



THE OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE
BY
COLIN BARROW

Extract

A SMITH SCRIPT

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**THE OLD WOMAN
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IN A
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A PANTOMIME

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USEFUL INFORMATION

Casting:- The casting can be quite flexible to suit your available performers. Although some are best played by male, it would be quite possible for them to be played by a female if your performer availability dictates to do so

Small part/cameo characters:- Ideal parts for anybody wanting to be involved with few lines and wishes to play a character. If you do have a chorus and are **limited** with **other** performers to fill these cameo characters, some or all could be pulled from the chorus for the scenes where those characters are required.

Chorus:- This script can be used with or without a chorus. Where there are chorus speaking lines and you have no chorus, these can be delivered by the small/cameo performers who can be towns people, children, etcetera. The script is written for this option to be implemented if required.

General staging:- The scenery and lighting can be as simple and easy as you wish, especially if tight budgets and logistics have a strong influence on your production. This also applies to costuming and properties, and yet still providing a brilliant pantomime. Of course, if budgets and logistics dictate otherwise, the skies are the limit!

Scenes:- The script is written with four full stage scenes and one front cloth scene. These are not set in stone and by all means re-name some scenes if you wish to run more cloths. Likewise, if you are running with limitations. The full stage scenes could use the same back drop of a nondescript mottled effect. And dress each scene where needed to match its title. There are three ways in which the shoes can be achieved. 1)The shoe can be painted on a cloth and have a hole cut for the doorway. 2) A shoe module that is able to be brought onto stage easily which has an operating door. 3) The heel and back of a shoe module including a door which is set at a upstage entrance so it is just showing.

Set dressing:- Dressing for the scenes is entirely up to you and the stage space available. It will also depend on what type of backdrops you are using. Especially for those working with no chorus and have more stage space available.

Approximate running Time:- Two hours {plus interval}

CAST

Main

3 Female, 3 Male, 6 Either

MOTHER HUBBARD..... Dame
SIMPLE SIMON..... Comic

GEORGIE PORGIE
WEE WILLIE WINKIE
BOY BLUE
POLLY

JACK..... Principle boy
BO-PEEP..... Principle girl
OLD MACDONALD
MARY MARY..... Baddie
HUMPTY DUMPTY..... Mary Mary's secretary
BINGO..... Dog

Small part/cameo characters

2 Either 1 Male

The script is written so that the Fairy and Miss Muffet could be played by the same performer if it is wished.

FAIRY TWINKLE
MISS MUFFET..... Giants assistant
GIANT a recorded voice or spoken live through a microphone

Also

A HORSE (*if you decide to use one*)

And

CHORUS if you have one

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS AND COSTUME REQUIREMENTS

The general character costumes are up to you, as are the amount of costume changes characters are given. Also the scenes they are in, will dictate the costume types. Where characters require specific additional requirements, this information has been given below.

Mother Hubbard: Dame. Can be male or female. Costumed in the traditional way for a Dame. Also requires:- Overalls (*can be disposable*) or costume suitable for decorating mess scene. A French Can Can costume. Attire for a lady of the street (*for France*) with a veiled hat

Simple Simon: A comic. Played by a male. Usual comic dress. Also requires:- Pyjamas. Overalls (*can be disposable*) or costume suitable for decorating mess scene. A French Can Can costume

Wee Willie Winkie: Light humour part. Played by male or female. Wears a long night gown hat, slippers and where possible always with a candle in its holder.

