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THE OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT WENT TO SEE . . .

A Musical Play

by

SHEILA RUSKIN

&

DAVID WOOD

Music & Lyrics by

DAVID WOOD

Based on the verses and stories of
EDWARD LEAR

SAMUEL



FRENCH

LONDON

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THE OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT WENT TO SEE . . .

First produced by the Worcester Repertory Company at the Swan Theatre, Worcester, on Boxing Day, 1968, with the following cast of characters:

Owl	Juan Moreno
Pussycat	Catherine Crutchley
The Dong with a Luminous Nose	Matthew Walters
The Quangle Wangle	Jack Tweddle
Mr Canary	Carl Davies
Mrs Canary	Emma Stevens
The Runcible Spoon	Sheila Ruskin
The Plum Pudding Flea	Michael Richmond
Professor Bosh	Alex Johnston
The Pig	Brian Hewlett
The Turkey	Brian Hewlett
Head Jumbly	Carl Davies
Jumbly Girl	Susan Dury
Jumbly Two	Emma Stevens
Jumbly Three	Angela Dale Collins
Birds	Susan Dury
	Angela Dale Collins

Directed by Mick Hughes

Designed by Mary Moore

Produced by W. S. G. Productions Limited at the Jeannetta Cochrane Theatre, London, on 17th December 1969, with the following cast of characters:

The Fishes

Beatrice Aston
Christopher Biggins
Johanna Cassidy
Gavin Douglas

The Owl

Lionel Morton

The Pussycat

Carole Ann Ford

The Dong with a Luminous Nose

Monty James

The Quangle Wangle

Jack Tweddle,

Mr Canary

Gavin Douglas

Mrs Canary

Johanna Cassidy

The Birds

Beatrice Aston
Christopher Biggins

The Plum Pudding Flea

Allan Stirland

The Runcible Spoon

Sheila Ruskin

Professor Bosh

Roger Brierley

The Pig

Geoffrey Wright

The Head Jumbly

Christopher Biggins

The Jumbly Girl

Beatrice Aston

Jumblies

Johanna Cassidy
Gavin Douglas

The Turkey

Geoffrey Wright

At the Piano: Malcolm Sircom

Directed by: David Wood

Designed by: Susie Caulcutt

The action of the play takes place at sea and in the Land where the Bong Trees grow

AUTHORS' NOTES

This edition is a prompt copy of the first London production, but we are certain that the play offers much scope for imaginative directors and actors; therefore the stage directions, design and lighting instructions given here should be by no means taken as the only way to make the play work, rather as a guide, based on one production which was successful.

For example, if the actor playing Owl can play the guitar, it might be effective for him to use it throughout the play, thus affecting the silhouette mimes. Indeed, the silhouette mimes, though extremely effective, were found impractical and therefore cut in an excellent production at the Phoenix Theatre, Leicester.

Costume designers may be helped by the original pictures of most of the characters to be found in most editions of Edward Lear. In the first production a cast of twelve was used. The Pig doubled the Turkey, and the four Jumblies also played Fishes, Birds and Mr and Mrs Canary.

Finally, *The Owl and the Pussycat Went to See* . . . was written for young audiences. Adults will enjoy it if their children are enjoying it. Therefore no "business" or "innuendo" should be put in purely for the adults, as unfortunately happens in many pantomimes. At the same time there should never be a hint of patronizing the children. The story, played for real, is what is important.

DAVID WOOD and SHEILA RUSKIN

CHARACTERS

Owl: Gentle, straightforward, lovable, warm, but somewhat slow-witted—he is often one step behind everyone else.

Pussycat: Direct, very practical, quick-witted; moves nimbly; should never be “coy or prissy”.

Dong: Melancholic, lugubrious, sad; but not necessarily slow of speech.

Quangle Wangle: Bright, lively, sprightly; boundless energy and attack; very eccentric in personality and movement.

Plum Pudding Flea: The villain; should resemble both a flea and a plum pudding. Lear's character has only one leg; this may be impractical for the stage, but he must hop, not walk.

Runcible Spoon: Genteel, timid, spinsterish lady.

Professor Bosh: True blue gentleman; the last of the great Victorian amateurs. Enthusiastic, eccentric.

Pig: Fat, ponderous, greedy; his initial crossness should take the audience by surprise—pigs are usually expected to be friendly!

Fumblies: Strange, unpredictable, high-voiced, with green heads and blue hands; they should hardly ever stop moving.

Turkey: Elderly, well-meaning cleric; his absent-mindedness and addiction to Spoonerisms continually frustrate his good intentions.

ACT I

SCENE 1

The set comprises a large, round, raked rostrum and behind it a curved rostrum which leads off stage on both sides; behind this a cyclorama follows the curve. This basic set is used for all the locations of the play, with simple pieces of scenery added when necessary. The use of different coloured lighting on the cyclorama helps to effect a change of scene or time.

Before the CURTAIN rises music is heard.

When the CURTAIN rises, four Fishes are discovered. The atmosphere is mysterious and magical. Owl and Pussycat are in position on the central rostrum, in semi-darkness.

No. 1 SONG: THE OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT

Fishes The Owl,

Owl is picked up in the light; he moves in owl-like fashion, then freezes

And the Pussycat

Pussycat moves in her light, then freezes

The Owl and the
Pussycat

They come together, as the lighting increases

Went to sea
In a beautiful
Pea green boat

Fishes bring on the boat from off stage. Owl and Pussycat board it

They took some honey

One Fish brings on a large jar marked "honey" and hands it into the boat

And plenty of money

Two Fishes bring on four bags of money and give them to Owl and Pussycat

All wrapped up in a
Five-pound note

Two Fishes carry on a huge five-pound note. All four Fishes hold the corners to allow Owl and Pussycat to throw the bags of money inside. The Fishes knot the opposite corners and hand it all back into the boat. Owl and Pussycat sit down

The Owl looked up
To the stars above
And sang to a small guitar

Pussycat hands a guitar to Owl. The moon flies in. The Fishes lie down and rock gently, their fins suggesting the movement of the sea

Owl O lovely Pussy,
O Pussy my love,
What a beautiful
Pussy you are, you are, you are,
What a beautiful pussy you are.

Pussycat (*speaks*) And you're so very elegant.

Owl (*speaks*) Am I really?

Pussycat Yes.

Owl and Pussycat laugh

Owl (*after a pause*) Why don't we get married?

Pussycat What?

Owl I love you so much—let's get married—now.

Pussycat Eh?

Owl This very minute.

Pussycat: But how can we?

Owl It's quite simple really. We ask a friendly vicar to . . .

