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SF PERUSALS

Jack and the Beanstalk

A Pantomime

John Crocker

Lyrics and Music by
Eric Gilder

Samuel French–London
New York–Sydney–Toronto–Hollywood

ISBN 978-0-573-16454-5

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PRODUCTION NOTE

Pantomime, as we know it today, is a form of entertainment all on its own, derived from a number of different sources - the commedia dell'arte (and all that that derived from), the ballet, the opera, the music hall and the realms of folk-lore and fairy tale. And elements of all of these are still to be found in it. This strange mixture has created a splendid topsy-turvy world where men are women, women are men, where the present is embraced within the past, where people are hit but not hurt, where authority is constantly flouted, where fun is poked at everything including pantomime itself at times, and, above all, where magic abounds and dreams invariably come true. In other words, it is - or should be - fun. Fun to do and fun to watch and the sense of enjoyment which can be conveyed by a cast is very important to the enjoyment of the audience.

Pantomime can be very simply staged if resources are limited. Basically a tab surround at the back, tab legs at the sides and a set of traverse tabs for the frontcloth scenes, together with the simplest of small cut-out pieces to suggest the various locales, (or even just placards with this information written on them), will suffice. Conversely, there is no limit to the extent to which more lavish facilities can be employed.

The directions I have given in the text adopt a middle course and are based on a permanent setting of a cyclorama skycloth at the back, a few feet in front of which is a rostrum about two feet high, running the width of the stage. About two thirds of the depth downstage is a false proscenium, immediately behind which are the lines for a set of traverse tabs. Below the false proscenium are arched entrances left and right, with possibly one foot reveals to the proscenium. A border will be necessary at some point between the false proscenium and the cyclorama to mask lighting battens and the top of the cyclorama. Lastly, there is a set of steps leading from the front of the stage into the auditorium, which I have referred to as the catwalk. I have imagined it to be set stage left, but it is unimportant whether it is left or right.

Into this permanent setting are placed various wings left and right. (I have catered for one a side set on a level with the border, but a greater depth of stage may require two a side for masking purposes.) Cut-out ground rows set on the back of the rostrum complete the full sets. On smaller stages these cut-outs seen against the cyclorama give a better impression of depth than backcloths. The frontcloth fly lines come in behind the traverse tabs. Cloths can, of course, be tumbled or rolled if flying space is limited. It is a good tip always to bring in the traverse tabs when a cloth has to be lowered, then if any hitch occurs the lights can still come up and the actors get on with the scene. Similarly, I have indicated where the traverse tabs should be closed in frontcloth scenes so

that there is plenty of time for the cloth to be flown before the end of the scene. The quick flow of one scene into the next is important if a smooth running production is to be achieved.

The settings and costumes should preferably be in clear bright colours to give a story book effect. It is probably best to try to have one overall period, but which period is immaterial. Also, of course, deliberate anachronisms should be introduced into some settings and some of the comics' costumes.

Pantomime requires many props and often they will have to be home made. Instructions are given in the prop plot about any of the more awkward seeming ones. Props should also be colourfully painted and in pantomime most props should be much larger than reality. It is also wise for the property master to examine carefully the practical use to which a prop is to be put - it is very painful to be hit with a Giant's club of solid wood, one of material filled with foam plastic is far gentler.

I have not attempted to give a lighting plot as this entirely depends on the equipment available, but, generally speaking, most pantomime lighting needs to be full up, warm and bright. Pinks and ambers are probably best for this, but a circuit of blues in the cyclorama battens will help nightfall and dawn rising effects.

Follow spots are a great help for this kind of show, but not essential. But, if they are available, it is often effective in romantic numbers to fade out the stage lighting and hold the principals in the follow spots, quickly fading up on the last few bars because this often helps to increase the applause! They can also be used for the Fairy and Demon to give them greater freedom of movement than with fixed front of house or spot-bar spots.

Flash boxes, with the necessary colour and flash powders, can be obtained from the usual stage electrical suppliers and so can ultra violet equipment if it is used in Scene 5. It is very effective for the transformation if the chair, stove, the sections of the wings which are revealed in the change and other parts of the exterior set are painted with a special paint which shows up in the U.V. light, so that when they are moved by the stagehands, who should be dressed in black to make them quite invisible, they will appear to be floating about of their own volition. Similarly it adds a magical quality to the ballet and the growing of the bean-stalk if the Fairy's dress and wand, the bean costumes for the Chorus and the beanstalk are treated in the same way.

