O.P.**
- HUMPTY: Pssst ..... Pssst ..... Willie .....
- WILLIE: Yes.
- HUMPTY: I still don't understand ..... What exactly has gone wrong?
- WILLIE: Apparently, your Humpship, we're not having a good time.
- HUMPTY: So ..... if we enjoy ourselves, Captain Boredom will go away?
- WILLIE: That appears to be the general idea.
- HUMPTY: But how do we do that?
- WILLIE: Perhaps, your worship could organize some sort of fun event.
- HUMPTY: What a great idea, Willie. I'm glad I thought of it.
- MOTHER: *(Moving towards them)* HUMPTY! WILLIE!
- HUMPTY: Coming Mother!
- THEY MOVE TO HELP TOWNSFOLK**
- MOTHER: *(To audience)* I don't know. You can't take your eyes off them for one moment.

**SONG: MOTHER'S "THE LAMENT"  
(IT'S HARD TO BE A MUM TODAY)**

**SONG ENDS**

**BLACK OUT**

**END SCENE II**

SCENE III  
THE ZOMBIES

ENTER THE SERGEANT P.S. LEADING THE ZOMBIE ARMY IN

**SONG: THE ZOMBIE SOUND OFF**

- SARGE:** Squad - HALT ..... Fall IN. *(They form up into lines)* Wait for it ..... FIX DRESSING *(They begin disheveling their clothing. The Sergeant moves among the ranks, inspecting the Zombies)* Pull that T-shirt out! ..... Stick out those stomachs..... get those trackie - dacks\* at half mast, .... Alright you horrible lot: You may THINK this is a PICNIC. But I'm here to tell you it AINT! We've got a job to do. And you've got to be ready. Ain't that RIGHT?
- ZOMBIES:** *(In monotone)* Yes, Sarge.
- SARGE:** Take a look around. This is your new home. But let me tell you this: Youse ain't gonna be WALKING into it. You gotta EARN it. RIGHT!
- ZOMBIES:** Yes, Sarge.
- SARGE:** You got to be a crack unit of Zombies. You must be able to do what you've been trained for - without thinking.
- PRI. DORK:** What have we been trained for?
- SARGE:** Oh - a trouble maker, eh? *(Goes to Private Dork and takes out notebook)* What's your name?
- PRI. DORK:** Private Dork, Sir.
- SARGE:** *(Writes down name, puts notebook away)* I've got my eye on you ..... *(Paces and addresses Zombies)* It seems we need to remind Private DORK of the duties and PRIVILEGES of a fully - fledged member of the Zombie Army ..... we will start with DRESS ..... what is the official Zombie uniform?
- ALL:** T-shirts, trackie dacks\* and moccasins, Sarge.
- SARGE:** Correct. Regulation length of dacks?
- ALL:** They must be old, well - holed and droopy.
- SARGE:** Correct. Now ..... hygiene. Some of you have not been following regulations ..... When do you wash your T - shirts?
- ALL:** Never.
- SARGE:** Correct ..... *(Walks along ranks)* But SOME of us have been disobeying orders. *(Pushes Private Dork forward. Private Dork has white fluff and tissue paper stuck to T-shirt and dacks)* The tell - tale signs of tissue in the wash ..... *(Pushes Private Dork back into ranks)* We move now to the important area of nutrition. Name the four main food groups.
- ALL:** Chocolate, potato chips, white bread and coca - cola.
- SARGE:** Correct ..... then perhaps someone can explain THIS. *(Pulls apple core from pocket, holding it with obvious disgust)*

**ALL:** GASP.

**SARGE:** I found this little item in YOUR locker Private Dork. It appears to be the remains (*Sniffs the apple core*) Pee - Yoo ..... of FRESH FRUIT!

**ALL:** DOUBLE GASP!

**SARGE:** Alright you lot - the Captain will be here soon - and I expect you to show him that you are a lean, mean, fighting machine.

**ENTER CAPTAIN BOREDOM P.S.**

**SARGE:** Squad ..... attenSHUN!

**THEY ASSUME SLOVENLY POSITIONS, STICKING OUT STOMACHS, SLOUCHING ETC.**

**CAPTAIN:** Sergeant.

**SARGE:** Suh!

**CAPTAIN:** Are the troops ready, babe?

**SARGE:** Ready, willing and ..... almost able suh.

**CAPTAIN:** Cool. (*Goes to Humpty's throne upstage*) Pretty soon, Yours Truly is gonna be in the Driver's Seat. (*Pats throne*)

**SARGE:** Do we storm the palace now, suh?

**CAPTAIN:** Hang loose, babe.

**SARGE:** Suh?

**CAPTAIN:** Maybe these Nursery Cats are more street - wise than we think.

**SARGE:** How so, suh?

**CAPTAIN:** (*Looking around*) Hm ..... they're up to something ..... this town ..... it's back to normal. Like ..... I smell a rat.

**SARGE:** (*Sniffing*) Could be the squad, suh.

**THE ZOMBIES BEGIN SNIFFING THEMSELVES AND EACH OTHER**

**CAPTAIN:** (*Thinking*) Gotta to make sure those dudes are still turning into billboards.

**SARGE:** I see, suh.

**CAPTAIN:** We need a little high powered infiltration.

**SARGE:** Beg pardon, suh?

**CAPTAIN:** Like ..... a SPY.

**SARGE:** (*Looking at Zombies*) Not from THIS lot, suh.

**CAPTAIN:** Hey babe. I'm talking double - agent.

**SARGE:** Suh?