



NINE SCOUT AND CUB PLAYS

BY
DOUGLAS BERWICK

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Editor's Note:

The reader is reminded that these texts have been written a long time ago. Consequently, they may use some terms or express sentiments which were current at the time, regardless of what we may think of them at the beginning of the 21st century. For reasons of historical accuracy they have been preserved in their original form.

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WHEN SCOUTS WERE BOLD.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

JACKIE	-	-	-	-	P.L. Ravens.
BILL	}				
CYRIL	}	-	-	-	Scouts of the Raven Patrol.
ALAN	}				
MAKGARET					
LYNETTE					
MR. GOODWIN					
EARL GODWIN					
RALPH	-	-	-		The Robber
SERVANT	-	-	-		To Earl Godwin.
FIRST ROBBER					
SECOND ROBBER					
THIRD ROBBER					
FOURTH ROBBER		-	-		If required

For a Troop of ten or twelve SCOUTS.

SCENE I.

The Camp-Fire.

A camp-fire in the middle of the stage, and a tent shewing on the left. The light is subdued as it is night-time and the camp-fire is lit.

One Scout, CYRIL, is putting wood on the fire; another, ALAN, is sitting at the door of the tent. The other two, JACKIE and BILL, are standing together on the right of the camp fire looking into the wings.

JACKIE—That's right, Cyril, stoke up a good fire; we'll have a jolly good sing-song to-night. Mr. Goodwin and his daughter should be here any moment now. Topping girl she is Margaret.

BILL—Let's see, that's about the sixth time you've informed me that Margaret is a topping girl. Strikes me you're absolutely dippy about her, Jackie.

JACKIE—Me? What rot! I don't care a hang about girls, really. It just struck me that Margaret is rather nice, quite pretty you know. You wouldn't catch me running after a girl though. Rather not.

BILL—Hello! Here she is now. Just coming along.

JACKIE—Oh cheers; come on, Bill, let's go and meet her. (*Exit JACKIE.*)

BILL—Did you hear that, Cyril? You won't catch me running after a girl. Rather not. Look at him now. He's not running, he's charging. Well, I think I had better go and chaperone them, (*Exit BILL.*)

ALAN—Are they coming, Cyril?

CYRIL—The girl is, but I can't see her father yet.

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ALAN—Beastly nuisance having girls about a camp. They're bad enough at home.

CYRIL—Cheer up, Alan. Margaret is a good sport; besides it's jolly decent of her father to let us camp on his land. (*Enter MARGARET, JACKIE and BILL.*)

MAKGAKET- - What a ripping fire.

(*ALAN and CYRIL salute. MARGARET sits down.*)

MARGARET.—Daddy will be here soon. He's just talking to the gardener. They talk about sweet-peas for hours on end those two. Mind you I've nothing against sweet-peas, I think they're awfully pretty, but I don't want to talk about them all day long.

(*BILL sits down on MARGARET'S right, and CYRIL on her left, much to JACKIE'S annoyance. ALAN busies himself with a dixie of cocoa.*)

ALAN—Here's Mr. Goodwin coming,"

(*Boys stand up. Enter MR. GOODWIN.*)

MR GOODWIN—Hello, boys. Well, I hope you've had a good day.

JACKIE—Yes, thank you, sir; jolly good of you to come to the camp-fire.

ME. GOODWIN—Not at all. Very good of you to ask me. Besides, I want to taste your cocoa.

(*ALAN hands round the cocoa. JACKIE manages to get on MARGARET'S left while CYRIL is unaware.*)

MR. GOODWIN—H'm! it's good too. What do you think, Margaret?

MARGARET—Great.

JACKIE—Shall we have a song?

CYRIL—Let's have (*any favourite song.*) (*All sing the song.*)

JACKIE—Can you spin us a yarn, Mr. Goodwin?

MR. GOODWIN—A yarn? Ah, I thought that would come sooner or later. Boys always ask for a tale, so I came prepared, and brought one with me. You see I'm not much good at telling tales from memory, so if you don't mind I'll read this. It's a mixture of fairy tale and history, and it happened on this very spot. Or didn't, of course, as the case may be.

CYRIL—Oh that sounds great; do go on, sir.

MR. GOODWIN—Right, but you must stop me if the tale bores you. The house we live in is very old you know; it goes back to Tudor days, but before it was built there was a still older house, "a real mediaeval castle of which all that now remains are those few grass-grown ruins just over there. So far as we know, you are actually camping in the old courtyard. And now for the story. (*He begins to read.*)

"There lived in the castle at that time, an old earl and his daughter Lynette. In his younger days, the earl had been a great lighter, but at the time of our tale evil times had fallen upon him. A band of robbers from near-by were continually plundering his land. The leader of the band was called Ralph the Robber. He was an enormous man, a veritable giant, the terror of the countryside. His plunderings became more and more frequent and terrible, and one black day he and his band attacked the Castle. The old earl and his daughter and one faithful servant who had not run away, were led out into the courtyard, and bidden to stay there on pain of death, whilst the robbers plundered the Castle. After what seemed an age to Lynette, hope came to her, for in the distance along the road she saw a horseman moving. Now being a girl of great resource, Lynette picked up a stick from the ground, and tying her kerchief to the end of it, gave it to the servant, and bade him wave it whilst she yelled as loudly as she could.

The horseman saw the signal, reined in his horse, and rode towards her. As he approached, Lynette's heart beat fast, for she recognised him to be none other than Sir Walter, the bravest

and most famous of all the King's knights.

Sir Walter dismounted, saluted the old earl and kissed the hand of Lynette. 'Didst thou call, gentle lady?' he enquired.

'Yea, Sir Knight, oh pray help us for we are indeed in dire straits,' replied Lynette.

'My arms are at thy command, fair one,' said Sir Walter.

'Then list, Sir Walter. Ralph the Robber and his band, the very terror of the countryside, have fallen upon us and taken us prisoners. At this very moment they are plundering our home and carrying off all that is precious to us. Help us, good Sir Walter,' pleaded Lynette.

Sir Walter mounted his steed again. 'Fear not, fair maid, and thou noble earl. Thy castle will soon be rid of these knaves or Sir Walter will die in the attempt.'