The music has been specially composed so that it is easy for the less musically accomplished to master, but it is also scored in parts for the more ambitious. If an orchestra is available well and good, but a single

piano will suffice. It is an advantage, however, if there can be a drummer as well; not only because a rhythm accompaniment enhances the numbers, but also because for some reason never yet fully fathomed slapstick hits and falls are always twice as funny if they coincide with a well-timed bonk on a drum, woodblock or whatever is found to make the noise best suited to the action.

Pantomime demands a particular style of playing and production. The acting must be larger than life, but still sincere, with a good deal of sparkle and attack. Much of it must be projected directly at the audience, since one of pantomime's great advantages is that it deliberately breaks down the 'fourth wall'. The actors can literally and metaphorically shake hands with their audience who become almost another member of the cast; indeed, their active participation from time to time is essential. A word of warning, though, on this - the actors must always remain in control; for instance, if a Demon or villain encourages hissing he must make sure it is never to such an extent that he can no longer be heard. The producer should see that the story line is clearly brought out and treated with respect. There is always room for local gags and topical quips in pantomime, but they should not be over-done. Most important of all, the comedy, as any comedy, must never appear to be conscious of its own funniness.

Characterization should be very clear and definite. Bubble imagines he is highly efficient, but is really the very opposite, while Squeak is simply in search of a quiet life. Nevertheless, he frequently manages to come off better than Bubble.

King Umpty is a weak man, though still very likeable as he blusteringly tries to assert the authority and dignity he lacks.

Jack should be played as a slightly cheeky, but very romantic and adventurous young lad (but not by a young lad, for my preference).

Fairy Evergreen, for all that she is the embodiment of Good, is not above, and indeed rather enjoys, a little mischief. In brief, she should have a sense of humour. Demon Pestblight, on the other hand, has none. He is filled with a sense of his own importance, but frequently trips up over his own imcompetence. Nevertheless, he should at times still present a real menace to Jack's fortunes.

Princess Felicia also has a sense of humour and should not be played merely as a sweetly pretty little thing, rather as a not too sweetly, but certainly pretty girl, with a lively and decided mind of her own. For her, life is fun and she is determined to see that it stays that way.

Life is also fun for Dame Durden, because as she says in her first song, she has a 'happy mind'. Whatever troubles beset her they never daunt her for very long. The playing of a Dame requires a rather special

balance - it should be a sincere character performance of a woman by a man, but one which never quite lets us forget it is by a man.

Simple Simon may be a little slow in the uptake, but he should have a great deal of charm and not be played as a mere numskull.

Jumping Joan is a slight enigma - a sort of wistful hockey-playing type. She is also very unselfish and outgoing with her affections. It would be best if the actress who plays her has a good sense of comedy. She will need it particularly in Scene 8, the bulk of which depends on her.

Daisy the cow is all woman - capricious, steadfast, wilful, pliant, detached and affectionate in turn. But, like all women, she is still always lovable.

The Giant is divided within himself; the two sides of his nature are, I trust, fairly obvious. It should be remembered when he actually appears that his purpose is comic and the achievement of his giant's stature should in no way detract from this.

The Pieman, I think, speaks for himself.

John Crocker

CHARACTERS

SIR BERTRAM BUBBLE	-	The Lord High Chamberlain
SIR SYDNEY SQUEAK	-	The Lord Low Chamberlain
KING UMPTY THE UMPTEENTH		
JACK DURDEN		
FAIRY EVERGREEN		
DEMON PESTBLIGHT		
DAME DURDEN	-	Jack's mother
PRINCESS FELICIA		
SIMPLE SIMON		
JUMPING JOAN		
DAISY	-	Dame Durden's cow
A PIEMAN		
GIANT BLUNDERBORE	-	A two-headed, three-legged giant

CHORUS as Villagers, Market Folk, Beans, the Elements

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

Scene 1	THE VILLAGE OF DAFFYDOWNDILLY
Scene 2	A CORRIDOR IN THE PALACE
Scene 3	THE MARKET PLACE
Scene 4	ON THE WAY HOME
Scene 5	DAME DURDEN'S COTTAGE
	and Grand Transformation to -
	THE GARDEN