Pussycat In the middle of the sea?

Owl Oh. Good point. No friendly vicars out here—only fish.

Pussycat Exactly. (*After a thinking pause*) Let's look for one!

Owl What, a fish?

Pussycat No, silly, a vicar.

Owl Yes! (*Doubtful*) Where?

Pussycat Anywhere.

Owl Then we'll keep going till we find somewhere.

Pussycat (*remembering*) And a ring—you have to give me a ring.

Owl But you're not on the telephone.

Pussycat A wedding ring.

Owl Yes, of course. A ring and someone to marry us. That's all we want.

Pussycat Let's hope we find them soon.

Owl Then you *will* marry me?

Pussycat Of course . . .

Owl and Pussycat wave and the boat sails on

Fishes (*singing as they start to exit*)

They sailed away
For a year and a day
To the land where
The Bong Trees grow.

The Fishes exit

The boat stops, then the rope Bong Trees "grow" on either side. Owl and Pussycat stand up in the boat

Owl Well, we've arrived—somewhere.

Pussycat Looks like an island.

Owl Funny trees. Bet there are ghosts and beasties and things hiding them . . .

Pussycat Stop it.

Owl Just waiting to—pounce. (*He pounces on Pussycat*)

Pussycat (*taken by surprise*) Ah! Don't be silly. Let's go on land. We can try to find a vicar there.

Owl It's a bit dark to start vicar-hunting.

Pussycat I know, silly. We'll rest under the trees and start looking in the morning . . . (*Whispering*) Come on.

Pussycat climbs over, helped by Owl, and tiptoes through the "water" to the "dry" land

Ooh, it's cold; mind your tail feathers.

Owl climbs over and gets his feet wet

Owl Oooh! (*He joins Pussycat*)

Pussycat (*whispering*) Shhh. Pass me the luggage.

Owl (*whispering*) Right.

Owl goes back to the boat, getting his feet wet again

Pussycat It's ever so dark.

Owl (*struggling back with the honey*) I don't know why we had to bring this with us—it's so heavy.

Owl puts the honey down and returns to the boat to collect the money

Pussycat It won't be so heavy when we've eaten some.

Owl Here's the money. (*He hands it to her*)

Pussycat Good. Very useful. (*She puts the money down behind the honey-pot*)

Owl On an island? I doubt if they use money here. (*In his normal voice*) I say.

Pussycat (*frightened*) What?

Owl What are we whispering for?

Pussycat I don't know.

Owl There's no-one here to wake up!

They sit down back to back on the honey-pot, then look around

Pussycat It's ever so dark.

Owl Don't worry about the dark. Ah, Pussy (*He puts a wing round her*), at least we're on our own.

A moving beam of light appears from off stage

Just you and I, and there are so . . .

Pussycat (*seeing the beam of light and jumping up*) Aaah.

Owl (*not realizing*) Don't worry, Pussy; there's no need to be frightened of the dark.

Pussycat It's not that. (*Pointing*) Look.

Owl Really, Pussy, you are . . . (*He sees the beam of light*) Aaah. Oh, oh, I say. (*He jumps up, his wings starting to flap, but he tries to be brave*) Just your imagination.

Pussycat Then why are your wings flapping? You know your wings only flap when you're nervous.

Owl Well, I er—I'm not exactly nervous—just——

The noise of loud, bitter sobbing is heard from where the light is coming
(*Hearing the sobs*)—terrified! Let's move to the trees.

They start to move in opposite directions. Realizing they are thus separated they join hands and again start to go, but again in opposite directions. They come together again and becoming more confused as the sobs from off stage get louder, they cross over each other and end up separated again. Owl hides behind one set of Bong Trees, Pussycat behind the other

The Dong With A Luminous Nose enters

Dong (*sobbing*) Ah. Ah. Ah. It's no use. Ah. Ah. Ah. (*He sits on the honey-pot*) I'll never find her, I'll never see her again.

Owl and Pussycat timidly approach the Dong, one large step for each sob

Ah. Ah. Ah.

Owl I say . . .

The Dong sobs very loudly, frightening Owl and Pussycat backwards. They regain confidence and approach again

Dong Ah. Ah. Ah.

Pussycat Excuse me . . .

The same business happens. Loud sob and retreat, then another try

Dong Ah. Ah. Ah.

Pussycat (*interrupting the Dong before the next loud sob*) Is there anything we can do for you?

Dong Yes.

Owl What?

Dong For a start you can get off my foot.

Owl (*doing so*) Oh. I'm sorry. Look, I'm Owl.

Pussycat And I'm Pussycat.

Dong How do you do? I'm Dong.

Owl and Pussycat look at him enquiringly

Owl Pardon?

Dong D.O.N.G. Dong.

Owl What's wrong, Dong?

Dong I've lost my Jumbly Girl.

Owl (*not sure of what the Dong means*) Oh dear.

Pussycat Where did you last see her?

Dong I can't remember. I've been looking for so long I've forgotten.

Owl But—sorry to sound stupid—but what is a Jumbly Girl?

Dong You've never heard of the Jumblies?

Pussycat No. You see we've only just arrived.

Dong Did you sail here?

Owl Yes.

Dong In a sieve?

Owl In a sieve?

Pussycat No.

Dong Aaah.

No. 2 **SONG: THE SONG OF THE DONG**

Dong The Jumblies came in a sieve, they did,
Landing at eve near the Zemm'ry Fidd
Where the oblong oysters grow;
And I fell in love with a Jumbly Girl so fair
With her sky-blue hands and her sea-green hair.

O somewhere in valley or plain
Might I find my Jumbly Girl again;
For ever I'll seek by lake and shore
Till I find my Jumbly Girl once more.

Such happy days while the Jumblies stayed,
Dancing all night to the pipe I played;
Till one day they sailed away.
As the sieve grew smaller, my Jumbly Girl I saw
As I waved good-bye, from the cruel shore.

All: O somewhere in valley or plain
Might I find my Jumbly Girl again;
For ever I'll seek by lake and shore
Till I find my Jumbly Girl once more.

Dong But because at night-time I could not see
I gathered the bark of the Twangum Tree,
From it wove a wondrous nose;
And all painted red, round my head with bandage tied
It has holes all round and a lamp inside.

All O somewhere in valley or plain
Might I find my Jumbly Girl again;
For ever I'll seek by lake and shore
Till I find my Jumbly Girl once more.

By the end of the song all three are seated on the honey-pot, the Dong in the middle and Owl and Pussycat perched on either side

Pussycat I'm sure you'll find her one day.