'May heaven bless thee,' said the earl fervently.

At that moment a loud laugh was heard, and "Ralph the Robber appeared. At first he did not see Sir Walter.

'What ho, pretty one,' he said, chucking Lynette under the chin. Thou'lt make a pretty bride for Ralph, ha! ha!'

Sir Walter leapt from his horse and threw his glove down at Ralph's feet. "'Hold, varlet,' he cried. 'Yon maid shall never be thine. Long have I awaited this chance to do battle with thee. See, I have dismounted and so meet thee on equality.'

Then there ensued a terrible combat which to Lynette, her father and the servant seemed to last for ever.

At last Ralph fell to the ground pierced by Sir Walter's good and trusty blade. Hearing the noise of the fight some of the robbers rushed in to help their leader.

Sir Walter held his sword with the point resting on the body of his prostrate foe.

'See, he cried. 'See what fate has overtaken your master. A like fate will come to each one who fails to return to its rightful owner what he has stolen from the Castle. Go, on pain of death, and return your ill-gotten loot.'

The old earl came up with tears in his eyes and thanked the brave knight for what he had done,

'What can I do for thee, fair knight, name thy reward and it shall be given to thee according to the best that I have.'

'Yea, Sir Karl, though I little deserve it, I will claim as my reward the very best that thou hast to give. I would have the hand of thy daughter.'

The old earl placed the right hand of his daughter in that of the knight, while Lynette blushed. 'Take her,' he said, 'thou shalt be my son and to thee and thine will I give my lands when I die'."

And that, boys, is the end of my tale, and it took place at this very spot, so legend says. I hope I have not bored you.

CYRIL—Rather not, sir, thanks most awfully.

ALL—Thank you.

MR. GOODWIN—Well, come on, Margaret, we must be going

ALAN—Oh just one more song before you go.

MR. GOODWIN—All right, but it must be only one though. (*They all sing a second chorus.*)

MR. GOODWIN—Well, goodnight, and thank you very much. We'll see you in the morning. We're early risers at our house.

ALL THE BOYS—Goodnight.

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MARGARET—Goodnight.

JACKIE—Goodnight.

(Exeunt MARGARET and MR. GOODWIN. The Scouts stand round the camp-fire)

JACKIE—Did you hear her say goodnight then? She said it specially to me.

ALAN—Idiot!

BILL—Don't you believe it, Jackie. Now I'll tell you a secret in great confidence. She is seized with a tremendous passion for Alan's handsome features.

ALAN—Fat-head.

(ALAN disappears into the tent.)

JACKIE—It happened on this very spot. It must have been wonderful to be a knight. Those were the days. Ah, me, what dull times we do live in! Nothing exciting ever happens in these days.

BILL—Oh, doesn't it? What about that night in camp last year when our tent blew down on us?

JACKIE—That wasn't romantic.

CYRIL—No, it was the wind's antic.

BILL—Shut up, Cyril. *(Chases him to the tent)* I'm going to make my bed. Coming, Jackie?

JACKIE—Yes, in a jiffy.

(He sits down by the camp-fire deep in thought, then talking low to himself.)

Fear not, fair maid, and thou noble earl.

Nay, I would have the hand of thy daughter.

SCENE II. *The Dream.*

Same as before except that the camp-fire has gone.

MARGARET (as LYNETTE), MR. GOODWIN (as EARL GODWIN) and a SERVANT are discovered on the right. LYNETTE is shouting "Help!", and the SERVANT is waving a white handkerchief on a stick as the curtains are drawn.

JACKIE pokes his head out of the tent, rubs his eyes, runs out to the camp-fire and looks at the group.

LYNETTE—Ah, brave sir, methinks thou art a knight, though truly thine armour seemeth odd. Save us, fair sir, from our foes.

JACKIE—My holy aunt, what on earth? . . . *(turning back to the tent)*. Here you chaps, something's happened.

(The rest tumble out of the tent rubbing their eyes.)

ALAN—Oh lor', more women.

(They advance towards EARL GODWIN, LYNETTE and the SERVANT)

JACKIE—Has something gone wrong, sir?

EARL—Yes, gentle youth, methinks everything hath gone wrong. Ralph the Robber hath" taken possession of my castle, and doth threaten our very lives. But I see that thou and thy companions are true knights, though of some unknown order, for knights of the Bare Knee are not familiar to me.

CYRIL—Well, I'm blowed, this isn't half a rummy do.

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LYNETTE—Thou speakest true, oh my father, These knights must have come from a far country, for see, they speak in a foreign tongue.

BILL—Did you say that robbers had attacked your castle, sir?

EARL—Aye, fair sir, and the chief robber would even carry off my beloved daughter and marry her.

JACKIE—Dirty dog.

CYRIL (*looking worried*)—Foreign tongue? I say, “Where is there a telephone?” (EARL *does not understand*.) “You know, sir—telephone. (*Goes through the actions of telephoning*) Ting-ting, hello, hello, are you there? and all that sort of thing.

JACKIE (*on whom the truth has gradually been dawning*)—I know, of course; why didn’t I think of it before. Tell me, sir, what year is it?

EARL—Why the year of grace one thousand one hundred and ninety-seven. Strange that thou knowest not even the year. Ye are indeed foreigners.

ALAN—One thousand one hundred and ninety-seven.

CYRIL—He means 1197, I suppose.

BILL—1197, good heavens! Whose reign was that?

ALAN—I dunno, I’ll ask him. I say, old bean, I mean, prithee gentle sir, tell us who it is that doth sit upon ye throne?

EARL (*while SERVANT bows and LYNETTE curtsseys, he salutes*)—His Majesty King Richard I.

ALAN—1189-1199, John 1199-1216—Magna Carta 1215. My hat, what a do, we’ve slipped back about eight hundred years.

LYNETTE—Tell me, gentle youth, which king dost thou serve?

JACKIE—His Majesty King George VI.

(*All come to the alert, salute, and JACKIE imitates bugle call.*)

LYNETTE.—Is he then a great king?

CYRIL—Yes, he’s a great chap. Or rather, he was . . .