ACT TWO

Scene 6	THE TOP OF THE BEANSTALK
Scene 7	OUTSIDE THE GIANT'S KITCHEN
Scene 8	THE GIANT'S KITCHEN
Scene 9	MEANWHILE, BACK AT HOME
Scene 10	DAME DURDEN'S GARDEN
Scene 11	BEAUTY PARLOUR
Scene 12	THE BEANFEAST AT BEANSTALK HALL

Running time, excluding interval, approximately two hours and thirty minutes

ACT ONE

Scene One - THE VILLAGE OF DAFFYDOWNDILLY

MUSIC 1. OVERTURE

(Full set. Cut-out representing village green at back of rostrum. There is a wing R. with a sign on it 'DAME DURDEN'S DAIRY'; there is a mop leaning against the wing. Another house wing L. U.L. a sign - 'TO THE PALACE. SEE ROUND THE ROYAL GROUNDS. 25p a BONCE'. U.C. a maypole with coloured ribbons. Steps down from rostrum.)

(CHORUS as villagers discovered dancing round maypole.)

MUSIC 2. MAYDAY

CHORUS — Mayday, Mayday is a grand and gay day
In the very heyday of the Spring.
April showers being the sunny hours;
There's a scent of flowers as we sing.
Spring is springing and young loves are clingi
All the bells are ringing out to say,
'Never have there been such lovely days as these;
Birds and bees, flowering trees:
Let this lovely day go on for ever, please,
This lovely gay Mayday'.

BUBBLE — (off L.) Make way for his Majesty! Make way for his Majesty!

(MUSIC 3. BUBBLE and SQUEAK enter L. carrying two poles.)

Make way for the royal sedan chair.

CHORUS — Hullo, Bubble and Squeak.

BUBBLE — (stopping C.) Oh, no, no. We must have a more respectful greeting than that for the chief officers of state. I mean, what will his Majesty think?

SQUEAK — But, Bubble -

BUBBLE — One minute, please, Squeak. (To CHORUS.) I know that at the moment we are merely carrying the royal sedan chair -

SQUEAK — But we're -

BUBBLE — Squeak, I am squeaking, I mean speaking.

(To others.) Nevertheless, I am still Sir Bertram Bubble, the Lord High Chamberlain and he is Sir Sydney Squeak, the Lord Low Chamberlain. Therefore, we must be greeted in the proper manner. Try again.

CHORUS — Hullo, Bert and Syd.

BUBBLE — No, no, no. Oh, what's the use? You'd better proceed to welcoming his Majesty.

SQUEAK — But they -

BUBBLE — Later, Squeak, we mustn't keep the King waiting. Loyal subjects, prepare to receive his most mellifluous Majesty, King Umpty the Unpteenth. (Turns in.) Your Majesty - oh.

(CHORUS laugh.)

We appear to have mislaid his Majesty.

SQUEAK — That's what I've been trying to tell you ever since we left the palace.

BUBBLE — Well then why didn't you? Quick, back to the palace.

(MUSIC 4. They run off backwards D.L. KING UMPTY runs on U.L. carrying round himself a floorless sedan chair.)

KING — Bubble! Squeak! Oh, where have they got to?

CHORUS — (bowing and curtseying) Good morning, your Majesty.

KING — (stopping in C.) What? Ah, my subjects, good morn - (Tries to bow and nearly overbalances.) Oh, dear. Just a minute, good people, while I, that is, we remove ourself. (Puts down sedan, with door facing front, on his feet and gives a cry of pain, straightening up as he does so that his head shoots through the roof and he gives another cry.) Ow! My feet! My head! I mean, our feet, our head. (Opens door to step out rather grandly.) Now, my people - (Trips and falls.) Somebody take this thing away before it cripples me for life.

(Two of CHORUS take sedan off L. and return.)

What were you saying, my dear populace?

CHORUS (bowing and curtseying) Good morning, your Majesty.

KING Ah, yes indeed. Good morning.

(MUSIC 5. KING starts to bow as BUBBLE and SQUEAK run on backwards with the poles, BUBBLE leading.)

