

PUSS IN BOOTS

A FELINE PANTOMIME

By

DANIEL O'BRIEN

With

Music and Lyrics by

ANNEMARIE LEWIS THOMAS

Daniel O'Brien
72 High Street
Ashwell
Herts
SG7 5NS

LIST OF CHARACTERS

JACK – A Miller's Son

JAMES – his brother

JENNIE – his sister

KING CHARLES – the fugitive King of England

CROMWELL – an Ogre

HENCH - his man

NELLIE GWYNNE

PRINCESS CAROLINE – daughter of King Charles

PUSS – The Mill Cat

A FOREST DWELLER

CROMWELL'S SOLDIERS

THE KINGS ATTENDANTS

THE CAT CHORUS:

➤ RUMPLE

➤ TEASER

The action takes place in the England of the mid 1600's.

The cast is 5 male, three female and a chorus of two.

ACT 1

Before the performance starts the CAT CHORUS is in the auditorium doing what only cats can do. They lounge around the seats and generally get under people's feet. PUSS is also with them. Perhaps one of them is asleep on the front of the stage. As soon as the audience is ready, the lights dim and the sound of a dog barking can be heard. The cats all react. They become alert and rush out of the auditorium and head for the stage. The curtain rises to opening music on....

SCENE 1 Outside the Mill –

Music begins and PUSS and the CAT CHORUS enter and we also see the rest of the cast assemble and sing

No 1 Cats Chorus

ALL

*Welome to the cacophony a cats chorus
We're superior creatures it's plain to see
We're utter purrfection
Let us entertain and you are in for an eyeful of feline festivities
Kingdom of the cats, we're in England A.D.*

*When we get cream then we're smug for days
Living out in Cheshire makes us grin away
Cats are the purrfect pets, but we don't wish to brag
(well if you insist)
We do Olympic standard acrobatics
If we have a fault we could be called enigmatic
Never a dull moment when you let us out of the bag – feline funtime*

*We're magical moggies, not pampered pouches
Enter the world where puss in boots lives
Sit back relax as our play begins
It's not Dick Whittington this stars Nell Gwyn*

*Kitten playing the keys we sing a cats chorus
Here's a tail of our own no scorpion sting
Do we have mews for you?
Having eight more lives provides us the luxury of having curiosity
The stray cat strut sounds like an excuse to cat swing*

(Instrumental break)

*Our breeds are many as you might suspect
Lots of them are regal with the surname Rex
Siamese, Angora and Somali to give just a taste of feline family
Tonkinese and Burman are another pair*

*Don't forget the sphinx with its Egyptian air
It's dog eat cat eat mouse in the Darwinian race
Survival of the fittest*

*We're magical moggies, not pampered pouches
Enter the world where puss in boots lives
Sit back relax as our play begins
It's not Dick Whittington his tales been told
Puss in Boots the name of this show
(Though other high street chemists are available)*

At the end of the number CROMWELL, the Ogre enters with his man HENCH. The rest of the company scatter and exit.

CROMWELL Ah Hench! Forsooth and threesooth, did I hear the sound of,
 eeeeuch, music?

HENCH Yes Master Cromwell.

CROMWELL And 'odsbodkins and spillikins, did I see, uuurgggh,
 dancing?

HENCH Yes Master Cromwell

CROMWELL And oxblood and pigsblood, did I see people, aaaagghh,
 having fun?

HENCH Er...?

CROMWELL Did I?

HENCH Well....

CROMWELL Did I?

HENCH Actually....

CROMWELL What say you Hench?

HENCH No.

CROMWELL No?

HENCH No.

CROMWELL No what?

HENCH No Master Cromwell?

CROMWELL No!

HENCH No your Ogreship?

CROMWELL No!!

HENCH No Ollie the Ogre?

CROMWELL No!!!

HENCH Um No, my Lord Protector, the worst and most scariying ogre in the whole of England who has banished the king, ruled the country with a reign of terror, banned singing, dancing, feasting and having fun, taxed everyone to within an inch of their lives, made everyone eat sawdust and drink flat beer and generally made life not worth living?

CROMWELL No!!!! Flat head!

[He whacks him and HENCH falls over, then gets up again immediately]

I saw people having fun.

HENCH Strictly speaking you didn't see them. You only heard them. Which, in my book, isn't exactly proof....

CROMWELL *[interrupting]* With my own eyes I tell you

HENCH Well truthfully sire...

[CROMWELL whacks him again and HENCH falls over, then gets up again immediately]

CROMWELL What did you say?

HENCH Yes sire. You saw people having fun.

CROMWELL And fun isn't allowed. They must be punished. What shall I do? *[to audience]* Shall I make them dance barefoot in cow poo? *[No!]* Shall I pull out their fingernails? *[No!]* Shall I make them eat worms? *[No!]* Oh very well. I'll just have to double their taxes again. Grab, grasp, guzzle! Oh I'm such a clever Ogre aren't I? *[No!]* Oh yes I am. *[Oh no you're not!]* Oh yes I am. *[Oh no you're not!]* Oh yes I am. *[Oh no you're not!]*. Silence or I'll mince your bones in the bone mincing machine and feed them to the pigs. HENCH!

