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SF PERUSALS

LADY LOLLIPOP

Adapted from the book by Dick King-Smith

The Play

by David Wood

SAMUEL FRENCH

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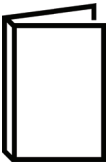
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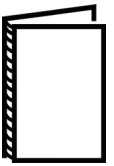
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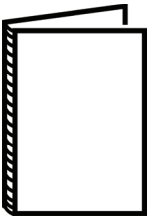
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ABOUT THE ADAPTER

David Wood is often referred to as 'the national children's dramatist' (*The Times*). His plays are performed worldwide, and include *The Gingerbread Man*, *The Plotters of Cabbage Patch Corner*, *Save the Human* and *The Ideal Gnome Expedition*. Among his adaptations are eight Roald Dahl stories (*The BFG*, *The Twits*, *The Witches*, *Fantastic Mr Fox*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *Danny the Champion of the World*, *George's Marvellous Medicine* and *The Magic Finger*), Dick King-Smith's *Babe, the Sheep-Pig*, Eric Hill's *Spot's Birthday Party*, HRH the Prince of Wales's *The Old Man of Lochnagar*, Philip Pullman's *Clockwork*, Judith Kerr's *The Tiger Who Came to Tea* (Olivier Award nomination in 2012), Sam McBratney's *Guess How Much I Love You*, the award-winning *Tom's Midnight Garden* (from Philippa Pearce's novel) and Michelle Magorian's *Goodnight Mister Tom*, which opened at Chichester, toured twice, played seasons at the Phoenix Theatre and the Duke of York's in the West End and won the Olivier Award in 2013 for Best Entertainment and Family.

His book, *Theatre for Children* (Faber & Faber, 1999) is a set text on both sides of the Atlantic. Film screenplays include *Swallows and Amazons* and the award-winning *Back Home* (from Michelle Magorian's novel). For The Queen's eightieth birthday, he wrote *The Queen's Handbag*, broadcast live from Buckingham Palace Gardens to 8 million BBC1 viewers. With composer Richard Taylor, he adapted L.P. Hartley's *The Go-Between*, which won Best Musical Production at the Theatre UK Awards 2012, and played a West End season at the Apollo Theatre, starring Michael Crawford, in 2016.

His children's books, many created with illustrator Richard Fowler, include *Mole's Bedtime Story*, *Funny Bunny's Magic Show* and *A Present for Father Christmas*, and he regularly visits schools with the message 'Books Are Fun!'. He also performs *The David Wood Magic and Music Show* in theatres all over the UK. As an actor, David played on stage opposite Sir Michael Redgrave in John Mortimer's *A Voyage Round My Father*, on the big screen with Malcolm McDowell in Lindsay Anderson's *If....* and, on the small screen, starring opposite Shelley Winters in *The Vamp*.

He is President (and former Chair) of Action for Children's Arts and a trustee of The Story Museum. In 2004, he was awarded the OBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours.

Visit his website at www.davidwood.org.uk

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I expect you can imagine how thrilled I was when I heard that my friend David Wood was going to adapt another book of mine for the stage. (I say "another", because he had already done a wonderful adaptation of *Babe*.) This story is also about a pig, a pig called Lollipop, who belongs to a very spoiled little princess. Thanks to her, the princess becomes a lot nicer by the end of the play.

I was a teacher once, many years ago, and when I showed the draft of this play to the head of that very school at which I had taught, she was mad keen for the children to perform it. Could they, she asked me?

Could they, I asked David?

To cut a long story short, they could and they did.

So they day came when David Wood and I sat side by side in the hall of Farmborough Primary School, near Bath, and watched the World Premiere of a play called *Lady Lollipop*, and what fun it was!

Every child in the school had a part, and how well they played them! Princess Penelope, her father King Theophilus, her mother Queen Ethelwynne, Penelope's friend Johnny Skinner the gardener, the palace servants, the pig-keepers, the pigs – everyone enjoyed themselves tremendously.

And so did I!