Also requires:- Overalls (*can be disposable*) or costume suitable for decorating mess scene. A French Can Can costume

Georgie Porgie: Light humour part. Played by male or female. Can be a little *camp* if wished. Costume to suit your ideas, padding may help to strengthen the character name. Also requires:- Overalls (*can be disposable*) or costume suitable for decorating mess scene. A French Can Can costume

Polly: Light humour part. Played by male or female. Prettily dressed with full petticoated skirt and pig tails (*which if played by a male makes the image funnier*) Also requires:- Overalls (*can be disposable*) or costume suitable for decorating mess scene. A French Can Can costume

Boy Blue: Light humour part. Played by male or female. Predominately blue in colour to match the character name. Also requires:- Overalls (*can be disposable*) or costume suitable for decorating mess scene. A French Can Can costume

Jack: Principle boy. Played by a female. Costumed with a some reservation to full Principle Boy attire until he is discovered to be a Prince in ACT II when he can then be costumed as a Prince

Bo-Peep: Principle girl. Played by a female. Prettily dressed to fit her character and also requires a shepherds crook.

Old MacDonald: Played by male. Quite a jovial character which becomes stronger when he is Old King Cole. Costumed as a Squire in appearance until he is found to be Old King Cole, after then his attire should become regal

Humpty Dumpty: Mary Mary's secretary. Can be male or female. Has some

warmth and not over serious with areas of comedy. Quite official in appearance with spectacles. (*The spectacles are not worn in one scene*) Padding will be

required to make the performer as egg shaped as possible

Mary Mary: Not a true villain but a nasty selfish person. Played by a female. Has a strong stern attitude and quite officious. Costuming can be quite striking in colours best suited for baddies. There is a lot of reference to her sagging or drooping knickers. This means her knickers ought to be showing at all times of varying sorts and types

Bingo: Mother Hubbard's pet dog. Played by male or female. Although in the mess scene, he should remain clean and not require protection!!! Also requires:- A French Can Can costume

Fairy Twinkle: Played by male or female. A small part. Costumed as a dainty pretty fairy

Miss Muffet: Played by a male or female. A small part. She has a slight French accent. Costumed in a French maid style

Horse: (*Only if used. The script allows it to be imaginary where costume or performers prove a problem*) Male or female.

Giants Voice: Male. (*Not seen on stage*) Recorded or spoken live through a microphone.

The Chorus: Town/country folk, children, etcetera and costumed accordingly

MUSIC AND DANCE

General song/dance numbers:- The script is written to allow the *maximum time* of ***one minute to one and a half minutes*** for each song or dance routine. In each case choosing an ending to give a natural finish. These can be shorter, but watch if too many run longer as this could alter the pantomimes whole running time.

Song/dance not with time restrictions:- The opening number, principle boy and girl duets and solo's, the community song those with lyrics included within the script and the finale. These are important numbers and should run their own natural course. There has also been made a few timing suggestions within the script.

By keeping to these parameters it will keep the production running quickly, fresh and entertaining to your audience. It also helps the cast in learning fewer song words and for those who are not used to singing, more comfortable.

Not all song/dance slots needs to be executed. They are there as ideal spots if you wish to use them. This helps those main cast who do not feel comfortable to sing to opt out. **You don't** need to **use all the slots** allocated for chorus

numbers, especially if your chorus numbers are very low.

If you are working without a chorus and not using the song/dance slots allocated. You can add an extra cast members song or two, or lengthen the other cast songs allocated slightly to make up the time.

The script does supply some song suggestions but they do not need to be used. All other song/dance numbers are to your own choice. This allows the cast who are involved to select something that's comfortable for them and perhaps modern. It also prevents the repetition of music from recent past productions.

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SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene one	SOGGY BOTTOM
Scene two	ON THE WAY TO THE SHOE
Scene three	OUTSIDE THE SHOE
Scene four	ON THE WAY TO THE SHOE
Scene five	INSIDE THE TOWN HALL
Scene six	ON THE WAY TO THE SHOE
Scene seven	SOGGY BOTTOM <i>or</i> OUTSIDE THE SHOE

ACT II

Scene one	VICHY
Scene two	ON THE WAY TO THE SHOE
Scene three	SOGGY BOTTOM <i>or</i> OUTSIDE THE SHOE
Scene four	ON THE WAY TO THE SHOE
Scene five	SOGGY BOTTOM

THE OLD WOMAN WHO LIVED IN A SHOE

ACT I

Scene one

SOGGY BOTTOM (town) (*full stage*)

The scene opens with the cast and/or chorus singing/dancing an opening number. If you have no chorus they can be replaced by those playing smaller character parts as towns people. If the cast are used for the opening, make sure Mother can exit first so she can re-enter immediately after the remaining cast have exited

Song:

After the opening number, the cast, exit the stage left and right. The chorus or towns people remain on stage.