BUBBLE We must have missed him.

(BUBBLE bumps into KING's behind and knocks him over. CHORUS laugh.)

KING Aah!

BUBBLE So sorry. Can't stop. Looking for the King.

(BUBBLE and SQUEAK run off R.)

KING (rising) I fail to see anything humorous in the situation. And I was just in the middle of saying something when it happened.

CHORUS Good morning.

KING Of course. Well, good m- (Is about to bow, but stops and looks off L.) Ah, all clear. Good morning. (Bows.)

(MUSIC 6. BUBBLE and SQUEAK enter R., BUBBLE still leading backwards.)

BUBBLE Come on. (Bumps into KING and knocks him down again.)

KING Aah!

BUBBLE Beg pardon. Can't stop. Must find his Majesty.

(BUBBLE and SQUEAK run off.)

KING These hit and run pedestrians are getting a menace. Now, I'm here to make a most important announcement. The wicked Giant Blunderbore threatens to ravage our land again unless we pay him double his usual dues. Therefore all outstanding rent must be paid by noon today, plus twice the usual Giant tax.

CHORUS — Twice the usual tax! Oh, it's not fair! By noon! We shall be ruined! Where's the money to come from, etc.

KING — Ah, my people, my heart bleeds for you. But how else can we deal with the Giant?

(Enter JACK DURDEN U. R.)

JACK — We can fight him.

KING — I beg your pardon?

CHORUS — It's Jack! Hullo, Jack.

MUSIC 7.

KING — Jack? Jack who?

JACK — (coming D. S.) Jack Durden. You're the King, aren't you?

KING — I am, I mean, we am, I mean - yes. What's all this foolish talk of fighting the Giant?

JACK — It's not nearly so foolish as paying to keep him quiet. The more we pay the more he wants. So why not let's try fighting him?

1st CHORUS — Because we'd all be killed.

JACK — We wouldn't. I bet you we'd kill him.

KING — Kill the Giant! Oh no, that might really upset him. Really, I don't know where you get such dangerous notions from, Master Durden, but - Ah, wait a minute, Durden. You must be the son of that dairy woman, Dame Durden.

JACK — That's right.

KING — Then no wonder you've thought up this harebrained scheme - so your mother won't have to pay her debts. She owes more rent and taxes than anybody in the kingdom.

JACK — I'm not surprised. She's owed more than anybody. For instance, the palace milk bill hasn't been paid for ten years.

KING — Yes, well, er - (Looks at watch.) I see, it's Friday. Time for me to sign on at the

Labour Exchange. We must leave you now, my people. Good morning. (Bows.)

(MUSIC 8. Enter BUBBLE and SQUEAK backwards L., BUBBLE leading.)

BUBBLE — We're bound to run into him soon. (Bumps into KING and knocks him down.)

KING — Aah!

BUBBLE — Sorry. Can't stop. Still looking for the King.

(BUBBLE and SQUEAK run off R. KING rises.)

KING — Oh no! This is too bad. I'll summons them for careless running. Come back here! Come back! (He runs off R.)

JACK — I was afraid he wouldn't listen, but I'm sure I'm right all the same. But why didn't any of you back me up? Don't you want adventures?

CHORUS — Not those kind of adventures.

JACK — Well, I do. I want to go out into the world and do all the exciting things there are to do. I want to live.

MUSIC 9. I WANT TO LIVE

I want to dance,
  I want to sing, sing, sing,
I want to laugh
  Because it's Spring, Spring, Spring.
With all the wild excitement that the future has to give,
I want to live, I want to live, I want to live.
The world's a book;
  I like the trend of it;
I want to look
  Right to the end of it.
I want to travel oceans and I won't go in a sieve -
I want to live, I want to live, I want to live.
The world has seven wonders, and
  There's seven million more:
I really want to understand
  What life's worth living for.
Get out the map!

The die is cast for me.
I feel the sap
Is rising fast in me.
I'm young and I am healthy and the world has much to give -
I want to live, I want to live, I want to live.

(JACK and CHORUS go off. BLACKOUT. WHITE SPOT on FAIRY EVERGREEN as she enters R. MUSIC 10.)

