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## **CHARACTER & PLOT SYNOPSIS**

Jack, the miller's son has been left with just the family cat in his father's will and although he has great ambitions it is unlikely he will amount to much!

Things soon change with the arrival of his Auntie Hettie and the revelation that Puss can talk (and look pretty fetching in a pair of boots)!

Soon Jack, Auntie and Puss are embroiled in a complex scheme to persuade the King and Queen that Jack (aka. the Marquis of Carabas) is suitable husband material for the beautiful Princess.

But first they will have to contend with a jealous noble suitor, a pair of dastardly henchmen, and a hideous shape-shifting Ogre!

## **CHARACTER NOTES**

**Jack***Female*

Our hero. A boy but played by a girl!

**Puss in Boots***Female*

The clever booted pussy cat

**Princess Alice***Female*

The royal daughter ready for marriage.

**King Herbert***Male*

The King of the kingdom

**Queen Mildred***Female*

The Queen of the kingdom.

**Lord Roger - The Ogre / Suitor** *Male*

A nasty piece of work who wants to marry the princess and will brook no rival! Unbeknownst to all, he is also the ogre in shape shifting human form. (A fact we will not discover until near the end of the show.)

**Nosmo***Male / Female*

A dim-witted for hire henchman. One of the King brothers.

**Nopar***Male / Female*

Another dim-witted for hire henchman. The second King brother.

**The Narrator***Male / Female*

The story teller who also gets involved in dialogue with the actors

**Auntie Hettie Quette***Male*

Auntie to the hero. Traditional Dame character

**Chorus (Adults and Children)**

Townfolk, animals, guards and courtiers. The script includes a number of small speaking parts and chorus lines that can be shared out.

## THE PLOT

### ACT ONE

#### Prologue

Front of cloth

**Featuring:** *The Narrator*

The narrator sets the scene. He'll be on and off quite a bit throughout the story. He talks in no rhyming couplets, even when in dialogue with the cast. At times there will be interaction between the narrator and the character on stage. In this opening prologue he introduces the story and Jack, explaining that Jack's father, the miller, has just died and Jack is about to learn the content of the will.

#### Scene One – The Village Square

Main stage

**Featuring:** *Jack, Chorus, Puss, Dame, Narrator*

An obligatory opening **song** for the chorus. Jack arrives to announce that his brothers have inherited the mill and the money and he has been left with the family cat. There is some banter with Jack about possible ways for him to make his living. This will include some good natured teasing about the princess after a husband! There is mention of the horrible local shape-shifting ogre. Perhaps Jack can earn his fame and fortune by beating the creature? The Dame arrives. She is the sister of the dead miller and has decided to come and make sure that Jack is looked after – since he is her favourite nephew. She is setting up a local branch of her successful etiquette residential schools – the “Hettie-Quette Conservatoire of Refinement and Stuff”. The Dame explains that the only way he will be a success and get on in life is to become a gentleman and with her help he will have no problem winning the princess. She heads off to sort out accommodation for her conservatoire. There will be running gag that she has no idea that Puss is intelligent and talks and Puss makes sure she never gets any idea! In fact she doesn't like cats. The chorus leave and Jack is left alone to play with the cat. Puss then speaks, much to our hero's surprise and promises to make him rich and successful in return for a pair of boots. Puss suggests to Jack they try to woo the Princess with gifts of bunnies from the forest. The princess must have everything she could possibly wish for but all the girls like a fluffy pet. Puss and Jack set off to go hunting....

#### Scene Two – The Palace

Front of cloth

**Featuring:** *The Narrator, Princess, King, Queen, Lord Roger, Nosmo and Nopar*

The narrator takes us to the palace where we meet the Royals. The King and Queen are insisting that the Princess marries and soon. The Princess is not happy and has not been impressed with the range she has seen already. The wicked suitor, Lord Roger (who is actually the evil ogre in human form intent on taking over the kingdom), arrives and leers and smarms accordingly. The King and Queen are all impressed but Princess is not. He asks her what she would like and she says she would like a pet (Puss was correct after

all!). Lord Roger vows he will win her hand and summons his contract henchmen, Nosmo King and Nopar King and sends them off to the woods to catch something to impress the princess.

### **Scene Three – The Woods**

Main Stage

**Featuring:** *The Narrator, Puss, Chorus, Dame, Jack, Nosmo and Nopar*

We are now deep in the woods. The chorus as hunters and assorted animals perform a **musical number**. The hunting chorus are keen to show Jack how best to catch the bunnies but of course are just scaring them off. The Dame catches up with them and is baffled where Jack got this daft idea from and after being spooked by woodland things and getting fed up she leaves and drags the boy home to do some cooking for the princess. Puss is left to hunt alone. The woodland animals perform a **dance**. Nosmo and Nopar appear and bring on a complicated and pointless contraption to catch bunnies which they set up. The device is intended to attract bunnies by 'making a sound like a lettuce'! Through their own incompetence, they get caught by their own machine, leaving Puss to collect a couple of chorus rabbits by process of asking for volunteers (being a palace rabbit is after all quite a treat) and heads off to the palace in triumph.