Mother enters with a shopping basket

Mother (*singing*) Oh! What a beautiful morning! Oh! What a beautiful day!
Hello everybody?

All Hello, Mother Hubbard.

Mother (*to audience*) I didn't hear much from you lot. I'll try again. Hello
everybody?

All Hello, Mother Hubbard.

Mother Well, it was better, not much but better. Now, for those not in the
know, I'm Mother Hubbard, otherwise known as the Woman who
lives in the shoe.

All The 'Old Woman!'

Mother Not so much of the "Old." I'm just mature, like a fine wine!

Chorus 1 Or a very old cheese.

Mother Why do you keep using the word "Old?"

All Because you are not young.

Chorus 2 You're as old as what you feel.

Mother And I want to feel a man with muscles.

All Mother Hubbard!

Mother I have some rocks that need shifting and a five stone weakling would be no use.

Chorus 3 How many children have you got, Mother Hubbard?

Mother I can't remember, but it's several. All orphans you know. There's Jack, Bo-Peep, Wee Willie Winkie, Simple Simon, Georgie Porgie and many others with new ones arriving all the time.

Chorus 4 Have you ever been married?

Mother I had one husband. He died in the vegetable garden, tragic it was. When they got him to the hospital, the doctor told me he had a lettuce up his bottom! And that was just the tip of the iceberg! Has anyone seen Simple Simon?

All No, why?

Mother He is supposed to taking the Dog for a walk, or it may be the dog is taking Simon for a walk. Anyway, at least they are both getting exercise whilst I go to the market. It so busy at our market, men pushing you from one side to the other, prodding me in the back, poking me in the front. And if I bend over to choose a melon, it's me that's tested for ripeness. *(A bit tongue in cheek)* And I just have to go everyday to get my fresh produce! I bet none of you know the difference between a Brussel sprout and a bogey?

All No. What's the difference between a Brussel sprout and a bogey?

Mother You try getting kids to eat Brussels sprouts! *(Sighs)* I don't know, a woman's work is never done, if only I were a man! Now, before I go and get my daily offers. Will you help me? You see from time to time I get fed up. The value of the pound, the local election results, being told to go on a diet, meeting a man only to find out he's not that desperate! So to cheer me up, when I say, "hello boys and girls" you shout back "hello Mother Hubbard", do you think we could do that? Let have a try. *(Does business with audience)* That's brilliant. Right, it's time to get down to that market and see if I can get any offers.

Mother exits

Bingo enters stage front pulling a taught rope. General ad-lib can be used for this routine. Off stage on the other end is Simple Simon. Bingo tries to pull Simon on, as Simon tries to pull Bingo off. The choreographed tussle goes on for about thirty seconds before finally Bingo pulls Simon on stage and exits with speed off the other side, Simon also exits with speed as if being pulled along. Simon re-enters pulling the rope and in a few seconds Bingo enters and circles around Simon as many times as it takes to wind the rope around Simon. They both end up facing each other. Bingo barks at Simon

Simon Poo! What have you been licking?

Bingo Woof, woof!

All Morning, Bingo.

Bingo Woof, woof! (*Lets go the rope, may have to tuck the end in to stop it dragging*)

All You seem a bit tied up Simple Simon?

Simon I am what's known as being on the end of my tether! Here I am, the pride of Soggy Bottom. The answer to a maidens prayer, the heart throb of the town, the man who has a lot to offer and is always taken back and exchanged for a better model. My mum says, "I have to get experience to treat a girl properly." How can I get experience if they won't let me experience the experience? If only I could find love and a friend for life, to live, love and have laughter.