FAIRY

Greetings, good mortals, I am here
Jack Durden's destinies to steer
Toward renown and fortunes high,
Since guardian of the youth am I.
My name is Fairy Evergreen -
Where'er things grow is my demesne,
And all my verdant realms do thrive
Provided I 'gainst evil strive.
But there's the rub - 'twould seem of late
That evil's in a parlous state,
For Demon Pestblight, my pledg'd foe,
Now ne'er his power tries to show.
But stay! I'm wrong, for here he comes.
Beware, the smoke and crash of drums.

(MUSIC 11. FAIRY puts hands over her ears. DRUM CRASH and GREEN FLASH L. GREEN SPOT on DEMON PESTBLIGHT as he enters L.)

Why must thy entry cause such noise?

DEMON

Thy pardon if it spoils thy poise,
But I'm not on thy comfort bent,
I've come to show my pow'r's not spent.

FAIRY

What kept thee then so long away?

DEMON

Why, nothing.

FAIRY

Nothing?

DEMON

Aye.

FAIRY

Oh, nay!

I think to tell ye are afraid.

DEMON

Since thou must know, I had mislaid
A book on which my skill relied -

'The Necromancer's Black Arts Guide'.

(FAIRY starts to laugh.)

Pray, what does cause thy mirthful zest?

FAIRY

The large result of my small jest,
Which I had quite forgot till now.
'Twas I mislaid thy book, not thou.
I hid it but for passing sport,
Not thinking 'twould thy pow'r so thwart.

DEMON

Thou wilt regret thy hum'rous slight,
For I shall now exert my might
Till I do reign the whole world o'er!
And that I may this end ensure
Thy cherish'd ward I'll make my prey
And haste his fortunes to betray!

(DEMON goes off L.)

FAIRY

He is himself once more, I see,
Which, truth to tell, much pleases me;
For, 'twixt ourselves, I find our strife
The spice of my immortal life!

(FAIRY goes off R. SPOT OUT and LIGHTS UP. Clatter and banging heard off L.)

DAME

(off L.) Stop, you silly thing, stop!

(MUSIC 12. DAME DURDEN enters L. buffeted on by a small motorised hand-drawn milk-float, on top of which is a sign 'DURDEN'S DAIRY' and 'DRINKA PINTA MILKA (STOUTA) DAY'.)

Oops, nark it, now, nark it! Look out!

(It knocks her flat on her face.)

Ow! (Rises.) You're supposed to be a milk float, not a milk buffet. (Sees audience.) Oh, people - how lovely, now I shan't have to talk to myself. (Curtseying.) How do you do? I'm Dame Durden. How are you, all right? (Listens for reaction.) Dear me, you can't be as bad as all that. I'll try again. How are you, all right? (Gets them to answer 'yes'.) Ah, that's better. Ooh, look - there's a party here have brought their musical instruments with

them. Isn't that nice? Are you in charge, dear? What's your name?

(CONDUCTOR gives name. DAME repeats it.)

Well, I do hope you can all stay, because I'm sure you'll come in useful later. (To audience.) I've had a terrible morning trying to do me milk round. Me milk float wouldn't stop. And now I'm all shaken to bits. Well, I started out to deliver three dozen pints of milk and here I am back again with three dozen pounds of butter. And what it's done to me stays, I don't know. One moment they were down round me ankles tripping me up and the next up round me neck strangling me. In fact, they weren't so much stays as moves. I've lost track of them altogether now. (Lifts skirt to find them.) No, it's all right, they've returned to base - if you see what I mean. Of course, my son Jack's supposed to do the milk round, but he's always out looking for adventures. Still he's a great comfort to a poor widow like me. I used to have a daughter too, but she was stolen away as a tiny mite. (Begins to cry.) Ah, poor little scrap.

(CHORUS enter L. and R.)

CHORUS — What's the matter, Mrs Durden? Don't cry.

2nd CHORUS — You're supposed to be happy today. It's Mayday.

DAME — So it is. (Patting her hair.) Have you chosen the May Queen yet?

3rd CHORUS — No, but -

DAME — Splendid, then now's your chance.

4th CHORUS — Well, Simple Simon's going to be the judge this year.

DAME — Simple Simon? My cowman who looks after my cow, Daisy? But he's so shy with girls. Daisy's the only female he can look in the face. He'll probably choose her. You'd much better settle for me.

