

# **MOTHER GOOSE**

A PANTOMIME

by

**DANIEL O'BRIEN**

with

Music and Lyrics by

**PETER WHITE**

Rehearsal Draft

## **LIST OF CHARACTERS**

**DISCORDO – The Demon King of Gooseland** who becomes -

**LORD DE FOIE GRAS - An Autocratic Landowner**

**FORTUNA – The Good Fairy of Gooseland** who becomes -

**HOUSEKEEPER HATTIE – A Helpful Soul**

**GERALDINE GOOSE – a.k.a MOTHER GOOSE**

**GRETCHEN – A German Goosemaid**

**SQUIRE DITHER – An Undecided Chap**

**COLIN DITHER – The Squire’s Son**

**PRISCILLA – A Goose/FLOWER SELLER**

**DISCORDO’s ACOLYTE/PULL/MALE UNDERSTUDY**

**FORTUNA’s ACOLYTE/ PUSH/FEMALE UNDERSTUDY**

**A CHORUS OF GOSLINGS**

**Setting:** Gooseland in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century

The cast is 9 strong: four/five male, two/three female and a chorus of two [1m/1f] plus a juvenile chorus.

## Scenes and Songs

Prologue – Gooseland Frontcloth

- ***Duet of Confrontation***

Act 1 Scene 1 – Outside Mother Goose’s House

- ***Opening Number***

Act 1 Scene 2 – Outside Squire Dither’s House

Act 1 Scene 3 – Inside Mother Goose’s House

- ***They’re in the Money***
- ***Love Quartet***

Act 1 Scene 4 – Outside Squire Dither’s House

- ***Song of Frustrated Ambition***

Act 1 Scene 5 – Inside Mother Goose’s House

- ***More***

Act 1 Scene 6 – Gooseland Fronthcloth/Pool of Beauty.

- ***Act 1 Finale - Vogue***

## INTERVAL

Act 2 Scene 1 – Inside Mother Goose’s House

- ***Change Song***
- ***Simply Irresistible/The Best***

Act 2 Scene 2 – Gooseland Frontcloth

- ***Christmas Song***

Act 2 Scene 3 – Outside Squire’s House

- ***Let’s Call the Whole Thing Off***
- ***You’ll Never walk Alone***

Act 2 Scene 4 – Discordo’s Cave

Act 2 Scene 5 – Outside Mother Goose’s House

- ***Tap Number***

Act 2 Scene 6 – Frontcloth

- ***Songsheet***

Act 2 Scene 7 – Walkdown

- ***Can’t Buy me Love***

## Prologue – Gooseland Frontcloth

*There is a big flash and DEMON DISCORDO and FAIRY FORTUNA are suddenly in front of us, furiously mid-argument. Each is accompanied by an athletic ACOLYTE costumed in respective livery.*

FORTUNA Oh what rubbish, you talk such tosh  
Humans selfish? That's just hogwash!  
They're just, kind, generous, courageous,  
Your attack is just outrageous.

*With the wand she carries she beats the air. Her ACOLYTE does something magically spectacular.*

DISCORDO Humanity grabs and cheats and cons  
Self interest comes before anyone's.  
Search all the world, you'll fail to find  
A man or woman with contented mind.

*With the staff he carries he thumps the floor three times. His ACOLYTE looks at him with disdain and does nothing.*

FORTUNA So the Gods of Magic have punished you.

DISCORDO And I'll have my revenge on them.

### **The Duet of Confrontation**

**FORTUNA Man is good and woman too;  
Beautiful creatures, not like you.  
Kind and good, brave and strong,  
Virtuous the whole day long.**

**DISCORDO Shut your trap you puling fairy,  
Man is bad, he smells, he's hairy.  
Even woman's base and greedy,  
Steals from all, ignores the needy.**

### **ACOLYTES fight**

**FORTUNA Man is proud and fierce as a lion.**

**DISCORDO**            **Man is lazy and sloppy as swine.  
Dumb as an ass and blind as a bat**

**FORTUNA**            **As loving and loyal as a dog or a cat.**

**DISCORDO**            **I can prove that they are bad.**

**BOTH**                **I can prove that they are good/I can prove that they  
are bad/  
I can prove that they are good/bad, good/bad,  
good/bad.**

*They explode out of the song*

DISCORDO            I will have my revenge, Fairy Fortuna and I'll prove it!