Dick King-Smith

ADAPTER'S NOTE

The idea of adapting *Lady Lollipop* sprang partly from the increased interest in plays for use in the classroom as part of the Literacy Hour. Many teachers enjoy using a playscript for reading practice – it is more interesting than simply getting the children to read a paragraph each.

The play is also suitable for performance in the school hall, to be acted out by some of the older children for the enjoyment of the younger ones. Or it could be the school play. Or it could be performed by drama groups.

The ideal age of the performers is probably 9 or 10.

One of my aims has been to create roles for a reasonably large number of children. In fact the play could be ideal for one class of, say, thirty children to act out. However, more children could take part, by increasing the number of Palace Staff, Roses, Pig-keepers and Pigs.

The main roles have more to say and do, but many of the roles are not too taxing, which, hopefully encourages everybody to get involved, even those who are not really keen at first to perform.

Simplicity of staging is vital. The play needs an open space, plus a few props and two thrones.

Narration is spoken by the Palace Staff, who act as observers and also stage managers throughout the play.

There are suggestions for music – fanfares, percussion accompaniment etc.

There are opportunities for mime and movement.

There are opportunities for making props and masks, plus costume ideas.

It has been fun adapting Dick King-Smith's warm and amusing story. I hope that children and their teachers enjoy reading and performing it.

David Wood

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

All the scenes take place on an empty stage or in an empty space. Two thrones remain in the acting area throughout. They are turned around to create the gateway to the Great Park, the entrance to the Rose Garden, or the back wall of the Palace Stables. The locations can be written on the thrones.

Scene 1 – The Throne Room
Scene 2 – The Great Park
Scene 3 – The Palace Stables
Scene 4 – The Throne Room
Scene 5 – The Rose Garden
Scene 6 – The Palace Stables
Scene 7 – The Palace Stables And The Rose Garden
Scene 8 – Bedtime – The Dreams
Scene 9 – The Rose Garden

To the children of

Louth Kidgate Primary School

Partney C of E Primary School

Withern St Margaret's C of E School

Willoughby St Helena's C of E Primary School

Saltfleetby C of E Primary School

North Cockerington C of E Primary School

whose workshops on *Lady Lollipop* helped so much in bringing the story from page to stage.

And to:

Gail Rhodes

Rob Ashton

Sharon Humphreys

Jane Salt

Ned Pickerill

who offered such effective experience and leadership.

Thank you all,

David Wood

CHARACTERS

PALACE STAFF/NARRATORS/STAGE MANAGERS (6) – efficient and formal
KING THEOPHILUS – posh, hearty and friendly
QUEEN ETHELWYNNE – posh, sometimes a bit fierce
PRINCESS PENELOPE – spoiled and rude (at first)
PIG-KEEPERS (5) – rural, respectful
PIGS (5) – untrained, noisy
JOHNNY SKINNER – clever, modest, kind
LOLLIPOP (the pig) – bright, well-trained
ROSES (8) – neglected (at first)
FLOWER SHOW JUDGE – enthusiastic

MUSICIANS/PERCUSSIONISTS

Extra stage managers, prompter, costume and prop assistants

Scene 1
The Throne Room

Two thrones are centre stage.

MUSICIANS *(fanfare)*

Enter the **PALACE STAFF**. *They stand formally either side of the two thrones.*

PALACE STAFF 1 Once upon a time...

PALACE STAFF 2 In a far away land...

PALACE STAFF 3 There lived a little Princess.

MUSICIANS *(a pounding percussion beat)*

Enter the **PRINCESS**, *stomping crossly to centre stage. She stands, looking fierce.*

PALACE STAFF 4 She was a very spoiled child.

PALACE STAFF 5 Her mother, Queen Ethelwynne...

MUSICIANS *(short fanfare)*

Enter the **QUEEN** *graciously. She sits on her throne.*

PALACE STAFF 5 ...spoiled her quite a bit.

The **QUEEN** *takes a marshmallow from a bag and gives it to the* **PRINCESS**, *who stuffs it in her mouth.*

PALACE STAFF 6 Her father, King Theophilus...