BILL—No, he isn’t yet. He will be.

CYRIL—Yes, of course, will be.

BILL—1197, oh lor! I say, were there any cinemas then?

ALAN—Of course not, you idiot.

BILL—Well, did they eat chocolate then? I say, do you know what chocolate is?

LYNETTE.—Nay, fair sir, what may that be?

BILL—Oh lor! “NO cinema, no chocolate. How do they live?

JACKIE—Oh, the robber. Yes, I had forgotten all about him. Look here, chaps, we’ve got to rescue these three. What a chance! Why I’ve been dreaming of such an opportunity for years. Ever since we read *Redgauntlet* at school.”

BILL—Well we shall have to try to speak their language first. Er . . . let’ssee . . . Prithee . . . that’s good, I’ll say that again. Prithee, gentle maid, and you . . . thou, Sir Earl, and thou . . . er . . . Jenkins our lives are at your service to rid you of yon surly knaves—Oh!

JACKIE—Yea, for one so fair as thee, sweet maid, we would gladly die, wouldn’t we, chaps?

OTHERS (*rather reluctantly*)—Oh..... er, yes..... yes rather;

ALAN—But I vote we have a jolly good shot at bumping off the old crook first.

CYRIL—HOW shall we do it?

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JACKIE—I would fain fight him in single combat. With my good Scout stave I will lay him low.

(Takes his stave and practises brandishing it. Great roar without.)

LYNETTE—He cometh.

JACKIE—Oh help! *(begins to walk off.)*

LYNETTE—Brave Sir Knight, good-hick go with thee. Wear this kerchief of mine as thy colours in the fight.

JACKIE *(receiving handkerchief and tucking it in his belt)*—Fairest one, 'tis for thee.

ALAN—Oh, leave women out of this, you idiot, and get on with the job. We'll stand by, old thing.

EARL—Heaven help the right.

BILL—Yes, the right is going to need help, I assure you.

(Enter RALPH the ROBBER.)

RALPH—Ho! ho! Well, pretty one, art glad to see me? Verily Sir Earl, thou hast some possessions of great value thy castle. Ralph the Robber and his merry men will be richer than ever they have been before.

JACKIE—Hold! . . . er . . . false knave.

RALPH—Ho! *(begins to laugh)* who art thou? Ho! ho! A pretty sight. And what would'st thou with Ralph the Robber? Speak quickly, ere I crush thee to naught, and throw thy body for a meal to the crows.

JACKIE—I . . . er . . . I would do battle with thee, thou bad lot.

RALPH—Battle? Ha! Where is thy sword?

JACKIE—Nay, I have no sword. I trust in my lusty stave. Come, villain . . . For Earl Godwin and the right.

(JACKIE hits RALPH on the shoulder. RALPH draws his sword, and the battle begins. JACKIE using both hands to his stave parries RALPH'S sword thrusts. SCOUTS come up behind with ropes. JACKIE pushes his stave into RALPH'S middle and holds him at bay for a minute. Then he suddenly pulls away the stave, and RALPH falls to the ground. JACKIE and the others pounce on him, and tie his hands behind his back. RALPH roars. JACKIE picks up his sword. SCOUTS make RALPH stand up, and stand by guarding him, whilst JACKIE holds his sword at his heart.)

LYNETTE *(rushing forward)*—My brave knight, thou hast conquered.

JACKIE—H'm, wait a minute, we've not finished yet. *(To RALPH)* Now villain, call thy men here, and tell them to restore to the castle all that they have taken therefrom. Then tell them to hop it. Tell them to sally forth I mean, tell them to get them gone; you know what I mean.

(RALPH roars "Ho!" and ROBBERS run in. Minimum two, three or four, if boys to spare.)

JACKIE—Oh, wretched men. Thy chief is our prisoner. Right hath conquered over might. Give thine orders, oh Ralph.

ALAN—Come on now, do as you're told and no hanky-panky.

RALPH—Of a truth I understand not thy language.

ALAN—No, you wouldn't, but do as thou hast been commanded by him who has . . . hast . . . hath conquered, thee, thou lily-livered villain. Shakespeare!

BILL—Not born yet, idiot.

ALAN—Isn't he? Wasn't he? Never mind, he'll not know.

RALPH—List to the orders of your leader. I, Ralph the Robber, have been conquered in battle by methinks an agent of the Evil One . . .

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JACKIE—Here shut up, get on with your orders.

RALPH—I command you that ye return to the castle of Earl Godwin all that which ye have taken therefrom.

CYRIL—Go on, off you go, shoo.....(*Exeunt* ROBBERS.)

BILL—Here you, Jenkins, take this thing away and lock it up in a dungeon in the castle.

SERVANT—It shall be done, my lord. (*Exeunt* SERVANT *in charge of* ROBBER CHIEF.)

CYRIL—Well, thank goodness, it's all turned out all right.

(EARL GODWIN *takes* JACKIE'S *hand*.)

EARL—How can I thank thee, brave knight. Say but the word and the very best of my possessions will be thine.

JACKIE—I would have the very best of thy possessions, Sir Earl. I would have the hand of thy daughter.

ALAN—Oh lor', he's at it again. Come on, chaps, let's clear out. (*Exeunt* *blowing kisses*.)

LYNETTE.—Oh, my brave knight. How can I ever thank thee?

JACKIE—Nay 'twas naught, Lynette. I could do it again for thee a thousand times. (*They embrace*).

SCENE III.

Same as SCENE I.

The camp-fire is restored and JACKIE is lying asleep 'in front of the camp-fire. There is a lighted lamp in the tent, and a murmur of voices proceeds from it.

BILL—Have you made your bed, Cyril?

CYRIL.—Yes.

ALAN—Good, we're all done now. Where's Jackie?

BILL—I dunno. I wish he'd come and make his bed then we could all settle down.

CYRIL (*yelling*)—Jackie! Jackie! I'll go and look for him.

(*He finds* JACKIE *asleep by the fire*.) I say, you chaps, he's fast asleep: look. (*The others arrive*.)

ALAN—Dreaming about knights and fair ladies, I expect.