Dong Perhaps. (*He sighs*) You didn't by any fortubitous chance see a sieve at sea?

Owl No. Not even a boat. Only a few fish.

Dong Oh misery. But tell me, why have you come to this island?

Pussycat Well, we didn't intend to arrive here in particular. We just wanted to land anywhere and try to find a ring and somebody to marry us.

Dong Marry you . . . (*He starts to cry violently*)

Owl and Pussycat fall off the honey-pot. They get up and sit down again during the next speech

Oh, forgive me, but the mere mention of marriage makes me immeasurably morose and melancholic.

Owl Pardon?

Dong Sad.

Owl Oh, I see . . .

Pussycat strokes the Dong sympathetically; Owl, rather embarrassed, gives the Dong a hanky

Dong Most kind of you. How charming you are—and clearly so much in love—(*He cries again*)

Owl and Pussycat fall off the honey-pot once more

I'm so happy for you. (*He still cries*)

Pussycat (*getting up*) Can you help us at all?

Dong (*recovering*) I wish I could.

Pussycat Oh, please.

Owl (*getting up*) All we want is someone to ma . . .

Pussycat (*almost too late*) Shhhhh!

The Dong starts sobbing. Owl and Pussycat sit down again

Owl Oo—yes, sorry. Someone to help us to—you know.

Dong I'm sorry. It's impossible. I only have to hear the word "love"—

Owl and Pussycat anticipate the Dong's crying and raise themselves from the honey-pot to avoid falling off

—or "marriage"—

The business is repeated

—and I can't control myself. (*He sniffs and speaks through his tears*)

And you two are so in love—(*He cries*)

Owl and Pussycat, taken by surprise, fall off the honey-pot

—that I should weep all the time (*he wrings out the Owl's hanky*) and use up all your handkerchiefs. (*He holds out his hand*)

Pussycat gives the Dong her handkerchief

Thank you. And what's more, my tears might put out the light in my nose and then I couldn't see to search for my Jumbly Girl.

Owl (*getting up and moving round to Pussycat*) It's all right. Don't upset yourself. We can start looking for someone to . . . in the morning.
(*He helps Pussycat up*)

Pussycat Of course.

Owl and Pussycat begin to exit

Dong I'm so sorry I can't help. (*Thinks*) Wait. I think I know someone who can.

Owl and Pussycat run back to him

Pussycat Really?

Owl Who?

Dong I'm in lodgings at the foot of the Crumpetty Tree and my landlord is the knowledgeable Quangle Wangle. He knows everything about everything. He'll know someone who can ma . . . (*He starts sobbing*) I'll take you to him—(*sobbing louder*) with pleasure.

Pussycat Can we go now?

Owl Pussycat, it's a little late.

Dong (*rising*) I don't see why not. I'll guide you both by the light of my luminous nose.

Pussycat Is it far?

Dong We'll be there by morning.

The Dong exits

No. 2a

Music. Mime. Pussycat starts to exit, followed by Owl. She stops suddenly and Owl bumps into her. Pussycat points to the luggage. Owl goes back and picks up the money and starts to exit. Pussycat realizes that she is to carry the heavy honey-pot. Owl turns back waiting for her. Pussycat staggers towards him with the honey-pot and because he thinks she will drop it, Owl takes it, dropping the money in the process. Pussycat picks up the money and places it on top of the honey-pot, thus making it impossible for Owl to see where he is going. He staggers forward. Pussycat realizes he is going the wrong way, follows him and taps him on the shoulder. He turns, she hands him her tail and guides him off

Owl and Pussycat exit

The lights fade to a silhouette on the cyclorama, as the moon flies out and the boat exits

SCENE 2

Silhouette mime with music.

There is a stile in the centre of the back curved rostrum.

Owl, Pussycat and the Dong enter, the Dong carrying the honey-pot and Owl carrying the money. The Dong reaches the stile. He stops, and Owl and Pussycat bump into him concertina fashion. The Dong tries to cross over the stile but cannot because he is carrying the honey-pot. He hands it to Owl who has to hand the money to Pussycat in order to receive it. The Dong crosses safely. Owl goes to cross but cannot because he is carrying the honey-pot. He hands it to Pussycat who has to put the money down in order to receive it. Owl crosses safely and he and the Dong start to exit. They stop suddenly, realizing that Pussycat cannot climb over because she now has the honey-pot. They return to the stile and Owl takes the honey-pot from Pussycat. The Dong and Owl start to exit. Pussycat beckons and stops them—she needs help over the stile. Owl stretches an arm across but nearly drops the honey-pot. He tries again. And again. He then stretches out his leg which Pussycat uses to help her over the stile. The Dong, Owl and Pussycat start to exit. Pussycat taps Owl on the shoulder. All stop. Pussycat points to the money left on the other side of the stile. Owl shrugs his shoulders, hands the honey-pot to the Dong, and goes across the stile, picks up the money, and crosses back again. Dong, Pussycat and Owl exit

The lights fade to a Black-Out

SCENE 3

The Quangle Wangle's Hat Hotel.

Music. It is dawn. Mr and Mrs Canary and the other Birds change the set; they twitter gaily as they do so, and indeed throughout the scene they react to whatever happens with bird-like noises. They bring on a huge sombrero-type hat, underneath which, legs only visible, is the Quangle Wangle. They put it down below the central rostrum, the Quangle Wangle lying down underneath it. The Birds also bring on two flat Bong Trees and place one each side of the central rostrum. The Crumpetty Tree is flown in on to the central rostrum, and the stile is removed from the back rostrum. Finally, the sun flies in as the lighting increases. The Birds gather round the hat as the Dong, Owl and Pussycat enter. They stop and the Dong proudly points to the hat

Dong Here he is. The Quangle Wangle.

Owl and Pussycat, bewildered, bend to look under the hat

Ring the bell.

Pussycat goes to the hat and rings one of the bells on it. Quangle Wangle makes a loud snore, snort or whistle. At the same time one leg kicks forward. Pussycat surprised, rushes back to Owl and the Dong

Dong Try again.

Pussycat tentatively goes to the hat and rings a bell again. The same thing happens and again she rushes back to Owl and the Dong

Quangle Wangle (*waking up*) Aha! Customers, customers, customers. (*Stretching his legs*) Good morning, good morning, good morning, and a hearty welcome to the one and only Quangle Wangle's Hat Hotel. (*He orders*) Raise the roof.

The Birds, twittering as they do so, lift up the hat. The Quangle Wangle emerges. They put the hat down

Where are they? 'Morning, Dong. (*Seeing Owl and Pussycat*) Aha! Good day, good day, good day. An Owl and a Pussycat. Most distinguished. (*He claps*) Mr. and Mrs. Canary. Come and take our visitors' luggage.