Song: *An upbeat number*

Chorus/towns people exit after the song left and right

Mother enters with her shopping basket full

Mother Hello boys and girls!

Audience reaction

Mother (*removes a box of eggs*) Eggs are going up!

Simon That'll be painful for the chickens.

Mother (*removing a cheese*) I have a dangerous cheese here.

Simon How do you handle it?

Mother Caerphilly!

Georgie enters with a newspaper

Mother What's in the news today then Georgie Porgie?

Georgie (*reading*) Humpty Dumpty has had a nervous breakdown! Doctors say " He's finally cracked!" And Jack has exposed Jill on her allotment.

Simon (*looking over Georgie's shoulder*) She certainly knows how to grow melons!

Georgie (*reading*) Councillor Mary Mary Droopy Drawers of Soggy Bottom, claims the Shoe is a blot on the landscape.

Mother (*taking the paper*) Let me have a look at that. She says " since it was

left behind by the giant and occupied by Mother Hubbard, it has become an eyesore. The shoe, which has become a so called orphanage is no more than a doss house for undesirable children.” Councillor Mary Mary Droopy Drawers demands “the shoe should be removed!”

Simon That will cause a stink!

Mother That woman has really got it in for me. That Mary Mary is quite contrary. (*At a loss*) I don't know what to do? Where's my Wee Willy Winkie?

Simon If you've got to ask, it's not worth bothering about!

Mother (*shouts*) Wee Willy Winkie!

Willie Winkie enters

Willie What's all the shouting about?

Mother Ah, Willie. Councillor Mary Mary Saggy Pants says our home is a blot on the landscape.

Willie Well it is, isn't it!

Mother No, it has that lived in look. And where is Jack?

Willie Bo-Peep has lost her sheep again.

Georgie And Jack is helping her to look for them.

Simon I think Jack is looking for something else too!

Willie He has always had eyes for Bo-Peep.

Georgie I wish someone had eyes for me!

Mother Look, what are we going to do? Councillor Mary Mary baggy knickers has threatened me with this, that and the other.

Georgie I don't know about this and that, but the other sounds interesting?

Mother Maybe a spring clean would help?

All start to move away slowly with moans

Mother I got some sweets here for those who help.

All return happily

Simon But we did it last year?

Mother And we'll do it again this year. This time we shall play a game. Now, let's have a practice. *(Takes a bag of sweets out of the shopping basket)* You do the actions and I will guess what you're doing. If I'm wrong you get a sweet.

All We get a sweet if you're wrong?

Mother Yep!

Georgie and Willie goes through the motions of knocking a ball to each other

Mother You're playing tennis!

Georgie }
 } No, ping-pong. *(holding out there hands)*
Willie }

Mother *(gives them a sweet)* But that has got nothing to do with work?

Willie That's 'cause we're still outside playing and not started work!

Mother Oh! *(Producing a whistle and blows it)* Right you lot, get cracking.

Bingo, Willie and Georgie pull on the rope and unwind Simon

Mother You're pulling the rubbish away!

All We are starting Simon up by pulling his cord!

They all hold their hands and are given a sweet as they do this Simon runs about and returns as if carrying a ladder to the proscenium arch and begins to move his hand and feet up and down as if climbing a ladder

Mother You're climbing a ladder.

Simon No. I'm coming down! *(Holds out hand for a sweet)*

Mother But you got to go up before coming down?

Simon Not when I've been up there since last Spring!

Mother chases Simon off. Georgie seemingly carrying a bowl and scraping something with a spoon with real effort (on the grr) and flicking the spoon (on the slap) as if applying the contents to a wall

Georgie Grr! Slap! Grr! Slap! Grr! Slap! Grr! Slap! *(Repeat as much as needed)*

Mother You're mixing cement?