CYRIL—Wake up, Jackie, we want to go to bed. (*Shakes him*,) (*JACKIE jumps up, puts his arm round* CYRIL'S *neck, calling out*—)

JACKIE—Nay 'twas naught, Lynette. I would do it again for thee a thousand times.

ALAN—There you are, what did I tell you?

JACKIE—Oh, it's you, Cyril, Oh drat you; then it was a dream, only a dream. But you were all in it though.

BILL—Were we? Thanks very much.

JACKIE—We killed the robber and rescued them.

CYRIL—You've got that story that Mr. Goodwin told us on the brain. That's what's wrong with you.

JACKIE—Yes, that's it, then it was only a dream. Bother.

BILL—Come down to earth, Jackie, you're too romantic to live.

CYRIL—I don't know about romantic, but if we hadn't woken him up he would have been rheumatic.

ALAN—Look here, Cyril, your puns get more and more feeble every day.

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BILL—Well I want to go to bed; do buck up and make yours, Jackie.

JACKIE—Righto. Oh well. It was a good dream anyway. Perhaps we shall see Lynette or Margaret to-morrow.

ALAN—Oh, dry up.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE. *A Short Play in One Act for Five Scouts.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

OLD MAN

OLD WOMAN - - His Wife.

MAN

DICK - - - Patrol Leader

DAVID - - - Scout

SCENE.

A room in a cottage. There is a door on the right either shewing, or else imagined, just off the stage.

A table and two chairs stand in the back centre. A lighted lamp stands on the table.

An OLD MAN AND OLD WOMAN sit at the table talking.

OLD LADY—Them noises at night be a-getting on my nerves.

OLD MAN—Aye; three nights running we've heard 'em now, haven't we? Always at midnight too.

OLD LADY—I be a-getting in such a state as I can't sleep at nights. I expect they'll come again to-night. There is a legend in the village as this house is haunted, you know.

OLD MAN—Yes, they say as one of Cromwell's men was in this 'ere house a long time ago. About 1892 I should say.

OLD LADY—Nay, John, it were earlier than that. About 1870 I should think it were.

OLD MAN—Oh well, it was whenever them Civil Wars was on; I don't remember them myself. Anyway, this 'ere man, a Roundhead or summut they called him, was a-living in the house, and he had a tidy store of jewels which he hid when the King's men came along and nabbed him. I don't believe this, mind you, but old Bill Higgins over the way swears that he saw a white thing gliding along the path. It had no head, and its hands was . . .

OLD LADY—Oh don't, John, you fair make me tremble.

OLD MAN—Nonsense, pull yourself together, Martha. Well, old Higgins he said that his hands was long and claw-like, and he distinctly saw the ghost glide along up to the door and bang the knocker . . .

(A loud bang is heard.)

OLD LADY *(jumping up)*—Oh John, don't answer the door. It's the ghost I'm, sure.

OLD MAN—N-n-nonsense, woman, I'm not a c-c-coward.

(He picks up a thick stick, and goes stealthily to the door. The OLD LADY peers anxiously in

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his direction. The OLD MAN comes back looking relieved.)

OLD MAN—It's two of them Scout boys, Martha.

OLD LADY (*sitting down exhausted left*)—Oh dear, it fair gave me a turn, to be sure.

OLD MAN (*standing in the middle*)—Come in, you lads.

(DICK and DAVID enter. *They are in Scout uniform and carry rucksacks. They stand just inside the door right.*)

DICK, PATROL LEADER—We've come to ask for permission to camp on your land for one night. We'll not make any mess at all, and we'll leave everything as we find it. We're doing our First-Class Journey.

OLD MAN—First-class Journey, eh? Well, well, I usually travels third myself, but you young people are that extravagant these days.

OLD LADY (*reviving somewhat and peering at the SCOUTS*)—Tell them we'll have a pint now, and a quart in the morning.

OLD MAN—Eh? This ain't the milk-boy. They'm two Scouts; them lads as don't wear no knees, nor no arms neither. They want to know if they can camp in our field.

OLD LADY—Camp? What, outside under them bits of sheet held up by two bits of wood? You'll catch your death of cold, young lads. Hadn't you better ask your mothers first?

DAVID—Oh, our mothers know alt about that all right.

OLD LADY—Well I think we'll let them, should we, John? Oh John, I've got an idea, come here.

(*They go to the left and confer in whispers while the SCOUTS look amused.*)

(*OLD MAN walks over to the SCOUTS and OLD LADY goes to the table.*)

OLD MAN—Er . . . how would you lads like to sleep in this nice warm room instead of in them cold tents of yourn?

DICK (*laughing*)—No, thank you, sir, we've got to sleep out. You see it's part of a test for a barge known as the First-Class Badge. We must sleep outside.

(*OLD MAN looks stumped, and beckons OLD LADY into the corner again. They whisper once more, then return.*)

OLD MAN—Well, we've decided to tell you everything. Now I don't know much about you Scout lads, but I believe that you're always out to help people, aren't you?

DICK—Yes, that's the idea, sir.

OLD LADY—Yes, well we want you to help us tonight.

OLD MAN—You see it's like this 'ere—

OLD LADY—Yes, you see this house—

OLD MAX—I was just a-coming to that—this house

OLD LADY—This house is haunted—

OLD MAN—Now, look here. Martha; am I a-telling this tale, or are you?

OLD LADY—Well, I reckon as we'm both a-telling it. But you can go on, John, I'll not interrupt you any more.

OLD MAN—Well, mind you don't. Now then, where was I? Oh yes. This house is very old, it was built a long time" afore them Civil Wars in . . . well, never mind, it was a long tune ago, and there has been a tradition that one of them Roundheads in this 'ere Civil War in . . . whenever it was in, it don't matter much, should say.

OLD MAN— Will you be quiet, Martha, and leave this to me. Now I've got all muddled up. Where was I?

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DAVID—You were talking about a Roundhead in the Civil War.

I was. They say that this ‘ere

OLD MAN— Oh yes, so I was, so I was. They say that this ‘ere Rowntree

OLD LADY— Roundhead.

OLD MAN— Didn’t I say Rowntree?

OLD LADY— Yes, you did ---

OLD MAN— Well what’s the matter then? I thought you said you were going to keep quiet.