Mr and Mrs Canary start to pick up the honey-pot and the money. Owl and Pussycat try to restrain them

Pussycat But, well, thank you, but you see . . .

Quangle Wangle I offer you a wide variety of accommodation, all of which is glorious, galloobrious and genteel—

Owl No, but I don't think you under . . .

Mr and Mrs Canary succeed in taking the luggage and return round the hat, placing the luggage by the Crumpetty Tree

Quangle Wangle —and available to you at all prices from the reasonable to the ridiculous. (*He goes to Owl and Pussycat and shakes hands with them*) How dee do, dee do, dee do?

Pussycat How do you do?

Owl Look, your hat is quite remarkable, but . . .

Quangle Wangle You like it? Splendid, splendid, splendid. Perhaps you'd like to know how I came to be an—(*relishing the word*) hotelier?

Owl (*under his breath*) Not really.

Pussycat I don't think we've got much choice.

All gather round the Quangle Wangle

No. 3 SONG: THE QUANGLE WANGLE'S HAT

Quangle Wangle At the foot of the Crumpetty Tree
For many years I sat,
But my face no-one ever could see
Because of the size of my Beaver hat.

And the longer I lived by the Crumpetty Tree,
 The plainer than ever it seemed to me
 That very few people came this way
 And that life on the whole was far from gay
 For the Quangle Wangle Quee.

Chorus (including Owl and Pussycat)

And the longer he lived by the Crumpetty Tree,
 The plainer than ever it seemed to be
 That very few people came this way
 And that life on the whole was far from gay
 For the Quangle Wangle Quee.

Quangle Wangle At the foot of the Crumpetty Tree
 It soon became quite clear
 That my hat was enveloping me
 So much, no-one noticed that I was here.

Quangle Wangle and Chorus

Yes, the longer I/he lived by the Crumpetty Tree,
 The plainer than ever it seemed to me/be
 That very few people came this way
 And that life on the whole was far from gay
 For the Quangle Wangle Quee.

Quangle Wangle But one day to the Crumpetty Tree
 Came Mr and Mrs Canary,
 And they said

Mr and Mrs Canary

Did ever you see
 Any spot so charmingly airy?
 May we build a nest on your lovely hat?
 Mr Quangle Wangle, grant us that.
 Oh please let us come and build a nest
 Of whatever material suits you best.

Quangle Wangle What could I do but answer yes?
 Then besides, to the Crumpetty Tree
 Came Stork and Duck and Grouse
 And the Snail and the Bumble Bee;
 They all said "your hat makes a lovely house."

Quangle Wangle and Chorus

And the Pobble who has no toes,
 The Frog and Bisky Bat,
 And the Dong with a luminous nose—
 We all built our homes on the Quangle's hat.

So the longer I/he live/lives by the Crumpetty tree
 The plainer than ever it comes to me/be
 That now ev'rybody comes this way
 And that life never was more bright and gay
 For the Quangle Wangle Quee.

Quangle Wangle That's me!

At the end of the song the Birds return to their conversation on the hat

So how can you refuse?

Owl We'd love to stay here, but . . .

Quangle Wangle Splendidness unlimited!

Pussycat But we can't . . . (*She looks towards the Dong, hoping he will explain*)

Quangle Wangle Friends of the Dong? For you a forty per cent reduction.
 (*Moving to the hat*) I can offer you two single rooms overlooking the
 Crumpetty Tree.

Birds Ooooh!

Quangle Wangle A double on the East West corner of the brim.

Birds Aaaah!

Quangle Wangle (*coming back to Owl and Pussycat*) And finest of all, for
 you my friends, la grande suite at the top of the crown.

Birds Hooray! (etc.)

Quangle Wangle (*indicating the crumpets hanging above the hat*) At no
 extra charge for breakfast each morning, fresh crumpets will be dropped
 from the Crumpetty Tree with butter and jam, of course. And to
 entertain you with music and dancing each evening—the renowned
 Hat Band.

Owl (*moving to the Quangle Wangle*) Well, your hospitality does all sound
 marvellous, but . . .

Quangle Wangle No buts . . .

Pussycat (*moving beside Owl*) But . . .

Quangle Wangle Naughty.

Pussycat (*desperately*) We've come here, because we want to . . .

*Pussycat remembers, nudges Owl, pointing to the Dong. Owl whispers to the
 Quangle Wangle*

Quangle Wangle (*loudly*) Oh, you want to be married.

The Birds react happily

Dong Married? (*He bursts into tears*)

Pussycat (*to the Quangle Wangle*) Now look what you've done.

*Owl and Pussycat go to comfort the Dong. They help him up and lead him
 towards the Birds on the hat*

Quangle Wangle Oh, come along, Dong, pull yourself together.

Dong I'm sorry, so sorry. (*He recovers slightly*)

Quangle Wangle After all, it's not every day we have a wedding.

Dong Wedding? (*He turns from the hat and starts weeping again*)

General sympathy for the Dong is interrupted by a fearful "boing-boing" noise which startles everybody. Panic. All scatter, running to hide; Dong behind a flat Bong Tree with one of the Birds, Mr and Mrs Canary in the brim of the hat or behind the crown, and the other Bird behind the Crumpetty Tree. Quangle Wangle is hidden behind the other flat Bong Tree, but seeing that Owl and Pussycat have been left bewildered in the centre, emerges and grabs them in the nick of time, taking them behind the Bong Tree..

The lighting fades a little. Enter the Plum Pudding Flea. Everybody hides, but peeps out to watch where the Plum Pudding Flea is going. The Plum Pudding Flea stops, barks ferociously and turns a 90 degree angle on the spot. He repeats this, thus facing up stage, whereupon all the heads hide again. Two more hops and he is facing front again. Satisfied there is nobody within eating range, he exits. The lights begin to return to normal and everybody emerges tentatively from hiding, but the Plum Pudding Flea suddenly returns & all hide again as the lighting fades once more. He hops in a straight line and exits. The lighting returns to normal

Quangle Wangle (*first to emerge on to the central rostrum*) Spoo-oon, Spoo-oon. (*To Mr Canary, who is peeping from under the hat*) You, fetch the Runcible Spoon at once.

Mr Canary is frightened

Don't just stand there hopping, hopeless. *Fly!*

Mr Canary exits

(*Stepping off the rostrum*) All right, everyone, safe now.