HENCH Sire?

CROMWELL You know what to do. Grab, grasp, guzzle! Make them pay up or else! *[to the audience]* I'll deal with you lot later. And please, don't thank me for insulting you. It was my pleasure. And with that I go! Ha! Ha! Ha!

[He exits, hopefully to a chorus of boos]

HENCH Oh dear he's a bit angry isn't he? And he's so scarifying when he's angry. What's that noise?

[From off stage we hear crying. JENNIE, JAMES and JACK appear]

Here are the miller's children. And in distress too. A perfect opportunity to carry out my master's orders.

JACK Oh Jennie, oh James. Poor old father's breathed his last.

JENNIE And the mill wheel won't turn

JAMES And there's nothing left to eat except sawdust.

JACK And nothing left to drink but flat beer.

ALL What shall we do? What shall we do?

HENCH Ah miller's children! I'm sorry for your trouble.

JENNIE Why Hench, how kind.

HENCH But I must make it worse before it gets better.

JAMES Why Hench, how unkind.

HENCH I have a proclamation.

JACK Does it hurt?

HENCH Shut up and listen!

J,J&J Ooooh! Touchy!

HENCH Be it known that Cromwell the Lord Protector, the worst and most scarifying ogre in the whole of England who has banished the king, ruled the country with a reign of terror, banned singing, dancing, feasting and having fun, taxed everyone to within an inch of their lives, made everyone eat sawdust and drink flat beer and generally made life not worth living decrees that all taxes are to be doubled from this moment forth. So pay up or else.

JACK Or else what?

HENCH I don't now, he just said 'or else'. And with that, I go!

[He leaves]

JACK What shall we do?

JENNIE We have no money.

JAMES We can't even afford the taxes now.

JENNIE We may as well just give up.

No 2 Giving Down

1) *Give up*

2) *Give up*

3) *Give up*

1) *Wait.....*

1) *To give up sounds optimistic and that really isn't us*

2) *We're not a trio who are cheerful*

3) *That would be just ludicrous*

1) *We've no money to our name*

2) *And no possessions of our own*

3) *So how can we pay the taxes that are ordered by the throne*

All

So we give down, cos giving up, sounds happy and too lightweight for the overflowing cup of doom

That's ours....the life we lead

Is our glass half empty? I think we're all agreed

1) *We've no happy ever after in this land of fairy tale*

2) *What's the point of our existence we're a 10 on Richter scale*

3) *All we touch turns to disaster*

1) *When we leave we turn to dust*

2) *With a fortune such as ours even gold would turn to rust*

All

So we give down, a poignant phrase, see it as a tribute to those long lost golden days when life was good. Remember then?

Living daily life with the motto "vie boheme"

1) *So we sing our tale of woe*

2) *A trio troubled as we are*

1) *How to solve this long depression*

3) *Spend a day at a nice spa?*

1) *But our troubles are so many*

2) *And solutions oh so few*

3) *Oh to tell the truth my brothers I don't feel as bad as you*

All

Yet we give down, the end is nigh, no more panto fun times think more Madame Butterfly

No sibling joy, just family woe,

1) *Better see what puss wants before we start to go....we're giving down*

3) *Down*

2) *Down*

1) *Down*

All

Down

[PUSS enters with a paper.]

JACK Oh look here's Puss!

JENNIE And he's got a paper.

JAMES It's father's will. Let's read it.

JENNIE Give it to me. I'm eldest and I should read it.

[She snatches the will. She speaks very slowly because she doesn't read very well]

This...is.....the....last

JAMES

Oh give it to me

[He snatches the will. He speaks very slowly because he doesn't read very well either]

This...is.....the....last

JACK

Oh give it to me

[He snatches the will.]

This is the last will and testament of Arthur the Miller. I leave all my possessions to my three children. To Jennie I leave the mill. To James I leave the old donkey and to Jack I leave the mill-cat. I have gone to a better place. Do not be sad. Love Dad. PS Don't forget to brush your teeth every morning and every evening.

JENNIE

Is that it? No money?

JAMES

No money?

JACK

No money.

JENNIE

Just the mill.

JAMES

Just the donkey.

JACK Just make the best of it.

JENNIE It can't be happening.

JACK Well it is. And I, for one, am not sticking about here any longer. There's not enough of anything for all of us. And there's a whole world out there. So I'm taking Puss and we're off.

JAMES Where will you go?

JACK I haven't a clue. But wish me luck.

JENNIE Goodbye Jack and God's speed.

JAMES Don't forget us.

JACK Goodbye! Come on Puss!

[Music begins and JACK and PUSS stride forwards leaving the others behind as a cloth descends and the scene ends with them finding themselves in.....]