### **Scene Four – The Palace**

Front of cloth

**Featuring:** *The Narrator, Princess, King, Queen, Lord Roger, Dame and Puss*

Back at the palace, Puss arrives to interrupt Lord Roger's tales of daring do and impresses everyone with the gift of the two rabbits, from his master the mysterious Marquis of Carabas. Lord Roger is mightily cheesed off since he has nothing!. The Royal party then retire to listen to more stories from Puss. The Dame arrives ... she's had the idea to make some suitably messy and creamy cakes to impress the princess – after all the way to a girls heart is through her stomach – well it works for her anyway!. The Dame spies the Suitor and fancies him and in true panto tradition, no scene with creamy cakes can end without someone getting covered in mess!

### **Scene Five – The Woods, by the lake**

Main Stage

**Featuring:** *The Narrator, Princess, King, Queen, Suitor, Nosmo, Nopar, Chorus, Dame, Jack and Puss*

Another **song** with the chorus as they pester Jack to see how the courting is going and the Puss announces the next stage of the plan. Puss suggests that Jack goes for a swim in the lake. Jack undresses and goes swimming and Puss steals his clothes and hides them. Then the Royal party arrive. Lord Roger has presented the King with a rich outfit but then Puss enters and announces that his master, the Marquis of Carabas has been set upon by bandits and is currently and drowning. Nosmo and Nopar are volunteered to save him and offstage, get in a pickle in the water and are eventually rescued by Jack. Since Jack's clothes have gone missing, the King gives him his new outfit. This sorely vexes Lord Roger! The Princess and Jack meet for the first time, and again in true panto tradition, fall

in love! Everyone heads off to the palace. Lord Roger is very angry and vows vengeance to the audience! With the help of an Ogre...!

## **ACT TWO**

### **Scene One – The Village**

Main stage

**Featuring:** *The Narrator, Princess, Nosmo, Nopar, Chorus, Dame, Hero and Puss*

Following a quick recap from the Narrator, we are back in the village. Jack is back home, dressed in Lord Roger's outfit and pretty chuffed with events so far. Nosmo and Nopar arrive and tell the audience that they have been hired now by the ogre ... to capture Puss. The henchmen inadvertently capture the Dame and the Princess (who has popped along to try and see Jack again) by mistake. The Henchmen set off to deliver the captives to the Ogre's castle. Jack and Puss discover what has happened and vow to rescue them from the ogre.

### **Scene Two – Ogre's Castle dungeons**

Front of cloth

**Featuring:** *The Narrator, Princess, Nosmo, Nopar, Dame and Lord Roger*

In the ogre's dungeons the Princess and Dame are tied up in the cells by the henchmen. They are chuffed as they'll get paid double for two victims. They are summoned off stage and we have a brief off stage dialogue with the distorted scary voice of the ogre. He learns that there are two women and not a Puss and sends them packing with no money. Soon after the Suitor appears (the ogre back in human form) and in the gloom speaks to them both. He mistakes the Dame for the princess and promises that he will rescue them from the vile ogre if she will promise to be his wife. They seal the vow with a magic ring which is all binding! Lord Roger does not release them just yet. He realises he must remove the threat of Jack and Puss first. He leaves them while he 'goes for help'.

### **Scene Three – The Woods**

Main stage

**Featuring:** *The Narrator, King, Queen, Chorus, Jack, Puss, Nosmo and Nopar*

Jack and Puss are on their way to the castle with the chorus in support. The King and Queen appear to wish them well. They meet the Henchmen who tell of the whole calamity regretting ever having agreed to help the Ogre and after a few cross words the whole gang join up. Jack, Puss and the two henchmen head off to the castle to sort out the ogre.

### **Scene Four –Ogre's Prison**

Front of cloth

**Featuring:** *Jack, Puss, Dame, Princess, Nosmo, Nopar and the 'Behind you' monster*

Deep in the dungeon the Dame and Princess are still imprisoned. The rescue party arrive for the obligatory 'Behind you scene'. Having rescued the Dame and Princess, they can now flee back to the village or Jack can seize this opportunity make it big time and defeat the horrible ogre and take over the castle! They choose the latter and head off to beat the ogre.

### **Scene Five – The Ogre’s Castle Hall**

Main stage

**Featuring:** *The Narrator, King, Queen, Nosmo, Nopar, Chorus, Jack, Puss, Dame, Princess and Lord Roger*

On the hunt for the Ogre, we hear his approach and hear the voice off stage threatening them all. Lord Roger appears in human form and reveals who he really is and that he has triumphed since the princess has promised to marry him. The Dame reveals it is she that he has to marry. There is then a showdown battle between Lord Roger and Puss, and either back projection for the animal changes or off stage silliness (depending on your budget / stage facilities). Puss captures the Ogre in mouse form and hands him to Dame in a cage. Everyone celebrates, the Princess is paired with Jack who now has his very own castle to live in, and the Dame is paired with mouse / Ogre! Cue celebration!

### **Scene Six - Song Sheet**

Front of cloth

**Featuring:** *Dame and Puss*

**Song sheet** and final business

### **Scene Seven – The Ogre’s Castle Hall**

Main stage

**Featuring:** *Everyone*

Finale / walk down and final couplets