All emerge. The Dong and the Birds return to the hat to recover from the frightening experience. Owl and Pussycat come to the Quangle Wangle

Owl (*trying to be casual*) Er, um, what was that?

Quangle Wangle That was the terrible, notorious and thoroughly scroobious Plum Pudding Flea. The most loathsome Plum Pudding Flea that ever was. Beware, beware, beware. The Plum Pudding Flea is always ravenously hungry and will devour whole any living creature he can catch. Also his spots are contagious.

Dong (*emerging, leaving the Birds and coming to the Quangle Wangle*) They're catching too.

Quangle Wangle (*dramatically*) One touch and you will be paralyzed.

Dong Most ungalloobrious creature.

Owl Sounds it.

Pussycat But isn't he afraid of anything?

Quangle Wangle Ah yes.

Dong The Runcible Spoon.

Pussycat The Runcible Spoon?

Quangle Wangle Correct. Coming over now.

Owl But why should he be afraid of a spoon?

Dong Stands to reason. After all, how do you eat Plum Pudding?

Owl Quickly?

Quangle Wangle No, no, no. With what do you eat Plum Pudding?

Owl (*helpfully*) Custard?

Quangle Wangle No, no, no. A spoon, my friend, a spoon.

Dong And as the Runcible Spoon is the only spoon on the island——

Pussycat —he protects you from the Plum Pudding Flea.

Quangle Wangle *She*, my dear, *she*, the fearless Amazon of the cutlery canteen.

Dong The pugnacious heroine of the Bong Trees.

Quangle Wangle The swashbucklingest swashbuckler.

Mr Canary enters, bringing the Runcible Spoon

Dong The most dangerous desperado.

Quangle Wangle Courageous in combat.

The Runcible Spoon approaches the Quangle Wangle tentatively, standing behind him and the Dong. Mr Canary returns to the hat

Dong Daringly defiant.

Runcible Spoon You sent for me?

Quangle Wangle Savage.

Dong A tigress.

Runcible Spoon (*tapping the Quangle Wangle*) I'm here.

Quangle Wangle Daredevil . . .

The Quangle Wangle turns. The Runcible Spoon jumps violently, screams, and faints into the Dong's arms. The Dong helps her up and she sniffs some smelling salts

Oh, there you are. Spoon, allow me to introduce you to the Owl and the Pussycat.

Runcible Spoon How do you do?

Owl She doesn't look very brave.

Quangle Wangle (*holding out his arm dramatically*) My dear fellow, you wait. One glimpse of the Plum Pudding Flea, and she becomes a tower of strength, a veritable fortress against . . .

The "boing-boing" noise of the Plum Pudding Flea is heard

Runcible Spoon The Plum Pudding Flea. (*She faints over the Quangle Wangle's extended right arm*)

Panic. The Birds scatter, their wings flapping; Mr and Mrs Canary end up hiding behind a flat Bong Tree, the other two Birds end up under the hat or behind the crown

Quangle Wangle (*business-like*) Come, come, Spoon. Hold her up, Dong.
 (*To Owl and Pussycat*) Encouragement needed occasionally, you know.
 Quick, behind me.

The Dong holds up the Runcible Spoon, facing off for the Plum Pudding Flea to see her. The Quangle Wangle crosses in front to behind the Dong, followed by Owl and Pussycat, who stand behind the Quangle Wangle, thus forming a line.

The Plum Pudding Flea enters ferociously, and stops when he sees the Runcible Spoon. Both freeze with fear. The Plum Pudding Flea howls, turns and hops off quickly

Dong (*letting her go*) Well done, Spoon.

The Runcible Spoon screams and faints backwards, knocking over the whole line

Quangle Wangle (*first to revive as they all begin to get up*) All clear, everybody.

The Birds reappear

No more trouble for a while. He's probably gone back to his pudding basin to sulk.

Dong (*holding the Runcible Spoon's arm up*) And it's all thanks to the Runcible Spoon.

General cheers

Runcible Spoon (*rather pleased, though a little embarrassed*) Thank you.

Quangle Wangle (*joining Owl and Pussycat*) Right, where were we? Ah yes, you want to get married.

Dong Married?

The Dong cries. The Runcible Spoon and the Birds comfort him, all going to sit on the hat. During the following scene and song, the Dong falls asleep on the hat

Quangle Wangle Oh, control yourself, Dong. (*To Owl and Pussycat*) Well, I think I can help you. What exactly do you need?

Pussycat A ring and someone to perform the ceremony.

Quangle Wangle It'll mean a journey of course. (*Struck by the idea*) How nice. I'll come too. I can guide you.

Pussycat Thank you.

Quangle Wangle Now, let me think, let me think, let me think. Luggage.

Mr and Mrs Canary. Fetch the visitors' luggage.

Mr Canary } But we've only just taken it in.
Mrs Canary }

Quangle Wangle Then bring it out again.

Mr and Mrs Canary collect the luggage from the Crumpetty Tree

What exactly are you taking?

Owl Some honey and plenty of money.

Pussycat Wrapped up in a five-pound note.

Quangle Wangle What more could we possibly need? I'll take nothing.

Owl I suppose the Runcible Spoon couldn't be persuaded to come too?
Extra company, you know?

Pussycat And she could protect us from the Plum Pudding Flea——

Owl looks put out, his motives have been exposed

—just in case.

Quangle Wangle Quick thinking. Spoo-oon.

The Runcible Spoon comes from the hat

I'm sure she'll come.

The Runcible Spoon arrives and meets the Quangle Wangle

Spoon, how do you fancy a few happy days' holiday, touring around the island?

Runcible Spoon That sounds lovely

Quangle Wangle These two are—*(making sure the Dong cannot hear)* getting married.

Runcible Spoon How romantic. I can't wait. When do we depart?

Quangle Wangle This minute, and your main duty on the expedition will of course be to ward off the Plum Pudding Flea.

Runcible Spoon Oh dear.

Pussycat *(taking a pace towards the Quangle Wangle)* Please, Spoon.

Owl *(taking a pace towards Pussycat)* We'd love you to come.

Runcible Spoon Well, I . . .

Quangle Wangle And when our quest is accomplished, you can be brides-maid to the happy couple. *(To Owl and Pussycat)* That's right, isn't it?

Owl Of course.

Pussycat Naturally.

Runcible Spoon *(after a pause)* All right. *(Coyly)* I've never been a brides-maid before.

Mr and Mrs Canary arrive from the hat, and cross to the Quangle Wangle

Mr Canary }
Mrs Canary } The Owl and the Pussycat's luggage, Quangle.

