

SCENE 1.

The Village of Merrydale.

**Full set. Pretty village setting. JACK and PRINCESS DEMELZA are discovered with the CHORUS, dancing and singing an up tempo NUMBER. At the end of the number JACK and the PRINCESS are C.**

JACK. Hello everybody! I'm Jack Trot - just a working lad in the dairy business. A simple, insignificant nobody!

CHORUS. (**commiserating**) Aaah -

JACK. But that's enough about me, because today, (**indicating PRINCESS**) on this lovely morning, we are honoured by the presence of royalty!

CHORUS. Hooray!

PRINCESS. Jack!

JACK. Elevated, exalted, taken to a whole new level of glory by -

PRINCESS. Stop it, Jack –

JACK. Her esteemed royal loveliness, Princess Demelza!

(**JACK bows deeply. CHORUS laugh, bowing and curtsying.**)

PRINCESS. Shut up, Jack!

JACK. Dancing with the common folk!

PRINCESS. I'm leaving –

JACK. But we love you dancing with us.

PRINCESS. No - you're just saying that.

CHORUS . We do!

JACK. We really do!

PRINCESS. Well, stop all this royal business –

JACK. We've stopped. It's finished.

PRINCESS. Promise?

JACK. Promise. Not another word.

PRINCESS. Good.

TRUMPET. (**off**) Make way for his Royal Highness –

JACK. I didn't say that!

CHORUS. It's Trumpet, the Royal Herald.

TRUMPET. (**entering, carrying royal staff**) His Royal Wonderfulness, King the Brave! (**Bows low.**) Bertram

(**KING enters.**)

JACK. (**to PRINCESS**) What does the King want with us?

PRINCESS. I don't know.

TRUMPET. Pray silence for His Majesty!

KING. Good people of Merrydale - (**To PRINCESS**) what are you doing here?

PRINCESS. Dancing.

KING. Dancing!

TRUMPET. Silence for His Majesty, King Bertram! (**Brings staff down on foot.**) **KING'S**

KING. Ow! Trumpet! You hit my foot!

TRUMPET. Did I?

KING. Yes, you did.

TRUMPET. Sorry.

KING. I've got a sore bit now. Budge over; I'll go the other side. (**Goes to other side of TRUMPET.**)

TRUMPET. And I'll put it in the other hand.

KING. Good idea.

PRINCESS. Daddy –

JACK. Daddy?!

(**JACK and CHORUS laugh.**)

KING. Don't call me Daddy –

TRUMPET. Silence for His Majesty! (**Brings staff down on to KING'S other foot.**)

KING. Ow! You did it again!

TRUMPET. Did I?

KING. Yes, you did.

TRUMPET. Sorry.

KING. **(taking staff)** Give that thing to me. You're not to be trusted. And Demelza, don't call me Daddy, like that. Not in front of the common people.

ALL. The common people!

KING. Silence!

TRUMPET. Silence!

KING. Yes, thank you, Tumpet. Now, where was I? Oh, yes. Good people of Merrydale, I am here today –

JACK. We can see that –

KING. Will you shut up! **(Brings staff down on his own foot.)** Ow! **(To TRUMPET.)** Now see what you made me do!

TRUMPET. Me!?

KING. Yes you! Bringing this silly thing out with you! See how you like it! **(Brings staff smartly down on TRUMPET'S foot.)** There!

TRUMPET. Ow!

PRINCESS. But that's not fair Daddy -

KING. Don't call me Daddy, I'm the King! **(Angrily brings staff down again on TRUMPET'S foot.)**

TRUMPET. Owoooo!

KING. Oh, sorry, Trumpet. **(Returning staff to TRUMPET.)** But don't bring that thing out with you again.

TRUMPET. **(whimpering)** No, Your Majesty.

KING. Now look everybody, I'm here today to give you some good news.

**(ALL cheer.)**

And some bad news.

**(ALL moan.)**

The good news is that we have finally paid all the Giant tax!