FORTUNA             Won't!

DISCORDO            Will!

FORTUNA             Can't!

DISCORDO            Can!

FORTUNA             Shan't!

DISCORDO            Shall!

FORTUNA             Didn't!

DISCORDO            Did!

FORTUNA             Haven't!

DISCORDO            Have!

FORTUNA             Wasn't!

DISCORDO            Enough stuff! Enough! No more fluff, you powder puff or I'll  
cut up rough. I, Demon Discordo, will show the  
all-grumbling Gods of Magic they made a mistake sending  
me somewhere as rubbish as goody goody Gooseland.

FORTUNA                    It's your own fault for only using magic for wickedness last time. Now the all-powerful Gods have said that your magic powers won't return until you are as kind and generous as humans.

DISCORDO                 Hah! Pick a human, any human and set them two trials.

FORTUNA                    Trials...?

DISCORDO                 The Trial of Gold and the Trial of Beauty. No human can resist them. Humanity will prove itself no better than I and then I'll get my magic powers back. It'll be easy-peasy, lemon-squeezy.

FORTUNA                    I don't think so.

DISCORDO                 Oh yes it will!

FORTUNA                    *(encouraging audience)* Oh no it won't!

DISCORDO                 Oh yes it will!!!

FORTUNA                    *(encouraging audience)* Oh no it won't!!

DISCORDO                 Oh yes it will!!!!

FORTUNA                    *(encouraging audience)* Oh no it won't!!!

*Beat*

DISCORDO                 So! It starts early this year eh?! You just wait you stumbling, crumbling human fools. I'll prove you're all rotten to the core.

FORTUNA                    They can't all be selfish and stupid like you.

*She scans the audience*

All of these lovely people ...

DISCORDO ... who believe that David Cameron actually likes Nick Clegg!  
What could be more stupid than that?

FORTUNA You may have a point. Who should I choose then?

DISCORDO It matters not. They're all the same.

FORTUNA Someone generous.

DISCORDO From grismal Gooseland? You'll be lucky.

*And we hear the familiar cry of a Dame in distress*

MOTHER GOOSE Oh woe, woe and more than twice woe!

*Some smart members of the audience may respond with a  
'Chin up Chuck'*

FORTUNA Of course Mother Goose!

On Gooseland's plains I spy a Dame  
Really worthy of that name.  
Poor, but generous, old yet true  
Surely she'll stand up to you.

DISCORDO Then shake my hand and take my wager  
She will change, that poor old stager.  
Watch her as Gold buys her ease,  
And Beauty brings her to her knees.

FORTUNA I shall set the trials. But you may only watch. No interfering.  
Agreed?

DISCORDO Agreed! No need. She's human. Ergo, so, thus and therefore  
she's selfish!

FORTUNA                    If I am right and humanity is true, you must learn from them otherwise the Gods of Magic decree that you'll never get your magic powers back. Agreed?

DISCORDO                    Agreed! Arrange the first trial. Let her favourite goose lay golden eggs and see if she can resist the lure of money! Ha! Ha! Ha!

*The audience should boo. He turns on them in surprise and picks on one*

Oh yes? Really? Boo did you say? Oh but if I've said anything to offend you, please tell me. I might want to do it again! Ha! Ha! Ha! I must be allowed to watch unnoticed.

FORTUNA                    So let it be. She must fail both trials for you to win. Agreed?

DISCORDO                    Surely one will do.

FORTUNA                    It must be both. Agreed?

DISCORDO                    Agreed! And now a quick change then into something, uugh, human. Who shall I be today?

*His ACOLYTE whispers to him.*

Very good, very good. Farewell Demon Discordo and welcome Lord Belvedere De Foie Gras of Gooseland!

*He tries to do magic but nothing happens*

FORTUNA                    And let it be so.

*She beats the air with her wand. Magic is in the air, the ACOLYTES assist the magic and then leave and DISCORDO stands revealed as LORD DE FOIE GRAS. He laughs an aristocratic laugh*



DISCORDO

Wah! Wah! Wah! Now let the trials begin.