Mr and Mrs Canary put the luggage down

Quangle Wangle Splendid, splendid, splendid. And Mr and Mrs Canary, please will you look after the hotel for a few days? We're going away . . .

No. 4

SONG: OFF WE GO

All Off we go together

Through the bracken and the heather

Towards the hills of Chankly Bore;

Through the Terrible Zone, round the Trees of Soffsky Poffsky,

Walk and walk, then walk some more.

Owl, Pussycat and Quangle Wangle

The Owl and the Pussycat and the Quangle Wangle Quee

Off to find a ring are we;

Not forgetting the Runcible Spoon

Runcible Spoon

That's me!

Owl, Pussycat and Quangle Wangle

To protect us from the Plum Pudding Flea.

The Runcible Spoon faints

All From the Bay of Gurtle

Past the slipp'ry slopes of Myrtle

Across the vast Gromboolian Plain,

Up and down on the shores of the great Lake Pipple-Popple,

Let's all hope that it won't rain.

The Owl and the Pussycat and the Quangle and the Spoon,

Let's set off this afternoon,

In the hope that the wedding will be quite soon,

Then we'll dance by the light of the moon.

From the Gulf of Handel

To the coast of Coromandel

Where lives the Yonghy Bonghy Bo,

To the City of Tosh, in the land of Gramble-Blamble,

On our journey now let's go,

Let's go, let's go, let's go,

On our journey now let's go.

Owl, Pussycat, the Quangle Wangle and the Runcible Spoon exit. The Crumpetty Tree flies out

The Birds lift up the hat, waking the Dong in the process

Dong (waking) Hey, where are they off to?

Mr Canary (clearing away the hat) They've gone to get married.

The Birds exit, carrying the hat. To effect a later scene change, one Bird can be left hiding behind a flat Bong Tree; this avoids a stagehand being seen

Dong Married? (He burst into tears and sits on the central rostrum) Oh dear, oh dear. What a miserable day. I've done nothing but cry, I've been up all night and I'm so tired—

The Plum Pudding Flea is heard approaching. The lights are fading slowly

—and now they've all gone off and left me, and there's the Plum Pudding Flea hopping along this way, and I know I'll never find my Jum . . .

(Realizing) The Plum Pudding Flea! I must hide. (He runs behind a flat Bong Tree, but suddenly emerges again and speaks to the audience) Whatever happens, don't tell him which way they went. Please. (He goes behind the Tree and watches nervously, hiding on whichever side of the Tree gives him most protection)

The Plum Pudding Flea enters on the back rostrum and hops down to the central rostrum

Plum Pudding Flea Ha, ha, ha, ha, I saw them going off, oh yes I did. And what's more I intend to follow 'em. *(Audience participation should be encouraged here)* I'm extremely hungry, and a tasty meal of plump Owl, garnished with Pussycat and spiced with Quangle Wangle will be just the job, ha, ha, ha. *(He hops off the central rostrum)* I haven't had a proper feast for ages, and I'm getting so thin that I rattle around in my basin. So I'll eat 'em all, ha, ha, ha, ha. Off to get married are they? Soon put an end to that little plan. They're moony—*(sneering)* in love—ughhhh. Love is a Bad Thing. Anyway, their affair won't last much longer, ha, ha, ha. Right. Which way did they go? This way? That way? *(He asks the audience. They will probably give him the wrong way, assisted by Dong who indicates "Yes" or "No" by nodding or shaking his luminous nose from behind the flat Bongo Tree)* This way? Thank you.

The Plum Pudding Flea starts hopping off. The lights begin to increase. The Dong pops out from behind the flat Bong Tree

Dong *(to the audience)* Thank you, we really fooled him that time.

Suddenly the Plum Pudding Flea returns. The lighting fades again. The Dong jumps back behind the flat Bong Tree

Plum Pudding Flea Wait a minute, you're all goody goodies, so I don't believe you. I'm going *that* way, ha, ha. *(He starts hopping off in the opposite direction but checks himself,)* Was that Runcible Spoon with them? She was? I'll have to watch out for her. But I'm so hungry I could tackle even her today—and use her to eat all the others with—ha, ha, ha . . .

The Plum Pudding Flea exits. The lighting increases

The Dong emerges from behind the Bong Tree, frightened, and steps down from the central rostrum

Dong Ohhh, how terrible. I must do something to save them. What can I do? Can you think of a way I might save them? *(Audience participation should be encouraged here)* Warn them, that's it. Get to them before the Plum Pudding Flea, and warn them. *(He starts to exit, then stops)* But it's very dangerous. I might get gobbled up on the way. *(To the audience)* Listen, if you were me, would you try to save them?

Audience Yes

Dong Even if you might get gobbled up on the way?

Audience Yes.

Dong You would really be brave and save them?

Audience Yes.

Dong Then so will I. *(He starts to exit, but suddenly the light in his luminous nose goes out)* Oh, no, my light's gone out now. *(He returns to the central rostrum and sits)* It's one thing on top of another; it's all that weeping I've been doing. I'm completely circumflumigated without my light; it's all the Quangle Wangle's fault for mentioning you know what . . . *(He moans to himself as he tries to mend his nose)*

Meanwhile Professor Bosh enters on back rostrum, carrying a huge net, magnifying glass, umbrella, etc., attached to his person. He notices the Dong. He looks delighted and advances warily. The Dong doesn't see him coming. The audience may shout "Look out". At last Professor Bosh catches the Dong in the net

Professor Bosh Got one at last. *(He checks excitedly in his book)*

Dong *(struggling)* Help, help. It's the Plum Pudding Flea. Don't eat me, please don't eat me. I wasn't *really* going to warn them. I know you are hungry, but I'm not very tasty, really I'm not, I'm tough, tough—ohhhhhh!

Professor Bosh *(lifting the net and looking underneath)* Oh, goshngolly, I say, I'm most awfully sorry, old man, my fault entirely. *(He removes the net and consoles the Dong, patting him on the head)* What a blunder. I do apologize most frightfully sincerely.

Dong *(recovering)* That's all right. Phew. I thought you were the Plum Pudding Flea, come to eat me up.

Professor Bosh What a coincidence! *(He sits beside the Dong)* I thought you were a Plum Pudding Flea. Jolly rare, you know. That's what I'm here for, you see, searching for a specimen for my private zoo. My card. *(He hands the Dong rather a large card)*

Dong Thank you. *(He reads)* Professor—Bosh?

Professor Bosh Bosh, yes.

Dong Illustrious scientist.

Professor Bosh Scientist.

Dong Botanist.

Professor Bosh Botanist.

Dong Gastronomical chef.