OLD LADY— All right, John dear, go on.

OLD MAN — Yes, it’s all very fine to say “go on”. I’m lost again now. Er— er— this Roundhead had a store of jewellery, and that he hid it somewhere in this very house, but we don’t know where. They do say that his ghost still haunts the house.

(*The SCOUTS look nervously around.*) We’ve heard queer noises these last three nights like someone walking about, and we daren’t look in case it might be the ghost. Ugh! Now what my missus and I was a-thinking was this ‘ere. Would you two lads do a good turn and stay in this room all night instead of sleeping out? It ‘ud be a great comfort to us, and maybe you young uns don’t mind ghosts.

DICK— Should we do it, David?

DAVID (*doubtfully*)— Er— yes— oh yes, rather.

DICK — Right, sir; we’ll look out for your ghost. You’ll stop and keep us company, won’t you?

OLD MAN — Eh, what? No, I think I’d better stay along o’ the missus— she gets that alarmed, you know. (*They go out.*)

DICK— Well, this is a rum do. We set out on our First-Class hike and finish up in the Chamber of Horrors.

DAVID— I don’t suppose the Skipper will mind, will he? It ought to be a real good turn.

DICK—Let’s make our beds on the floor.

(*They undo their rucksacks and begin to lay out their blankets in front of the table, centre of the stage.*)

Of course there may be more in it than we think. It might not be a ghost at all. It might really be someone looking for the treasure.

DAVID—Do you think we ought to get the police?

DICK—Good lord, no! We can manage this ourselves.

OLD LADY (*appearing with two cups of tea on a tray*)—Here’s some nice hot tea for you, you dear boys. I’m sure you’re feeling cold. You are brave, staying here all night. I shouldn’t be surprised if there are two or three big men instead of a ghost. And they might have guns with them too. I wish I could stay here with you, but I must stay with my old man, you know. He gets that alarmed he does.” However, if you want any help, you just call me and I’ll come down with a bedroom slipper and help you. Goodnight. I hope I shall see you alive in the morning. (*Exit.*)

DICK—Well, she’s a cheery soul, I must say.

DAVID—I never thought it might really be a man, or two men, with a gun, or two guns. Oh, Dick.

DICK—What’s up, David? You’re not feeling funky are you?

DAVID—Good heavens, no!

(*Enter the OLD MAN left.*)

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DAVID (*seeing the OLD MAN*)—Ugh!!

OLD MAN—You really make me feel I want to be a Scout. Are you comfortable now? Would you like a hot water bottle?

DAVID (*laughing*)—No, I don't think so, but thank you, sir.

OLD MAN—All right, lads. We shall feel much safer tonight. You're doing a rare good turn.

SCOUTS—Goodnight, sir. (*Exit OLD MAN.*)

(*Scouts finish making their beds, remove belts, scarves and shoes. DAVID gets inside his blankets. DICK turns out the lamp, and gets into bed.*)

DICK—Well, David, my child, sleep well, and if you hear anything, give me a nudge. We'll lay this jolly old ghost for them. Get a shoe ready, it's probably mice, or rats, ugh rats! What a tale to tell the Troop next Tuesday.

DAVID—Of course, if nothing happens, we shall have, to invent something. Patrol Leader Dick and his able Second, David, have a night of adventure in a lonely cottage. A dangerous gang of robbers captured.

DICK—Idiot! Goodnight, David.

DAVID—Goodnight, Dick.

(*The stage is quite quiet for a minute, then the sound of footsteps is heard off right.. It grows nearer. The sound of the key in a door lock is heard.*)

DAVID—Dick, Dick, listen! (*Dick snores.*) Dick, there's someone trying the door.

DICK (*sitting up*)—Lumme, so there is, here's the ghost. Now for the fun.

DAVID—I wish we'd never come n-n-ear this p-place.

DICK—Well, we've got to go through with it now. You get under the table, and I'll get behind the chair.

(*There are three or four big thuds on the stage, then the bang of a chair falling over. At the same time a scream is heard off left.*)

STRANGER.—Oh! They've heard me. I must get out, I . . . Oh who's that? Who are you? Let me go.

(*The SCOUTS jump on the STRANGER and a brief struggle is ensuing in the dark. Exclamations from the STRANGER.*)

DICK —That's got him, light the lamp, David.

(*DAVID lights the lamp, and the relighted stage shews an elderly stranger dressed as a farm labourer bound to a chair. DICK is standing behind the chair putting the finishing touches to some of the ropes. The OLD LADY and the OLD MAN appear right. They cannot see the STRANGER's face who is sitting facing right.*)

OLD LADY—Oh dear rue! Have you seen the ghost, boys?

DICK—We've not *seen* much of him yet, but we've *felt* quite a lot of him though. Quite a substantial ghost he is too.

OLD MAN (*coming forward right and looking at the STRANGER*)— Why, Martha, it's Mr. Giles. (*To the SCOUTS*) Him as lives a hundred yards down the road.

OLD LADY (*coming forward*)—Mr. Giles? What was you a-doing in our house at this time of night.

OLD MAN—So it was you as has been a-coming these three nights past, a-making the missus and me think as it was a ghost and fair frightening us out of our minds.

OLD LADY—You ought to be fair ashamed of yourself, Mr. Giles, and we always been so friendly-like. What was you after? What was you a-wanting?

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STRANGER—Well, I reckon as you've got me beat, thanks to them Scout lads of yourn as seem to have sprung up from nowhere as you might say. So I might as well confess everything. You see, one day I was a-sitting here by the fireplace. You two had gone out to the village and had left me alone. I'd heard this story about this 'ere Roundhead and the treasure as he was supposed to have hidden in this cottage. Then, I thinks to myself, "What's the betting as he's hidden his Jewellery in one of the bricks of the fireplace." With that I gets up and feels round and sure enough round the corner is a brick that feels loose. I pulls him out, and what does I find behind the brick but an old piece of paper in a leather purse.

DICK—By Jove! What did it say on the paper?

STRANGER—You'd best take a look for yourself, young man. If you hadn't been so clever with your reef knots, I'd get it out of my pocket to shew you,

DAVID—I'll get it, which one is it in?