*And he has gone.*

FORTUNA

Oh dear, I do hope I haven't done anything stupid. I don't suppose you'd help would you? [Yes] Would you? [Yes!] Really? [Yes!!] Well ... if every time he goes Wah! Wah! Wah! like he just did, it might stop him trying to interfere if you shouted out 'Blah! Blah! Blah!' back at him. Do you think you can do that? [Yes] Oh great. Shall we give it a practise? [Yes] I'll be him and you be you. Wah! Wah! Wah! ['Blah! Blah! Blah!']

*They practise until fluent.*

FORTUNA

I suppose I'd better change myself too. I think I'll be Housekeeper Hattie, the one with Housekeeper Hattie's hat on. That's why she's called Hattie!

*She dons a housekeeper's hat and becomes HOUSEKEEPER HATTIE.*

Well, that's that then! Now to find the Goose and set the first trial. See you later.

*And with that she has gone.*

**Act 1 Scene 1 – Outside Mother Goose’s House**

**Opening Number**

**ALL (Mother Goose, Discordo and Fortuna offstage):**

**We are poor but we are honest,  
Though we come from humble stock.  
And our honest hearts are beating,  
Underneath our tattered frocks.**

**[Market noises, calls]**

**FLOWER SELLER    Orchids for the poor kids.  
Daffodils for your window sills.**

**GRETCHEN         I’d love to but I’m broke.**

**FLOWER SELLER    No danger, have a hydrangea  
Who will buy my sweet red roses?**

**[HATTIE and FOIE GRAS are here by now]**

**COLIN              Pork pies, pork pies!**

**FOIE GRAS         What’s the price, for just a slice?**

**COLIN              I don’t need your money,  
Not when it’s all sunny.  
Any milk today?**

**HATTIE             I’ll have some feta, please.**

**SQUIRE DITHER    Madam, there is no better cheese.  
Try some gorgonzola,  
Then go play the tombola.**

**HATTIE             And can I have some Camembert?  
The shops don’t have it anywhere.**

**SQUIRE DITHER**    **Course you can, and I'll throw in some brie, for free.**

**ALL**                    **There's never no bother,  
Cause we look out for each other.  
Although we're bust,  
We're kind and just  
Yes we are...poor but we are honest,  
Though we come from humble stock.  
And our honest hearts are beating,  
Underneath our tattered frocks.**

*All exit except GRETCHEN who inspects the Chorus of Goslings. They are very street and very cool.*

GRETCHEN            Today, my dear Goslinks, is schwimday.

GOSLING 1            No it ain't, Gretch, it's Thursday. *[or whichever]*

GRETCHEN            No schwimday, schwimday, the day you in the wasser for the first time schwimmink go.

GOSLING 2            What you sayin' Gretch?

GRETCHEN            Wasser. Wasser!

GOSLING 3            Wasser what?

GOSLING 4            Wassermatter?

GOSLING 1            Wassertime?

GOSLING 2            Wasserdamage?

GRETCHEN            Nein, nein, nein!

*There is the sound of a siren and COLIN arrives pretending to be an emergency vehicle*

COLIN Hello Emergency Services, how can I help you? Fire, Police, Ambulance, Coast Guard, AA, RAC, NSPCC, RSPCA? Which reminds me – what kind of cheese gets a bear out of a tree?

ALL I don't know, what kind of cheese gets a bear out of a tree?

COLIN Camembert! [*ie Come on Bear*] Hi guys how's it goin'?

GOSLINGS Quackin', Col! Quack! Quack! Quack!

COLIN Good morning, Gretchen.

GRETCHEN Good morning, Colin.

GOSLINGS Oooo! Oooo! Oooo!

COLIN Put a sock in it you lot!

GRETCHEN In what, will they be putting a sock, Colin?

COLIN I'll explain later, Gretchen.

GOSLINGS Oooo! Oooo! Oooo!

COLIN Like I said, cool it guys.

*He notices the audience for the first time*

Oh hello, gang. I didn't see you there. How you doing? My name's Colin and I'm the Squire's son. What are you all doing here? [*We've come to see the show*] Really? You've just come to watch? Don't you want to join in? [*Yes*] Are you really sure? [*Yes!*] They told me you might! Perhaps you could quack like a goose when I come on each time. Like they just did! What do you reckon? [*Yes*] OK then. Every time I come on and say "How you doin'?" you can shout out

"Quackin' Col" like cracking, see and then quack like a goose three times. Shall we give it a try?