Professor Bosh Chef.

Dong And part-time gentleman explorer.

Professor Bosh Part-time gentleman explorer.

Dong And I'm the Dong.

Professor Bosh And I'm the Dong—I mean, *(he stands and formally offers his hand)* how do you do, Dong!

Dong *(impressed, stands and shakes his hand)* How do you do, sir!

Professor Bosh Listen, old man, have you actually *seen* a Plum Pudding Flea?

Dong Oh, yes, often.

Professor Bosh Recently?

Dong A few minutes ago. (*Pointing*) He's hopping after my friends, the monster. (*Starting to exit*) I have to reach them first to warn them, before he eats them up for his dinner.

Professor Bosh (*joining the Dong*) Then there's no time to be lost. I say, old man, may I pop along too? I could perhaps—(*picking up his net and indicating it*)—be of some service to you.

Dong (*sadly*) Delighted, sir.

Professor Bosh Come on then. (*He crosses in front of the Dong who does not move*) What's the matter, old man?

Dong I can't guide you, sir. My nose is out of order.

Professor Bosh You can't smell the tracks, you mean?

Dong No. I won't be able to see in the dark. My light's gone out.

Professor Bosh Oh, you poor chap. Let's have a look at it. (*He leads the Dong back and sits him on the central rostrum; he inspects Dong's nose with his magnifying glass*) I'm rather good at noses. Mmm, yes. (*He brings out a stethoscope and listens in to the Dong's nose*) Say ninety-nine.

Dong Ahhh.

Professor Bosh Mmm. Something wrong there. Say Ah.

Dong Ninety-nine, ninety-nine.

Professor Bosh Dear me, yes. Let's see. I know. Stand up, old chap. Put your left leg in the air.

The Dong does so

Good. Right arm up.

The Dong lifts his arm with difficulty trying to balance on one leg

Not too far. That's it. Close your eyes. (*He brings out a wooden hammer, holds his stethoscope against the Dong's nose, and taps him lightly on the head*)

Dong Ow.

Professor Bosh And again. (*A second tap*)

Dong Ow.

Professor Bosh Third time lucky (*A third tap*)

The Dong's light goes on

Dong Ow.

Professor Bosh Open your eyes.

The Dong opens his eyes

How's that?

Dong (*delighted*) As good as new, sir. Thank you. Right then . . .

Professor Bosh Let's get going.

No. 5 **SONG: OFF WE GO (Reprise)****Dong and Professor Bosh**

Off we go together
 Through the bracken and the heather
 Towards the hills of Chankly Bcre;
 Through the Terrible Zone, round the Trees of Soffsky Poffsky,
 Walk and walk, then walk some more.

Dong The Owl and the Pussycat, I must warn immediately.
 Danger lurks round ev'ry tree.

Professor Bosh

I'll come too, if I may, for I hope to see—
 And to capture—the Plum Pudding Flea.

Both From the Gulf of Handel
 To the Coast of Coromandel
 Where lives the Yonghy Bonghy Bo,
 To the City of Tosh in the land of
 Gramble-Blamble,
 On our journey now let's go,
 Let's go, let's go, let's go,
 On our journey now let's go.

Professor Bosh starts to exit in the wrong direction. The Dong stops him

Dong (spoken) Hey, Professor, (indicating the opposite direction) it's that way.

Professor Bosh (spoken) Goshngolly, yes.

Both (sung) On our journey now, let's go.

The Dong and the Professor exit.

The lighting fades to a silhouette. The Bong Tree is carried off by the Bird who is hidden behind it

SCENE 4

Silhouette mime with music

No. 5a

(1) *The characters enter and mime their journey across the back rostrum. There is an imaginary patch of mud in the centre. The Quangle Wangle is followed by the Runcible Spoon, then Owl carrying the honey and Pussycat carrying the money. The Quangle Wangle notices the patch of mud; he gestures to the others to stop—they do so, but so suddenly that the line concertinas. The Quangle Wangle cheerfully picks his way through the mud, shakes his feet the other side and beckons to the Runcible Spoon to come. The Spoon shakes her head. Business is repeated. The Quangle Wangle shakes his fists, recrosses*

mud and carries the Runcible Spoon, keeping stiff, over on his back. He lets her down and again shakes the mud off his feet. The Owl throws the honey-pot across the mud to the Quangle Wangle and makes his way through the mud using his wings to balance. Pussycat, carrying the money and holding her tail up, crosses easily and daintily. She shakes the mud off her feet and all four exit.

(2) *The Plum Pudding Flea enters in pursuit. He hops easily and happily through the mud, shaking his fist to incite audience reaction.*

(3) *The Dong and Professor Bosh enter. The Dong crosses the mud in a successful, though wobbly, fashion. Then Professor Bosh slips over in it, hanging on to his huge net for support. Dong pulls him out, using the net. They exit*

The lighting fades to Black-Out

SCENE 5

Another part of the island.

Owl and Pussycat, tired, enter and stop in the centre of the stage

Pussycat Who'd have thought a ring would be so hard to find?

Owl Who'd have thought this island was so large? My wings are dropping off.

Pussycat And my paws.

Owl How much longer, I wonder?

The Quangle Wangle enters, full of life and spriteliness. As he speaks he crosses behind Owl and Pussycat, then back in front of them

Quangle Wangle My, my, my. What a spendiferous trip. Having passed through the fantastical hills of Chankly Bore, let us now attack the vast galloobrious Gromboolian Plain.

Owl and Pussycat (to each other) Oh, no.

The Runcible Spoon enters, groaning with the weight of all the luggage

Runcible Spoon Ohhh. (She drops the luggage)

The Quangle Wangle jumps, then turns

Quangle Wangle On second thoughts perhaps we should have a rest first.

The Runcible Spoon takes the money off the honey-pot and places it down behind it

Owl Good idea, I'm sure Pussy could do with a rest.
 Pussycat Good idea, I'm sure Owl could do with a rest. } *together*

They glare at each other, then smile thankfully. The Quangle Wangle crosses to the honey-pot and goes to sit on it at the same moment as the Runcible Spoon. He wins. She moans and uses her smelling salts again

Quangle Wangle Really, Spoon. For first class silver, you're extremely soft.

Runcible Spoon I'm sorry, Quangle, I am trying.

Quangle Wangle Yes, very trying.

Owl (*moving with Pussycat to the honey-pot*) Er, Quangle, if you cared to remove yourself, we could perhaps partake of some of our sustenance.

Quangle Wangle Pardon?

Owl (*pointing to the honey-pot*) Have some honey.