MUSICIANS *(short fanfare)*

Enter the **KING** *grandly. He sits on his throne.*

...spoiled her rotten.

The **KING** *goes to take a marshmallow from a bag, then hands the bag to the* **PRINCESS**, *who greedily stuffs lots in her mouth.*

ALL The Palace Staff agreed that Princess Penelope was a RIGHT PAIN IN THE NECK.

The **STAFF**, *embarrassed by their lack of restraint, resume their formal poses.*

KING *and* **QUEEN** *(calling)* Penelope!

PRINCESS *(rudely, spluttering and spraying marshmallow)* What d'you want? Can't you see I'm busy?

QUEEN Now, now.

KING Steady on, old girl.

KING *and* **QUEEN** We want to ask you something.

PRINCESS What?

QUEEN Soon it will be your birthday.

KING What would you like for a present?

QUEEN A pony?

PRINCESS Don't like horses.

KING A puppy then?

PRINCESS Don't like dogs.

QUEEN Or a kitten?

PRINCESS Don't like cats.

KING Well, you tell us, darling. What would you like?

PRINCESS A pig.

KING *and* **QUEEN** What?

PRINCESS I want a pig for a pet.

QUEEN A pig, Penelope? But a pig is a dirty animal.

PRINCESS Is not!

KING A pig is an ugly beast.

PENELOPE Is not!

KING *and* **QUEEN** A pig is a stupid creature.

PRINCESS Is not!!! I wanna pig! I wanna pig!! I WANNA PIG!!!

She looks challenging at her parents.

KING *(with a sigh)* All right, then, my sweet. Daddy will buy you a pig.

QUEEN Aaaaaaaaaaaaaagh!

She faints into the **KING***'s arms.*

The **PRINCESS** *smiles triumphantly.*

MUSICIANS *(a hand bell rings)*

The **PALACE STAFF** *step in front of the thrones and, reading from scrolls, give a proclamation.*

PALACE STAFF 1 Calling all keepers of pigs!

ALL PALACE STAFF Calling all keepers of pigs!

PALACE STAFF 1 From North, from South

PALACE STAFF 2 From East, from West

Pigkeepers all

PALACE STAFF 3 By Royal request

PALACE STAFF 4 Please bring one pig

PALACE STAFF 5 The pick of your sty

PALACE STAFF 6 To the palace next Monday

The **PALACE STAFF** *let their scrolls roll up; cease the formal proclamation and talk more confidentially to the audience.*

MUSICIANS *(rhythmic accompaniment)*

ALL PALACE STAFF And this is why...

It's the Princess's birthday
And she wants a pet
So of course a pet
She is going to get.
But she doesn't want a cat
Or a dog or a rat
Between you and me
The Princess is a brat...
Princess Penelope wants a pig!
It's not a joke, she wants a pig!
So Pig-keepers all
This is the news
Bring a pig to the Palace
So the Princess can choose.

MUSICIANS *(the rhythm changes to a marching beat)*

The **PALACE STAFF** *back upstage to either side of the thrones as the* **KING** *and* **QUEEN** *stand and move to one side, where the* **PRINCESS** *joins them.*

Some of the **PALACE STAFF** *exit. Others turn the thrones outward to reveal 'Great Park' on the sides, leaving a space like a gateway. They stand like sentries as through the gateway the* **PIG-KEEPERS** *and their* **PIGS** *enter. They stand in a line.* **JOHNNY** *and* **LOLLIPOP** *are at the end.*

Scene 2
The Great Park

The **PIGS** *all grunt loudly.*

QUEEN Theophilus, do I have to be here with all these ugly, dirty, stupid creatures?

KING Of course, Ethelwynne. It's Penelope's birthday. Good morning, Pig-keepers!

PIG-KEEPERS *(muttering)* 'Mornin', sir.

KING Er...good morning, pigs.

PIGS *(grunt)*

KING Now, Penelope, which pig would you prefer?

The Royal Party start walking down the line.

PIG-KEEPER 1 My pig's called Spotty, miss. 'Cos of his spots.