STRANGER—Right-hand side. (DAVID *dives into* STRANGER'S *tight hand pocket and produces an old piece of paper.*) Aye, that's it. Just read what it says.

DAVID (*reading*)—Ye seconde Day of ye Month of March, in the Year of Grace 1644- . . . Whose reign is that?

DICK—Oh let me see. William the Conqueror 1066; William II, 1087. Wait a bit, I shall get there in time . . . Stephen 1100; Henry I, 1135; Henry II, . . .

DAVID—Oh, dry up, Dick, it will take you years at that rate—Let's think . . . 1644 . . . I know, it was Charles I, . . . it's during the Civil Wars, that's lucky, we did them last term.

OLD LADY—That's it . . . the Civil Wars, that's the time of the ghost.

DICK—Go on reading, David.

DAVID—This Day, have I, William Smythe, buried ye Treasure and Jewels of my Family in the Wall of my House within 3 feet 4 inches of Ye Door on Ye left-hand Side. To the dweller in this house, who shall find this Treasure, if I die before the end of this war, may it yield Benefit.

OLD MAN—Well, to think that we should find it after all these

STRANGER—Yes, you see, I was after the treasure. I knew it were wrong, but I was fair desperate as my boy, my only boy, who's been a cripple all his life has been that bad all this year, and I wanted the money to get him proper treatment. I was tempted and I fell, and I'm sorry, very sorry. I can't say no more, I reckon I'm a pretty clumsy burglar. And now you'd better send for the police.

OLD LADY—Poor Mr. Giles. I do feel sorry for him, and it's quite true about his son.

OLD MAN—Yes, well not get the police. Let him loose, lads, and we'll all hunt for the treasure together. (*The SCOUTS set their Prisoner free.*)

STRANGER—I've looked for three nights now within 10 yards of the door, and I haven't found it yet.

DICK—You've only looked in the inside wall of the house, have you?

STRANGER—Yes, being as I found the clue inside, I never thought to look outside.

DICK—Come on, David, well do a spot of exploring outside. (*Exeunt the two SCOUTS.*)

STRANGER—What are them two lads a-doing here anyway?

OLD MAN—They'm a-doing a journey or summut, but I'm glad they came.

STRANGER (*putting a key from his pocket on to the table*)—There's the key to your door. I pinched that too.

OLD MAN—Now, I wondered where our second door key had got to.

STRANGER—I don't know what you'll think of me.

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OLD LADY—Oh, we'll forget all about that, James; but why didn't you tell us all about it? You know we'd have shared the treasure with you to save your boy.

STRANGER—You're too good. Can you ever forgive me?

OLD MAN—Of course we can.

OLD LADY—This has all been too much for me. I feel faint,

(The OLD LADY faints into the arms of the OLD MAN who looks worried.)

OLD MAN—Brandy, quick!

STRANGER—Where is it?

OLD MAN—It's . . . oh, I'll have to go and get it myself, you'll never find it.

(Hands her over to the STRANGER and dashes about helplessly.)

(The Scouts enter excitedly right bearing, a small iron chest. They bump into the OLD MAN.)

DICK—We've got it, we've got it.

DAVID—Got it first go. The brick came out and there it was.

(The OLD LADY comes "to" remarkably quickly.)

OLD LADY—They've got it!

(She embraces the STRANGER, then DAVID and DICK much to their embarrassment, and finally OLD MAN.)

(The SCOUTS put the iron box down on the table.)

DICK—It's locked, of course, but the padlock is nearly rusted through. Have you got a hammer?

OLD MAN }

OLD LADY } Hammer? Hammer?

(The OLD MAN and OLD LADY dash off in search of a hammer. OLD MAN goes left, OLD LADY right. They search about, then dash across to the other side of the stage and collide in the centre.)

DICK—It's all right, it's broken off.

DAVID—Oh look!

(The SCOUTS pull out jewellery of all description. All handle it rapturously.)

OLD MAN—Goodness me! Old William Smythe done himself well. I wonder how he come to have such treasure, a-living in a cottage like this 'ere.

DICK—Perhaps it was a reward from Oliver Cromwell for his services in the war.

OLD LADY—Well, anyway, there's enough there to keep John and me comfortable for the rest of our lives, and to save your son as well, James.

STRANGER—D'you mean that, Martha?

(BOYS start to pack up.)

OLD MAN—Of course she does, bless her. You shall have enough to pay for treatment for your son Jack, on one condition, and that is, when he's cured he joins the Scouts.

DAVID—Hurrah, that's the spirit.

STRANGER—Well, I don't know how to thank you. I don't deserve it, I don't really.

OLD LADY—Rubbish, James; just say nought about it. After all, if it hadn't been for you, we'd never have found it.

DICK—Hear, hear! What I say is three cheers for old Master Smythe. His good turn has borne fruit though it's taken three hundred odd years to do it. Come on, David, are you ready?

OLD MAN—Ready? Why, where be you a-going?

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DICK- -To camp out in your field if we may. Now we can get on with our test.

OLD MAN—Lumme, what lads to be sure!

OLD LADY—Well I never! But you must come and have breakfast with us in the morning.

DAVID—D’you think that’s allowed, Dick?

DICK—Well risk it anyway. This is rather a special occasion, and we must celebrate sometimes. You don’t find fortunes every day, do you?

DAVID—Right-o. See you in the morning then, thank you very much. Goodnight.

DICK—And I hope we shall see you alive in. the morning.

CURTAIN .

THE OLD FASHIONED VILLAGE SCOUT CONCERT.

A Parody in Four Short Acts.

SCENE I. - -	-	-	The Grand Opening Chorus.
SCENE II. -	-	-	The Boy Scout Play.
SCENE III. - -	-	-	Our Own Girl Guides.
SCENE IV. - -	-	-	The Pageant of our Isles.

COMPÈRE—Ladies and Gentlemen, we are going to shew you a real old-fashioned Scout Concert in the Village Hall way back in ’68, when Scouts were Scouts and Guides were Guides. Those were the days!

SCENE I.

Grand Opening Song.