5th CHORUS — But all the candidates have to be under twenty-one.

DAME — Well, I'm not far off if you count quickly. Still, youth must have its fling, I suppose, and I certainly flung mine. Ah, I remember May Day when I was young. Year after year my mother had to wake me early in the morning. It never did a bit of good though - I was always the early worm that got the bird.

MUSIC 13. ALSO RAN Words and Music by John Crocker

I've always been an also ran,
Sometimes a runner-up,
Upon my beauty there's a ban,
It's never won a cup.
Except when I was very young
Upon a bearskin rug;
And then it was the rug that won
And not my ugly mug.

CHORUS — And then it was the rug that won
And not her ugly mug.

DAME — In eighteen ninety-nine, my dears,
Or was it ninety-eight?
They made me be, despite my fears,
Show-jumping candidate.
My turn-out seem'd to me a mess
It wasn't quite my size,
But 'cos they thought I was the horse
I nearly won first prize.

CHORUS — But 'cos they thought she was the horse
She nearly won first prize.

DAME — At ev'rything I have a go,
But even lose at whist,
For years I've stood 'neath mistletoe,
But never yet been kiss'd.
Yet I don't really care, you see,
Though fate may be unkind,
I know the secret of this life -

CHORUS — You know the secret of this life?

DAME — I know the secret of this life,
I have a happy mind.

(She starts to go off R., pulling the milkfloat, but it goes into reverse and pulls her protesting off L. MUSIC 14. Enter PRINCESS FELICIA R.)

FELICIA — Hullo.

(CHORUS turn; boys kneel and girls curtsey.)

CHORUS — Your Highness.

FELICIA — Oh no, do get up, please.

(CHORUS rise.)

I spend half my life at court seeing only the tops of people's heads and it gets very boring. Now, I've some news for my father. Have any of you seen him?

6th CHORUS — Yes, he's running around looking for Bubble and Squeak.

FELICIA — Then where are Bubble and Squeak?

1st CHORUS — Running around looking for him.

(MUSIC 15. ENTRANCE MUSIC. BUBBLE and SQUEAK run on R., with the poles.)

BUBBLE — Do stop dawdling, Squeak.

SQUEAK — (very breathless) But I'm - I'm -

FELICIA — Hey, Bubble, Squeak -

BUBBLE — Squeak, her Highness.

(They double-mark time L., and bow as they do so.)

Good morning, your Highness.

(They start running again and BUBBLE bumps into wing L.)

Ooh! Squeak, please look where I'm going.

(They trot off L.)

FELICIA — Ah well, perhaps Father will pay us a flying visit soon.

(MUSIC 16. ENTRANCE MUSIC. KING runs on R.)

Father!

KING (wheeling round and stopping just past her, double-marking time) Sorry, my dear, can't stop. (Starts running again, but to R.) Oh no, wrong way. (He wheels round and runs off L.)

FELICIA (laughing) Hopeless. I'll have to tell him later. You see, apparently the Giant is sending his daughter to collect the money today.

CHORUS His daughter?

2nd CHORUS I didn't know he had a daughter.

FELICIA Nor did I. I hope she won't have the same appetite as her father - so awkward if she gobbles up the reception committee. Anyway, at least we shan't have the Giant himself fee-fo-fumming around.

3rd CHORUS You don't seem very worried about her.

FELICIA Me? I'm hardly ever worried about anything. If you worry you can't enjoy yourself, and -

MUSIC 17. ENJOYING MYSELF

I like enjoying myself
And having a lot of fun.
I like to laugh and dance and sing
Stand on my head and ev'rything.
I'm not a stick in the mud
Who goes around feeling blue -
I just enjoy just enjoying myself,
Don't you?

Some old lazybones
Sit around all day;
Some old sleepyheads
Dream their lives away;
I'm up with the lark,
(There's one goes up at ten!)
I leap out of bed
And life's begun again.

(She goes off L. Loud crash off R.)

SIMON (off R.) Ow!

4th CHORUS — What's that?

(Louder crash off R.)

SIMON — (off R.) Ow!

CHORUS — It's Simple Simon.

(MUSIC 18. Enter SIMPLE SIMON U.R. with a blindfold round his eyes.)

