

# Puss in Boots

by

**Peter Webster**



PUSS IN BOOTS  
A pantomime in 2 acts

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## CHARACTERS

JANE GRAIN – The Miller's wife

WAYNE GRAIN – Jane's eldest son

SHANE GRAIN – Jane's middle son

MICHAEL GRAIN – Jane's youngest son

TOM – The family cat

KING SEVIDENCE

QUEEN QUEASY

PRINCESS ROSE – Their daughter

SCAPEGRACE – An ogre

PERI – A good witch

MR BIB – A keeper of the King's wardrobe

MR TUCKER – Another keeper of the King's wardrobe

A LION

THE FARM FOREMAN

THE OGRE'S IMPS

Chorus of children and adults as villagers, rabbits, farm workers and courtiers.

## SCENES

### **ACT ONE**

SCENE ONE – Outside the mill (main stage)

SCENE TWO – A forbidding place (lower stage/half tabs)

SCENE THREE – Outside the mill (main stage)

SCENE FOUR – In the country (lower stage/half tabs)

SCENE FIVE – The Palace (main stage)

SCENE SIX – The mill kitchen (lower stage/half tabs)

SCENE SEVEN – The Palace (main stage)

### **ACT TWO**

SCENE ONE – A forbidding place (lower stage/half tabs)

SCENE TWO – Outside the mill (main stage)

SCENE THREE – By the river (lower stage/half tabs)

SCENE FOUR – The Palace (main stage)

SCENE FIVE – The Palace (main stage)

## ACT ONE – SCENE ONE

*Overture of songs used during the show; some suggestions as to suitable placing of songs are made in the text, but directors are free to choose their own songs and to change their place in the action. As the overture ends, the curtains open to a scene set in front of a traditional mill. There is a large and obvious padlock on the mill door. On stage are JANE, WAYNE, SHANE, MICHAEL and a chorus of villagers. Some of the villagers carry sacks of grain to be milled. They go into a suitably upbeat opening number. As the song ends:*

1ST CHORUS: (*Approaching JANE.*) Here, when are you going to open up the mill?

2ND CHORUS: We need you to grind our corn right now!

3RD CHORUS: Yes, we need our flour!

1ST CHORUS: No flour, no bread!

2ND CHORUS: No buns!

3RD CHORUS: No cakes!

ALL: And we're hungry!

JANE: Ever so sorry, but we can't open up, the lawyers won't let us.

WAYNE: Not until our dad's will gets read.

SHANE: Not until we know who owns the mill now.

WAYNE: Isn't it obvious? As the eldest, I should own it.

JANE: But you've got no idea how to grind decent flour.

MICHAEL: You were so bad at it that Dad used to call you the cereal killer.

SHANE: Don't annoy him, the last thing we need is a cross Grain. Anyway, I should own the mill – Dad promised it to me.

MICHAEL: Nonsense! You just made that up – there's not a grain of truth in that story.

JANE: Boys! Boys! All this worry is grinding me down. There's no use in guessing – we'll only know who owns the mill when we read that will.

1ST CHORUS: Well why don't you just get on and read it? What's stopping you?

MICHAEL: We just can't find the will, that's what.

JANE: No, no one knows where it is. We've searched high and low, hither and thither, under and over.

MICHAEL: Up and down, front and back – not a sign.

2ND CHORUS: Have you looked under the bed?

3RD CHORUS: Have you looked in that drawer in the kitchen where you put everything you can't find a home for?

1ST CHORUS: Have you looked in the washing tub?

JANE: Certainly not! I'm not airing my dirty linen in public.

MICHAEL: Yes! Yes! Yes! We've looked everywhere. No sign of it.

1ST CHORUS: Well you'd better hurry up and find it and open up the mill.

2ND CHORUS: Otherwise we'll just have to take our business elsewhere.

3RD CHORUS: So you'd better put your noses to the grindstone.

JANE: What? Take your business elsewhere? That really goes against the grain.

1ST CHORUS: Tough luck! You've got one more day. We'll be back tomorrow and if the mill isn't open then, you know what'll happen.

ALL: You'll be toast! (*The chorus exit grumbling.*)

MICHAEL: Well what do you suggest we do now? (*THE GRAINS all make gestures of helplessness as the curtains close.*)

**Scene Two**

*The lighting changes to a dim green; wisps of smoke move over the floor. There are occasional flashes of lightning and the sound of distant thunder. THE IMPS precede the OGRE onto the lower stage or in front of half tabs, bowing and scraping as they go.*

1ST IMP: This way sir.

2ND IMP: We'll clear the path.

3RD IMP: Nothing will bar your progress.

4TH IMP: We'll see to that.

OGRE: Indeed you will! And what's all this 'sir' business? You can do better than that, surely? (*Smoothly and reasonably.*) Shall we try again? Humour me.

1ST IMP: Of course, your eminence!

2ND IMP: Your magnificence!

3RD IMP: Your splendidness!

4TH IMP: Your highness!

OGRE: That's better – but don't get too carried away; just remember your manners next time – otherwise there may not be a next time! Now – today's team meeting; is everybody here?

IMPS: Yes, your greatness!

OGRE: Good. Now my imps, what are you going to bring me today? What more treasures do you have for me?

2ND IMP: That could be a teeny, weeny problem master.

OGRE: (*Angry now.*) Problem? Problem? Explain!

3RD IMP: Well, it's like this.....

1ST IMP: Every day we go out to look for treasure to fill your vaults.....

4TH IMP: And every day we bring something back.

OGRE: Yes – and so? As I said, what’s your problem?

1ST IMP: (*Quietly.*) There’s no treasure left.

OGRE: What did you say? Speak up!

1ST IMP: (*Louder.*) I said – there’s no treasure left.

2ND IMP: We’ve taken everything worth taking....

4TH IMP: And now it’s all in your vaults.....

3RD IMP: All the gold, silver, jewels, pictures, hangings, money –  
you’ve got the lot!

OGRE: Oh dear, oh dear – that is a problem; for you, not for me.  
Well team, what do you suggest? Because suggest you must!

4TH IMP: Perhaps it’s time to take over another kingdom?

2ND IMP: More lands, more people, more treasures!

3RD IMP: And lots more opportunities to be your true heartless  
self!

1ST IMP: You already have all the kingdoms to the north, the east  
and the west; that still leaves the lands over the river to the  
south.

4TH IMP: But we never go south of the river!

2ND IMP: It’s a cultural desert.

3RD IMP: And you can never get a sedan chair to take you there.

OGRE: Now, now boys, don’t be so parochial. I like the idea; we  
go to the south. What do we do?

IMPS: (*In unison.*) We go to the south!

OGRE: We need to be prepared; so, let’s see who and what is there  
for us. Fetch me my seeing bowl!

IMPS: Yes master! At once, master!

*One of the imps goes offstage and returns with a large,  
beautifully decorated bowl. He kneels in front of the OGRE and  
holds up the bowl. The OGRE appears to stir the ‘water’ in the  
bowl and peers intently into it. More smoke, lightning and  
distant thunder.*