The SCOUTMASTER walks on to the stage from the left. He wears very long and narrow shorts or corduroy breeches, a tunic, butterfly collar and tie, and enormously long shoulder knots. He carries a walking stick and looks very nervous. Arrived in the middle of the stage, the S-M. blows his whistle, and six SCOUTS enter left in a line. They also wear tight shorts and chin straps under their chins. They carry staves.

The S.M. calls out “Halt!” but they have already halted from careful practice during rehearsals. He calls out “Left turn” and salutes the audience. One of the SCOUTS waves and whistles to a girlfriend in the audience. The S.M. “freezes” him with a nasty look.

S.M.—Ladies and Gentlemen. Thank you for your kind presence. We are delighted to have such a large gathering to witness our Scout concert. (*The S.M. claps, and nudges the SCOUTS to do the same. One of them lets off a, great whistle which wakes the S.M. jump.*) We will start the concert with our grand troop song The words are . . h’m . . by myself. Thank you.

The S.M. looks anxiously to the left for the accompaniment to begin. It does so at length, very laboured with a few wrong notes here and there. The music of the song is “The Vicar of Bray.” The words are:—

Boy Scouts are we ‘tis plain to set

Each day we do a good turn.

We help old men to cross the street

And useful things we do learn.

We learn to track by day or night
We learn the stars to follow.
We march along, left right, left right,
By valley, hill and hollow.

We love our dear kind Scoutmaster
He's like a great big brother.
And we know that he loves us too
As much as our own mother.
Honest, trusty, loyal are we,
We love our dear, dear land,
If good young boys you want to be
Come join our happy band.

Suitable actions are put into the song. At "We learn the stars to follow," the SCOUTS raise their staves and knock off each other's hats. They mark time very noisily, and go on tip-toe or bended knees according as to whether it is valley, hill or hollow.

In the second verse during the first two lines, the S.M. beams at the Scouts. One of them pulls a face at him, and he looks very angry, and shakes his stick ominously. At mention of the "dear, dear land" all spring to the alert.

At the end of the song S.M salutes the audience, then about turns and gives the order "Left turn". The SCOUTS on the right turn left, those on the left turn right, and they march into each other causing considerable chaos. The S.M. with great presence of mind points left and shouts "Oh . . . er . . . off the stage". He then falls in behind and marches off with them.

CURTAIN.

S.M. (in front of the drop curtain)—Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your kind applause. And now we are going to give you a real Boy Scout play entitled "Our Boys to the Rescue, or The Brave Patrol Leader". Will you kindly wait for a few moments as there is a great deal of scenery to be moved.

SCENE II.
The Boy Scout Play.

The actors in this play act very woodenly just saying their parts without any expression whatever. The play is on the main stage. A boy is lying in the centre of the stage. He groans periodically and holds his head. There is not a vestige of scenery anywhere. The S.M. rushes on looking very worried. He shouts off left, "Great Heavens, the scenery, you stupid boys, you have forgotten the scenery!" A SCOUT rushes on with a small plant in a pot which he places back centre of the stage. The S.M. salutes the audience and announces, "Scene— In the wood." He exits left, then rushes on again, and addresses the boy on the ground, "All right, go on groaning again." He rushes off again after muttering "Excuse me" to the audience. The boy groans again. Enter the Patrol in Indian file, staves at the trail, P.L. in front.

PATROL LEADER—Patrol halt! (He says this long after the PATROL has already halted.) Patrol, break away. (The PATROL gets into a semi-circle facing the audience, obviously well

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arranged in rehearsals.) Ah, what have we here? A boy on the ground.

SECOND—It may be that he has fallen.

PATROL LEADER—Let us see. Remember our motto “Be Prepared”. (*The SCOUTS all salute. The PATROL LEADER examines the boy on the ground.*) Ah, a cut on the head, Ramsbottom and Shufflebottom, you shall deal with the wound. You have your First-Aid kit on you?

RAMSBOTTOM—Yes . . . er (*he looks for it*) er . . . yes (*A haversack containing triangular bandages is hastily thrown on from the left.*)

SHUFFLEBOTTOM—A cut on the head. (*They proceed to bandage the patient for a broken leg. They tie about ten bandages all down his leg and round numerous splints, all the staves they carry are splints, all the while, until the patient looks like an Egyptian mummy.*)

PATROL LEADER (*to the SECOND*)—You and Montgomery, signal a message back to the Camp. You have the semaphore flags with you.

SECOND—Yes . . . er (*he looks for them*) er yes. (*A pair of Semaphore flags is thrown on from the left.*) I will say the letters and you send.

MONTGOMERY (*in a loud stage whisper, quite animated*)—Have you got your Boy Scout Diary?

SECOND — Sh! . . . (*They signal, with considerable difficulty, and much searching in the diary*)—Boy hurt, come here.

PATROL LEADER—Come, Jones Minor, let us examine the ground for tracks. I would not be surprised if the boy had been attacked by some ruffianly man.

JONES MINOR (*pointing left along the ground*) — See, here are tracks leading over yonder. (*The PATROL LEADER and JONES MINOR sleuth off to the left. They have made a mistake for the ruffianly man is in the right wing. He comes on to the stage and grunts at them. He is already gagged and his hands are tied behind his back. The PATROL LEADER and JONES MINOR turn round and see him. JONES MINOR looks put out completely, but the PATROL LEADER acts with great presence of mind.*)

PATROL LEADER — H’m, here are tracks leading over *this* yonder. (*They sleuth to the right. There is the sound of a scuffle off right.*) Tie his hands together behind his back, Jones Minor.

JONES MINOR—Yes, I will do so at once. You gag him, for he is using such dreadful language.

(*The ruffianly man is led on to the centre of the stage by the triumphant PATROL LEADER. Enter the SCOUTMASTER left, followed by a POLICEMAN.*)

PATROL LEADER—Patrol, Alert! (*All stand at the alert and salute.*)

SCOUTMASTER—Well done, boys. You have shewn that Scouts can be prepared. (*He goes towards the two who have just finished bandaging the boy. Splendid, boys, splendid.*)

PATROL LEADER (*coming forward*)—Ramsbottom and Shufflebottom have treated him for a scalp wound, sir.