Georgie No. Repairing the cracks with your porridge. (*Holds out hand*)

Winkie moving feet up and down (as if climbing stairs)

Mother You're stamping the stones in on the path?

Winkie No. I'm going to bed. (*Holds out his hand for a sweet*)

Mother But it's too early for bed.

Winkie Not for me it isn't. Just thinking of work make me tired. (*Exits*)

Bingo speed walks around the stage, waving his arms as if flicking dust with two feather dusters (like cheer leader s with pompoms)

Mother Suppose you're dusting?

Bingo stops and shakes his head

Mother What then?

Bingo whispers in Mother's ear, grabs the sweets and runs off

Mother (*calling after Bingo*) You can get stuff for an itchy bum from the vet! Kids, they drive you up the wall. Still, you've got to give a home and love to them, haven't you? And I seem to attract kids like flies to a horse! Do you know, I went to (*local shop*) and when I got to the checkout, I had a bag of bananas, a bar of chocolate, a little girl and a haggis! I was furious, what would I do with a haggis? (*Pointing to audience quickly*) Don't answer that! (*Picking up her shopping*) Well, I just need to go into the (*local pub*) as the landlord had a urgent message for me. (*Exits*)

Councillor Mary Mary and Humpty Dumpty enter

Mary Now that I have been elected onto the council, as the only candidate representing my party. I intend to start work immediately. And you, Humpty Dumpty, as my private secretary, will assist me in my work.

Humpty You're only a councillor, not the prime minister!

Mary Same thing, different name. Now, I see you have the legal document, Mr Dumpty. May I ask what Mother Hubbard said when implied that I was going to take steps?

Humpty Apart from calling you a crusty old crab. She said "Councillor Mary Mary Droopy Drawers can stick it up your jumper and smoke it!"

Mary Did she indeed. And have you the council letters that has been sent back unopened by Mother Hubbard?

Humpty I have. (*Produces a bunch on envelopes and reading the first*) This one says, 'not at home when the postman arrived so couldn't take delivery of the letter!'

Mary Bah! (*Grabs a envelope*) This one's no better, listen to this? 'The council installed loft insulation which would pay for itself. Please send to loft insulation!'

Humpty On here she has put. The lottery ticket purchased to win and pay bill, was unsuccessful. Sorry, we are both losers!

Mary That woman takes the biscuit! And residing on council land too! Do we get rent from her?

Humpty No. She says she considers herself as one of the charities the council supports.

Mary Well it won't do. I will not tolerate such goings on.

Mother enters wiping her mouth with the back of her hand. Not with shopping

Mother Hello boys and girls.

Audience response

Mary The very person for which I am looking .

Mother (*burps*) Excuse me. I just left my shopping at the local hostelry for safe keeping. How may I help?

Mary You have occupied the giants shoe on council ground for years.

Mother I know that, but you didn't need to come and tell me.

Mary It's a blot on the landscape. I am taking steps to have it removed.

Humpty Our records show you have not paid ground rent or council tax since occupancy.

Mother And my records show that I can't afford to pay. Next question?

Mary We have the tenancy document. Read out the contents Humpty Dumpty.

Humpty I shall leave out the hitherto's, the here-unders and the notwithstanding.

Mother But keep in the hitherback's, guzunders and the sitdownandputyourfeetups.

Humpty (*reading the document*) Now according to this, you can stay on the land until such time that your shoe, boot or whatsit, should become overcrowded holding over the stipulated number of residents.

Mother My whatsit is in no way overcrowded, in fact I've dropped a dress size. And we are all quite happy sharing as we do.

Humpty It also states, providing the rent and taxes are paid in accordance to the agreement.

Mary Of which they are not!

Mother Ah —well—yes. (*Lies convincingly*) However, I have a bit of paper at home stating that I only have to pay when I can afford it. It was signed by the then Mayor and Council Chairman.

Mary I didn't know that!

Mother Well now you do!

Humpty According to information received, you are at full capacity of the shoe according to this agreement.

Mother It's a tight squeeze I know that.