*With the help of the Goslings they practice until he's happy*

That's great. Well now look. There's a bit of a situation going on here. These poor little, sweet little goslings ...

GOSLING 1            Small geese, bruv, just small geese!

ALL GOSLINGS        Yeah bruv, just small geese innit?

COLIN                OK. OK! These small geese here have er ... lost their mother and Gretchen who came from a little town in Germany called ...

GRETCHEN            Villingen-Schwinningen-Schwenningen-ApfelStrudel-vonWillebrandunterderPlumpfenstrumpf

COLIN                ... to stay with Mother Goose and learn English, has had to stop her lessons to help bring them up. But the bottom's fallen out of the goose market and nobody's buying geese any more and now Mother Goose is so poor that she's spends all day looking for money to keep body and soul together. It gets her down.

*Once more we here the familiar cry*

MOTHER GOOSE      Woe, woe and more than twice woe!

COLIN                There she is now. She's only got poor old Priscilla left. And she hasn't laid an egg for years so there's not even anything for Mother Goose to sell at market. She needs cheering up. Do you think you could help? [Yes]. If she gets too gloomy, the only way of cheering her up is by shouting 'Chin up chuck' whenever she says ...

GOSLINGS            Woe, woe and more than twice woe.

COLIN                    Just like that! Do you think you can do that? *[Yes]* Do you?  
*[Yes]* Do you? *[Yes]* Great. Let's give it a go. Go for it, guys.

GOSLINGS            Woe, woe and more than twice woe.

AUDIENCE            Chin up chuck.

COLIN                    Again but louder! Guys?

GOSLINGS            Woe, woe and more than twice woe.

AUDIENCE            Chin up chuck.

COLIN                    Again but louder than louder!

GOSLINGS            Oh woe, woe and more than twice woe.

AUDIENCE            Chin up chuck.

*The force of their response propels him backwards off his feet!*

COLIN                    Now we're cooking!

GRETCHEN            Now off you goslinks go and ready for your lesson get.

*GOSLINGS troop off.*

GOSLING 1            Later man!

*COLIN and GRETCHEN are left suddenly alone and are acutely aware of it*

COLIN                    Hey Gretchen?

GRETCHEN            Ja?

COLIN                    How many goose eggs can you put in an empty basket?

GRETCHEN                Well, it would on the size of the basket depend.

COLIN                    Oh no it wouldn't.

GRETCHEN                Ja it would. And on the size of the goose eggs.

COLIN                    No it wouldn't.

GRETCHEN                Ja it would.

COLIN                    No. You can only put one goose egg in an empty basket...

GRETCHEN                Piffle, paffle, puffle!

COLIN                    ... after that it's not empty any more!

GRETCHEN                Ach Colin. Please to be stoppink the goat playink. Today is schwimday.

COLIN                    No I think you'll find it's Thursday. *[or whichever]*

GRETCHEN                Nein, time for kleine geese schwimmink to learn.

COLIN                    Well why didn't you say so Gretchen?

GRETCHEN                I did. But was not understood. Ach, Colin, you must better English me teach.

COLIN                    I did buy you a present.

GRETCHEN                What is ...

COLIN                    You know. A present. It's a book to help you learn English. Here.

*He produces a beautifully covered book*

GRETCHEN Ach Colin. You a very kind boy are.

COLIN You are a very kind boy.

GRETCHEN Ja. Dat is what I was meanink to say.

COLIN And you're a very beautiful girl. And I'm glad you've come here from ...

GRETCHEN Villingen-Schwinningen-Schwenningen-ApfelStrudel-vonWillebrandunterder...

COLIN ...Plumpfenstrumpf.

*A Beat*

GRETCHEN Down to the lake?

COLIN Perhaps I could ... teach you some English things.

GRETCHEN Ja Colin. That I very much like would.

COLIN I would like that very much.

GRETCHEN Ja. Me too.

COLIN Great. What are we waiting for then?

*He offers her his arm tentatively. She takes his hand and they go off.*