Hullo, Simple Simon.

SIMON — Hullo. (Crashes into maypole.) Ow! Sorry.

5th CHORUS — That's the maypole, Simon.

SIMON — Is it? (Pulls down blindfold.) Oh yes. (Moves across maypole, sees CHORUS GIRLS.) Gosh, girls. (Pulls blindfold up, turns and crashes into L. side of maypole.) Ow! Sorry. (Touches maypole.) Um, haven't we met before?

6th CHORUS — It's the maypole again.

SIMON — Oh. It's this blindfold, you know. It makes it difficult to see where you're going.

1st CHORUS — Then don't wear it.

SIMON — Oh, I must. It's part of my May Queen choosing equipment. You see, I get a bit shy with girls, but if I wear this I'm all right.

2nd CHORUS — But how are you going to choose one of us if you can't see us?

SIMON — Ah, that's where the other part of my May Queen choosing equipment comes in.

3rd CHORUS — What's that?

SIMON — (taking out steel knitting needle) This pin.

(CHORUS GIRLS shriek and run U.S.)

No, don't make a noise yet. Wait until you're chosen. Right, stand by.

(MUSIC 19. BUBBLE and SQUEAK run on L. with poles.)

SQUEAK — (gasping) I - I -

SIMON (plunging pin into SQUEAK's behind.) You're the winner.

SQUEAK Waah!

BUBBLE Save your breath for running, Squeak.

(MUSIC 20. They go off R. KING runs on L.)

SIMON And you're the runner up. (Plunges pin into KING's behind.)

KING Waah! Help! I've been assassinated! (He runs off R.)

4th CHORUS I think we'd better go. Come on!

(They run off L. and R. SIMON removes blindfold.)

SIMON There. Oh, they've gone. Well, they might have let me see which one I chose. (Sees audience.) Ooh. Oh dear, girls. I - er - that is, I - well - I - I'm shy, you know, and - well, goodbye. (Turns and runs U. S., crashes into maypole and rises, rubbing forehead.) Now I'm painfully shy. I really must do something about it. Ah, I've got an idea. I'll get all of you to help me. Every time I feel nervous I shall say, 'Help, please!' and all of you must shout back, 'Steady, Simon!' and then I shall be all right. Let's try it. Help, please! (Waits for reaction.) Oh no, you'll have to do better than that. I get a bit deaf when I'm nervous. I'll try again. Help, please! (Waits for reaction.) Better, I heard it very well in this ear, but not so well in this one. I'll try just once more. Help, please! (Waits for reaction.) Ah, that's it. Now I -

(A thump is heard off L.)

Was that an echo?

(Another thump.)

I don't think it can have been.

(Another thump.)

(Moving to look off L.) I wonder what it is?

(MUSIC 21. Enter JUMPING JOAN L., singing

and proceeding in a series of leaps. She jumps right round SIMON, who stands rooted to the spot, watching her progress round him by turning his head. She ends up on his L.)

JOAN — Here am I,
Little Jumping Joan.
When nobody's with me I'm always alone,
All alone, all alone, always alone.
All alone, all alone, always alone.

SIMON — Oh.

JOAN — (jumping a little closer) Oh, what?

SIMON — (jumping away) You're a girl.

JOAN — (jumping in) I know.

SIMON — (tries to jump away, but finds himself up against Dairy) Well - oh dear - I - er - I - Ah! (Moves down to audience.) Help, please!

AUDIENCE — Steady, Simon!

SIMON — Oh, very good, and it works a treat. I feel a new man. (Turning back.) Now then, Miss - oh I say, you're rather - er - rather - well, you are, aren't you?

JOAN — And so are you.

SIMON — Oh no, I'm not pretty. Ooh, there - I've said it. I'm getting very bold for me.

JOAN — And who is me?

SIMON — Simple Simon. Who are you?

JOAN — I'm not quite sure, really. You see my father's not my real father. He said he just found me, but I think he stole me away. He calls me Jumping Joan. That's because I jump, you know.

SIMON — Why?

JOAN — I have to where I live, the furniture's so high. Why, I even have to jump just to get on the carpet. You see, the man who calls himself my father is very big.

SIMON — What else does he call himself, besides your father?

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