Quangle Wangle Oh, stupid me! (*He gets off*) Picnicketty time, everybody.
 (*He stands behind the honey-pot and opens it*)

They all gather round, eating honey in their various ways. Quangle Wangle is in the middle, with the Runcible Spoon to one side, Owl to the other, and Pussycat kneeling in front of Owl

Pussycat Mmm, scrumptious.

Owl It's the best quality I could get.

Quangle Wangle A feast fit for a beast. How are you doing, Spoon?

Runcible Spoon Extra sticky and quite delicious, thank you.

Quangle Wangle Eat up then. It'll give you extra strength to fight off the Plum Pudding Flea.

Runcible Spoon Oh dear, I don't think I fancy any more.

Pussycat yawns and stretches, Owl yawns discreetly

Pussycat Let's have a little sleep before we go on. (*She starts washing herself*)

Quangle Wangle (*going to the central rostrum and starting to lie down*) Good idea.

Owl (*joining Quangle Wangle on the central rostrum*) Just forty winks.

Runcible Spoon I'm sorry, but I think that would be most unwise. Oh dear.

Quangle Wangle Why?

Pussycat Aren't you tired?

Owl Little nap do you good.

Runcible Spoon You see—it's most embarrassing, but—I tend to sleep-walk.

Pussycat Sleepwalk?

Runcible Spoon Yes. I might wander off anywhere.

Owl You could always come back when you wake up.

Runcible Spoon (*on the verge of tears*) But on a strange part of the island, how would I know where I was?

Quangle Wangle Look here, don't cry; you're almost as bad as the Dong.
(He crosses to the Runcible Spoon) You go to sleep and I'll stay awake
 and make sure you're all right.

Runcible Spoon Would you? Oh, thank you. I am rather tired.

The Quangle Wangle and Pussycat lead the Runcible Spoon on to the central rostrum. All settle down. Suddenly Pussycat sits up

Pussycat I suppose we're safe here?

Owl *(looking up from under his wing)* How do you mean?

Pussycat From the—*(whispers)*—Plum Pudding Flea.

Quangle Wangle Of course, of course. Anyway—*(yawning)*—I'm staying awake.

Pussycat Just in case. *(Coming down off the central rostrum; to the audience)*
 Will you watch out for us? *(Audience participation)* Will you? Thank
 you. If you see the Plum Pudding Flea, or even hear him, would you
 shout out and wake us up?

Owl *(coming off the central rostrum to join Pussycat)* That's a good idea.
 What we'd like you to shout is, "Plum Pudding Flea." Can you do
 that? Oh, thank you. *(They start to move back to the central rostrum)*
 Wait a minute. I think we'd better have a practice first. We'll count up
 to three and then you shout, "Plum Pudding Flea."

*Owl and Pussycat conduct a rehearsal to get the audience going. At no point,
 however, should they come out of character*

Pussycat That's marvellous, thank you.

Owl Thank you. Now we can get some shut-eye.

They return to the central rostrum and go to sleep

Quangle Wangle I don't know what you're worrying about. *(Beginning to
 yawn)* After all, I'm staying awake.

Pause. The Quangle Wangle blinks in a tired manner

Runcible Spoon *(sitting up suddenly)* Are you sure you'll stay awake?

Quangle Wangle Spoon, fret ye not.

*The Runcible Spoon lies down again. There is a pause. The Quangle Wangle
 starts to nod off.*

Runcible Spoon *(sitting up suddenly, as before)* Not nodding off, are you?

Quangle Wangle *(jumps)* Of course not. Go to sleep.

*The Runcible Spoon lies down again. Pause. The Quangle Wangle starts to
 nod off. The Runcible Spoon, sitting up suddenly as before, starts to speak,
 but is cut off by the Quangle Wangle glaring at her. She settles again.
 Music, such as the Brahms Lullaby. The Quangle Wangle nods off and lies
 down, then suddenly wakes up and jumps. He smacks himself saying
 "naughty". The business is repeated. The third time he remains asleep. The
 Runcible Spoon after a pause, gets up and starts to sleepwalk, arms forward.*

The Runcible Spoon nearly falls off the rostrum, and continues around it until she reaches the back and exits. The others, in spite of possible noise from the audience, have remained sound asleep. The noise of the Plum Pudding Flea approaching is heard. He enters, sees the honey-pot and the money and then the three asleep, exults, is put off by the noise from the audience and tries to quieten them. The Runcible Spoon enters, still sleep-walking, and walks straight towards the Plum Pudding Flea. When she gets very near, he sees her, screams and hops away to hide behind a Bong Tree. The Runcible Spoon carries straight on to the central rostrum and exits. Owl and Pussycat wake up. They rush forward off the central rostrum and ask the audience what has happened. Have they seen the Plum Pudding Flea? Where? The audience point. Eventually Owl and Pussycat understand and move across the front. At the same time the Plum Pudding Flea crosses behind them up stage. Owl and Pussycat pretend that the audience is having them on because they cannot see the Plum Pudding Flea. But now the audience is pointing to the Plum Pudding Flea on the other side, so Owl and Pussycat move across the front. At the same time the Plum Pudding Flea crosses behind them again. Owl and Pussycat again cannot see the Plum Pudding Flea and pretend that the audience is playing a joke on them. Meanwhile the Plum Pudding Flea starts to advance greedily upon Owl and Pussycat. The Runcible Spoon enters on the back rostrum, still sleep-walking. She arrives at the down-stage edge of the central rostrum just in time to put her outstretched arms around the Plum Pudding Flea's neck. He stops, turns, screams and hops off in terror. Owl and Pussycat hear the scream, see the Plum Pudding Flea exit and cross to watch him go. They do not notice the Runcible Spoon leave the central rostrum and exit the other side

Pussycat (*thinking of how they can protect themselves*) Spoon, Spoon!

Owl and Pussycat rush to the central rostrum where Runcible Spoon was sleeping

Owl (*wings flapping*) Ooooh, Ooooh, Ooooh!

Pussycat Quick, wake up, Quangle. (*She shakes him*) Please wake up.

Quangle Wangle (*stretching and yawning*) Oh, goodness me. I must have dropped off. (*Seeing their agitation*) What is it?

Owl tries to speak but is unable to. His wings flap as he gestures furiously

Owl Oooh! Oooh!

Pussycat (*impatiently*) The Plum Pudding Flea is here.

Owl nods

Quangle Wangle Well, that's all right. One peep at the Runcible Spoon will scare him off.

Owl and Pussycat gesture furiously, pointing to where the Runcible Spoon was. The Quangle Wangle takes no notice, but carries on talking

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