Mary Which means you may have more than you should. And if you have, out you go, lock, stock and barrel!

Mother Who's going "out"? Me, the lock, the stock or the barrel?

Mary The whole lot! And that dog which keeps killing the towns floral displays with his—his—his sprinkler system.

Mother You leave Bingo alone. He can be nasty when poked!

Bingo enters and come up behind Mary Mary and Humpty Dumpty. Stands between but just behind them

Humpty That thing couldn't scare an egg out of its shell!

Bingo suddenly comes between Mary Mary and Humpty Dumpty and bops them both on the nose

Humpty (*in fright*) Ahhh! I'm off! (*Exits*)

Mother And it smells like it, or it's the curry you had last night!

Chorus, towns people, Polly, Willie, Georgie, Simon, Boy Blue, enter left and right

Mary Mother Hubbard! I will not tolerate this improper and lax behaviour.
Your days are numbered until I shall pounce!

Mother Not before I pounce first, baggy pants. Bingo, see her off.

Bingo chases Mary off

Simon What did she want?

Mother The usual. Threat, threat and more threats. (*Unmoved*) Mary Mary Droopy Drawers indeed. I remember her from school with her baggy trousers and dirty shirts. Always playing football with us she was, and it didn't matter whether her drawers were drooping or not!

Song: *Baggy trousers by Madness*

Black-out

ACT I
Scene two

ON THE WAY TO THE SHOE (*front cloth*)

Jack and Bo-Peep enter

Jack Well, Bo-Peep, it looks like your sheep has completely disappeared?

Bo-Peep It looks that way, Jack. I've often wondered why you were called Jack?

Jack Until I was about two, I was just known as the baby! Then, as often as not, Mother Hubbard found me in the corner, eating her Christmas pie. I'd put in my thumb and pull out a plum and she'd say "what a good boy am I". So she called me Jack Horner.

Bo-Peep For some reason Mother Hubbard always called me Bo-Peep.

Jack I was about five years old when you arrived at the shoe. And I can clearly remember you came with a stuffed toy sheep. That's why she called you Bo-Peep.

Bo-Peep Well she has named us all after Nursery Rhymes. But I never understood why we live in a shoe?

Jack The giant left it behind and Mother Hubbard was looking for somewhere urgently to have as her orphanage. So, convincing the council she was doing her bit for recycling, they allowed her to turn it into a home. Our home, well it's everyone's home really, Mother Hubbard's door is always open.

Bo-Peep Like her mouth!

Jack And we both have a spark between us.

Bo-Peep A spark? (*Coyly moving away*) I don't know what you mean?

Jack I think you do. (*Grabbing her hand*) The times you have supposed to have lost your sheep and asked me to help you look for them. When all the time they are in the lower meadow.

Bo-Peep (*turning away a little shy*) They just always seem to end up there.

Jack With the lower meadows gate always securely shut!

Bo-Peep Just coincidence.

Jack (*pulling her close*) Then it is coincidence that we both wish for a kiss.

Bo-Peep (*breaking away*) I do not give kisses freely.

Jack Then you shall earn a kiss from me.

Bo-Peep That's some chat up line, I must say.

Jack And it always works. Now, I'll ask you the question and if you don't get the answer right, I get a kiss.

Bo-Peep Okay.

Jack Right then. There is a man standing on the corner in the rain. What's his name?

Bo-Peep I don't know.

Jack Bell, because he's ringing wet! (*Kisses Bo-Peep*) Let's try again. There is a man standing on the corner in the rain. What's his name?

Bo-Peep Bell, because he's ringing wet.

Jack No. Fat, because he's dripping. (*Kisses Bo-Peep*)

Bo-Peep That's not fair!

Jack Oh yes it is!

Bo-Peep Oh no it isn't!

They can do a short audience participation here of oh yes it is, and Oh no it isn't

Bo-Peep (*goes to stage side and is passed a candlestick with a candle*) Let me

have a go.

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