**(ALL cheer.)**

The bad news is that in an unprecedented gesture of badwill, the Giant has decided to double the tax –

ALL. Double it!?

**(General consternation.)**

KING. And will be sending his wicked henchman, Slimeball, to oversee payment!

**(More consternation. PYRO. SLIMEBALL leaps on. All KING hides behind TRUMPET.)** **scream.**

SLIME. You said it Daddy!

PRINCESS. Don't call him Daddy!

KING. No, no that's quite alright – Mister, er - Slimeball?

SLIME. That's me, but don't you worry, Granddad, the Giant's a reasonable man. He'll give you time.

KING. Really?

SLIME. You've got half an hour.

ALL. HALF AN HOUR!!!

SLIME. Thirty minutes. And if the money isn't handed over on time –

KING. Yes?

SLIME. The Giant's going to marry the Princess.

*Pages 15/16*

TRUMPET. 'Root and branch!' That's a good one, Your Majesty!

KING. (a **beat**) Don't try and come the comedian with me, Trumpet.

TRUMPET. No, Your Majesty. Beg pardon, Your Majesty.

KING. Your job is to find out what's happening and report back to me.

TRUMPET. Yes, Your –

KING. (**sees PRINCESS off**) Quiet! She's coming. Now remember. You're almost invisible in that disguise. So, stick to her like glue. (**Starts to exit.**)

TRUMPET. (**pursuing the KING**) But Your Majesty –

KING. Like, glue, TRUMPET. Like glue. (**Exits.**)

(**TRUMPET sticks his arms out rigidly and freezes as a tree.**)

PRINCESS. (**entering**) Daddy? That's funny. I thought Daddy was here. I'm sure I heard his voice.

JACK. (**poking his head on**) Demelza!

PRINCESS. Jack! What are you doing here?

JACK. I followed you.

(**Surreptitiously, TRUMPET starts to cross the stage.**)

PRINCESS. Why?

JACK. Oh. You know. I just wanted to talk to you.

PRINCESS. I hope my father didn't see you.

JACK. Oh, no. I was very careful.

(**JACK leans against one of the boughs of the "tree".**)

PRINCESS. He's got even more protective of me than he used to be.

JACK. I know. It's very annoying.

PRINCESS. Really? Does it worry you?

JACK. Well, of course it does!

PRINCESS. Why's that then?

JACK. You know why.

PRINCESS. (**crossing to centre**) I just think I'd rather like to hear you say it.

**(At some point JACK follows. TRUMPET tracks their position.)**

JACK. Well –

PRINCESS. Yes?

JACK. I - like talking to you, that's all.

PRINCESS. Oh.

JACK. I mean - I really, really like talking to you. Finding out who you are. Getting to know you, I suppose.

PRINCESS. Do you know what, Jack Trot?

JACK. What?

PRINCESS. I like getting to know you too.

**(NUMBER. (Suggest “Getting to Know You”) Lots of movement and dancing, all of which TRUMPET follows assiduously, gradually getting more and more involved, copying the dance steps and eventually being twirled out of control by JACK and the PRINCESS, who exit.**

**TRUMPET is left hopelessly giddy. The KING re-enters.)**

KING. Where is she? You've lost sight of her completely!

TRUMPET. Your Majesty, I was – I mean she was, well we all got dancing –

KING. DANCING!

TRUMPET. With that Jack Trot –

KING. WHAT! And you joined in? Bouncing around like a demented mulberry bush! You incompetent loon. Well, you can jolly well find her again and keep her in sight, or I'll have you chopped down, logged and pulped into paper!

**(KING exits chasing a terrified TRUMPET.)**

**SCENE 8.**

**The Giant's Kitchen. Fullset.**

**The PRINCESS is discovered in a cage – or imprisoned in some way. Large table with chair for Giant. Short, sad NUMBER. SLIMEBALL enters at the end of the number.**

SLIME. Hello again, Miss Demelza! Lovely song, lovely sentiment. Shame it's just a lot of old tosh.

