



SECOND FIDDLE

By Stephen Duckham

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SECOND FIDDLE

A short adult fairy tale

by

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CHARACTERS

DANDINI	-	from Cinderella
WISHEE WASHEE	-	from Aladdin
SIMPLE SIMON	-	from Jack and the Beanstalk
IDLE JACK	-	from Dick Whittington

This adult pantomime is full of the typical pantomime lines and situations, but should be played with the upmost sincerity. Very much in the *Carry On*.... vein.

There may be audience participation (hopefully laughter!) although it is not essential to the play. Characters should deliver all the double entendre without sending any of them up.

SECOND FIDDLE

[The scene is a country setting on an open stage. There are a couple of logs to sit on. To one side is a tree stump on which is a picnic basket with mainly bottles in. When the scene opens, Dandini is by the trees stump, pouring himself a glass of wine. He is a slightly aloof character, who has pretensions above his station. Wishee Washee is sitting on one of the logs. He has a very easy, if slightly complaining manner. Idle Jack is slumped on another log against a tree, fast asleep. When he has the energy, he can be quite presentable with a good physique and a handsome face.]

- DANDINI And it's always the same. Up at the crack of dawn to lay out Prince Charming's clothes for the day. They have to be pressed and colour coordinated for whatever event he will be attending. And he has over fifty different outfits to choose from!
- WISHEE Fifty? I've only got two. This one and whatever I can nick from the washing people bring in to mother's laundry!
- DANDINI Next his breakfast is brought in and I have to awaken him before any of it gets cold. He gets very irritated if his boiled egg is tepid! And his soldiers have to be straight.
- WISHEE What?
- DANDINI His toasted soldiers! And the right size for dipping!
- WISHEE I'm lucky to get toast, let alone an egg!
- DANDINI Then comes his morning bath. It has to be exactly the right temperature. And I have to scrub the royal back! Finally, the hair and nails. Then he's ready to face the day. Me – I'm ready for a lie down!
- WISHEE If it's such a difficult job, why do you do it?
- DANDINI Oh, don't get me wrong. I love my job. I mean the Prince and I have been friends since school days. He relies on me totally. It's just that every now and then I feel I'm being taken a little for granted.
- WISHEE I know what you mean. Always playing second fiddle.
- DANDINI I suppose.
- WISHEE Working in mother's laundry is OK, I guess. My brother is supposed to help out as well. But he's never around. Always off trying to get a look at the Princess, as well as dodging the palace guards. No one is supposed to look at her Highness. It's forbidden.
- DANDINI Everyone can look at Prince Charming. He loves being admired. And I must say, he is a fine figure of a man. Tonight, there's a grand ball in honour of his birthday. All the eligible ladies of the Kingdom are invited in the hope of catching his eye and becoming his wife.

- WISHEE Miss Wing from the Take-Away next door tried to catch my eye. And she must be the other side of fifty!
- DANDINI *[Shuddering at the thought.]* Ohh! I I think you need a drink.
[Dandini pours a drink as Wishee stands and crosses to him. Idle Jack stirs in his sleep and grunts.]
Look at *Sleeping Beauty* over there. Does he ever do anything?
- WISHEE Very little. That's why he's known as Idle Jack!
- DANDINI Where does he live?
- WISHEE At Alderman Fitzwarren's store in London. He helps out there, but by all accounts, he's more of a hinderance!
- DANDINI *[Taking a good look at Jack.]* Well he could help me out.... *[There is a look from Wishee.]* at the palace, I mean!
[Simple Simon enters. He is a lovable chap who, as his name suggests, is rather simple in speech. He often sounds as though he is addressing a pantomime audience.]
- SIMON Hello everyone, I'm Simple Simon. Everyone say "hello Simon"!
[He gives a double hand wave. Dandini and Wishee look at each other wide-eyed and then respond.]
- DANDINI & WISHEE *[Slightly monotoned.]* Hello Simon.
- SIMON *[With a big grin.]* That's great. I think we're going to be really good friends!
[He moves toward them and trips over Idle Jack's outstretched legs, which sends him sprawling.] Ooops! *[He stands up and turns to Jack.]* Sorry mate. *[Jack almost wakes up, but just grunts in his sleep and adjusts his position on the log. Simon continues in the ways of his panto character.]* I am a bit clumsy! When I do anything like that, why don't you all shout out "don't be simple Simon"?
- DANDINI Do we have to?
- WISHEE If I do things like that, mother usually gives me a clout round the head!
- SIMON *[Giggling.]* Really? What's a 'clout'?
[Wishee goes to show him, but Dandini stops him.]
- WISHEE Where are you from?
- SIMON *[Pointing.]* Over there.
- DANDINI *[Sounding bored.]* Where is 'over there'?

SIMON The farm in the village.

DANDINI You live on a farm?

SIMON With mother and my brother – and Daisy.

DANDINI Daisy?

SIMON She's a prize cow.

DANDINI You live with a cow?

SIMON We did. *[Putting on a sad face.]* But we're so poor we had to sell her. *[He looks at them and they say nothing.]* Well say 'Ahh'.

DANDINI &
WISHEE *[Automatically.]* Ahhh.

SIMON We're much poorer than that!

DANDINI &
WISHEE *[Louder.]* Ahhhhh!

SIMON See, I said we were going to be friends.

WISHEE Did you get a good price for her?

SIMON My brother sold her for five gold pieces.

WISHEE Ooooh!

SIMON But by the time he got home, they had turned into beans!

DANDINI Beans?

SIMON Yes. Mother was really mad and threw them out into the garden. Overnight they took root. Now we have a bloomin' great beanstalk in our vegetable patch!

WISHEE At least you'll have enough greens for your 'five a day' to last a lifetime.

SIMON It's grown right up into the clouds and my brother is going to climb it.

DANDINI How energetic!

WISHEE Sounds exciting.

SIMON He gets to go on an adventure and I'm stuck cleaning the barn out. He gets all the best jobs. *[Sadly.]* It's not fair.

[He waits for a reaction. The others just stare at him.]

 You do 'Ahhhh' now.