The **PRINCESS** *looks at the* **PIG** *and makes her decision.*

PRINCESS No!

PIG-KEEPER 2 My pig's called Droopy, miss. 'Cos of his ears.

PRINCESS No!

PIG-KEEPER 3 My pig's called Curly, miss. 'Cos of his tail.

PRINCESS No!

PIG-KEEPER 4 My pig's called Porky, miss. 'Cos he's...porky.

PRINCESS No!

PIG-KEEPER 5 My pig's called Perky, miss. 'Cos he's always falling asleep.

PIG 5 *snores loudly.*

Perky. It's a joke.

PRINCESS No!

They come to the last **PIG-KEEPER** *and* **PIG – JOHNNY** *and* **LOLLIPOP.**

Want THAT one!

The **QUEEN** *gasps in horror.*

KING But darling, you can't have that one. It's the scruffiest, ugliest pig of the lot.

PRINCESS Is NOT.

JOHNNY You're right, miss. You've picked the best one. Scruffy and ugly she may be, like your dad says, but she's the brightest, cleverest pig you ever did see. Just watch this.

He brings **LOLLIPOP** *forward.*

Sit!

LOLLIPOP *sits.*

Down!

LOLLIPOP *lies down.*

Roll over!

LOLLIPOP *rolls over.*

Stand!

LOLLIPOP *stands.*

PIG-KEEPERS Will you look at that!

They clap.

PIGS *(grunts of amazement and approval)*

JOHNNY I trained her myself, miss.

He hands the end of the string to the **PRINCESS.**

I shall be ever so sorry to see her go. She's all I've got.

QUEEN You must have a mother and father, haven't you?

JOHNNY No, ma'am, I'm an orphan.

PRINCESS Oh well, don't worry. Daddy will get you another pig.

She brings **LOLLIPOP** *forward.*

Sit!

LOLLIPOP *stays standing. The* **PRINCESS** *stamps her foot.*

SIT!

LOLLIPOP *stays standing.*

KING Choose another pig, Penelope my love. This creature only obeys the boy.

PRINCESS *(hands on hips, quietly determined)* I...want...this... pig.

KING Oh. *(To* **JOHNNY***)* Sorry. She wants your one.

JOHNNY Could I come and see her, now and then? The pig, I mean? *(He turns to the* **PRINCESS***)* Could I, miss, please?

Suddenly **LOLLIPOP** *sits and looks appealingly up at the* **PRINCESS.**

LOLLIPOP *(grunts hopefully)*

MUSICIANS *(a magical 'ting' from a triangle)*

Unexpectedly the **PRINCESS** *smiles.*

PRINCESS What's your name?

JOHNNY Johnny, miss, Johnny Skinner.

PRINCESS All right, Johnny Skinner. You can be my personal pig-keeper. You can go on looking after this pig, which is now *my* pig, my birthday pig. Understood?

JOHNNY Yes, miss.

QUEEN But darling...

KING But Penelope...

PRINCESS But nothing. Come on, Johnny.

They start to walk off. The **PRINCESS** *stops.* **JOHNNY** *and* **LOLLIPOP** *stop.*

By the way, what's his name, this pig of mine?

JOHNNY Well, miss. It's a bit of a strange name really, but it's what I've always called her.

PRINCESS What is it?

JOHNNY Lollipop.

All except **JOHNNY**, **LOLLIPOP** *and the* **PRINCESS** *(who freeze), laugh heartily at the name.* **PIG-KEEPERS** *guffaw,* **PIGS** *grunt, even the* **PALACE STAFF** *giggle and the* **KING** *and* **QUEEN** *smile. During the laughter, the* **PALACE STAFF** *onstage usher the* **PIG-KEEPERS** *and their* **PIGS** *out of the gateway. All exit, laughing.*

MUSICIANS *(music as all exit)*

The **PALACE STAFF** *turn the thrones to reveal the words 'Palace Stables' on the back, then exit.*

JOHNNY, **LOLLIPOP** *and the* **PRINCESS** *unfreeze. They are in the Palace Stables.*

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