PRINCESS. Go boil your head!

SLIME I'd sooner grill your toes. But never mind, I just thought you'd like to know that Blunderbore is on his way.

GIANT. **(off)** Fee Fi Fo Fum!  
I smell the blood of an Englishman...!

SLIME. Here he is, the blushing groom!

**(SLIMEBALL rushes to open the door UC.**

**Smoke, backlighting etc. The GIANT enters.)**

GIANT. Be he alive, or be he dead,  
I'll grind his bones  
To make my bread...!  
Slimeball! Where's that cow you got me?

SLIME. She's just in the larder.

PRINCESS. Daisy's in the larder?!

SLIME. We've been fattening her up for you.

GIANT. Not too fat. I wanna look good for my little wifey to be.

PRINCESS. I wouldn't marry you if you were the last man in the history of the world!

GIANT. But I love you, Demelza!

PRINCESS. You've never even met me before.

GIANT. I've met you in my dreams.

PRINCESS. How disgusting!

**(Short Barry White NUMBER for GIANT - with lots of sweaty grunting and grotesque soul dancing.)**

GIANT. There, Baby. Now do you see it was meant to be?

PRINCESS. No, I do not!

SLIME. Now, I call that ungrateful!

GIANT. Not to worry. I'll marry her anyway – and if it don't work out - she'll make a very tasty snack. Where's Harpy?

SLIME. On your table as always.

GIANT. Show Demelza what Harpy does.

**(SLIMEBALL picks up the harp which starts to play.)**

See? It always plays when you pick it up... Ah... Really pretty. Alright put it down.

**(SLIMEBALL does so.)**

**(Yawns.)** I like music. It always makes me sleepy. Where's Hetty?

SLIME. **(picks up a hen sitting in a basket)** Here she is. Your little treasure.

GIANT. Lay a golden egg for Daddy, Hetty!

**(SOUND EFFECT. Hen cackles, ending with a little whoop.)**

SLIME. **(holding up golden egg)** One a day, regular as clockwork.

GIANT. Give it to Demelza as a little prezzie from me. **(Goes to sit at his table.)**

SLIME. **(handing egg to PRINCESS)** Isn't he the perfect gentleman?

GIANT. Shut your face, you grovelling little toad. And put Hetty back on the table. Where's that intruder you told me about. Have you caught him yet?

SLIME. Er, not quite.

GIANT. Not quite? Well, get after him you dim witted slug!

SLIME. One thousand excuse me's, I'll get on to it straightaway. **(Exits.)**

GIANT. This is the life, eh? Me in the kitchen and you in your little cage.

PRINCESS. I'm not speaking to you.

GIANT. You just did. **(Chuckles.)** I've got the key right here, baby. **(Yawns.)** Busy day, eh? I might just have – **(Yawns again.)** a little nap. **(Falls asleep and snores gently.)**

JACK. **(from wing)** Psst!

PRINCESS. **(nervously)** Who's there?

JACK. **(whispering)** It's me!

PRINCESS. Jack!



JACK.       **(entering)** Sssh!

PRINCESS. **(whispering)** I mean, Jack! Thank goodness you're here. You came after me!

JACK.       Of course, I did. How do I get you out of there?

PRINCESS. The key's on his belt. **(JACK crosses to GIANT.)** And Jack –

JACK.       Yes?

PRINCESS. They've got Daisy.

JACK.       Daisy!

PRINCESS. Sssh!

**(The GIANT stirs, grunts a bit and resumes his gentle snoring.)**

JACK.       It's OK. He's still asleep. **(Working at key.)** I think I can get it off. Where's Daisy?

PRINCESS. In the larder –

JACK.       OK, first we'll get you free and then well rescue Daisy. There, it's just coming –

SIMON.     **(off, in a deep voice)** Fee fi fo fum!

PRINCESS. What's that?

JACK.       I don't know. **(Taking out his sword.)** Another giant? **(Hides, ready to pounce.)**