RAMSBOTTOM—Scalp wound?

SHUFFLEBOTTOM—It said a broken leg in my copy of the play.

SCOUTMASTER—Oh dear, how unfortunate. I must have mixed up the plays. Well.....er . . . have you treated him for a broken leg? Now go on from there.

RAMSBOTTOM—All right. Yes, sir, we have treated him. I think his head . . .

SCOUTMASTER—Leg.

RAMSBOTTOM—I think his leg . . . his legnow that’s put me all out.

SCOUTMASTER—Go on. I think his leg will be all right now. (*Pause*) Well, go on, say it.

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RAMSBOTTOM—Oh . . . I think his arm will be all right now.

SHUFFLE BOTTOM—Yes, sir. What useful things we do learn in the Boy Scouts, sir.

SCOUTMASTER—Yes, indeed, that is true. Would that every boy in our dear, dear country could join this splendid movement for boys and young men (*all spring to the alert and salute*) and learn to bandage heads . . . er . . . arms . . . I mean legs. You've got me all muddled now.

POLICEMAN—(*coming forward with enormous medals of card-board*)—I would like to shew the gratitude of the Police Force by presenting these medals to your brave boys.

SCOUTMASTER—Boys, fall in line. (*He blows a whistle; the SCOUTS fall in. line facing the audience, the prisoner amongst them. The POLICEMAN absent-mindedly pins a medal on to the prisoner.*)

POLICEMAN—Oh no, not you.

SCOUTMASTER—Boys, three cheers for the Boy Scouts. (*All cheer very feebly, including the prisoner whose gag has fallen down.*) No, not you, fathead. (*He re-arranges the gag.*)

CURTAIN.

SCOUTMASTER (*in front of the drop curtain*)—Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you very much for the kind way in which you have received our little play. (*Loud noises off left. S.M. raises his voice.*) The boys have worked very hard to learn their parts and I think . . . (*going to the left*) Quiet boys, please; not so much noise.

PATROL LEADER (*off left*)—He said I didn't know my part. It did say scalp wound in my copy of the play. Here it is, look.

SCOUTMASTER—Never mind, George, never mind. Remember a Scout smiles and whistles under all difficulties.

PATEOL LEADER—Well, if he doesn't shut up, I'll make him smile and whistle out of the back of his neck.

SCOUTMASTER—Ha! Ha! Nice boys, a little high-spirited, a little high-spirited. (*Noises subside*) And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, our own Girl Guide Captain and her girls are going to entertain you with a display of Physical Training. Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen.

(*He claps himself absent-mindedly*)—Oh . . . er . . . yes.

SCENE III.

The Girl Guides.

The GUIDE CAPTAIN and six or eight GUIDES enter left. They all look pretty ridiculous. The CAPTAIN'S coat is covered with cords and she has an enormous plume in her hat. She wears huge gauntlets. The CAPTAIN leads the "GIRLS" on from the left saying. "Left right, left right". The "GIRLS" shuffle on behind the CAPTAIN. The last one is always late. One or two of them wave to friends in the audience. The CAPTAIN leads them round the stage, and then down the front. She yells out "Halt?" All the "GIRLS" being busy looking at the audience or at their feet do not hear the command, and bang into the CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN (*coming to the front*)—Company, right turn! (*The "GIRLS" turn right, their backs to the audience. The CAPTAIN looks at her hands and tries to decide which is right and which is left.*) Dear me . . . er . . . About turn. Exercise number one. Right arm raise, left arm lower, right

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leg raise, left leg . . . Oh no, you can't do much with that, can you? Well, never mind, we'll just have right leg raise and lower. Ready, commence. Right leg raise. Not so high with that leg, Beryl dear. Remember where you are; this stage is rather high. Very good, Olivia, very good. As you were. (*All come to the alert.*) Next exercise; touching the toes. (*The CAPTAIN begins, back to the audience, then realises the delicacy of the situation. She turns round facing the audience and starts again. Of course she cannot get anywhere near her toes, so she straightens herself again, and letting down her gauntlets until her hands are in the cuffs does the exercise once more. This time she is more successful and the fingers of her gauntlets touch her toes. She turns triumphantly to the "GIRLS".*) Now, Girls, touching the toes—commence. One—two—one—two. (*One "GIRL," has considerable difficulty and raises her left leg to her fingers then her right.*) Halt, Girls, halt. Now then Exercise number three. Arms bend, arms sideways fling. (*She illustrates this.*) Company, arms bend, arms sideways fling. (*The "GIRLS" all knock each other over backwards.*) Oh dear, I forgot. Ha! Ha! Fall in again, Girls, or rather *don't* fall in this time. Ha! Ha! Ha! Number. (*They number from one to six or eight; when it comes to number four there is no reply. The CAPTAIN waits expectantly, then says gently "Four, four, Olivia dear," to which OLIVIA replies: "For what?" Number six stutters over her number, then finally brings it out in a sneeze. The CAPTAIN sneezes too.*) On the command "Form two ranks", the odd numbers will take two paces to the front, and the even numbers will take two paces to the rear . . . er . . . yes, to the rear. Now remember, Girls; odd paces take two numbers to the rear . . . er . . . back . . . er . . . front and even fronts take two backs to the number. Dear me, I got it right the first time. Form two ranks. (*The "GIRLS" promptly get into Indian files facing the audience. Oh, well, that wasn't quite what I meant, but never mind, that will do quite nicely. Now then, arms bend, arms sideways fling, (The CAPTAIN gives a loud indigestion repeat) Repeat! Halt, deep breathing in your own tune. Commence. (The CAPTAIN goes round and gets BERYL'S breath) Oh onions! BERYL dear, how often have I told you not to eat onions before a gym class. Phyllis, blow your nose dear. (PHYLLIS draws a handkerchief from her under garments and blows lustily.) Company, Halt. Form line again. (The "GIRLS" get into their Line.) Left turn. Oh well, keep on turning left until you're all facing the right. (The leading "GIRL" gets it first go, the others keep on missing it and turning one too many, then having to start all over again. Two of them are so dizzy at the end of it that they can hardly stand up. The CAPTAIN goes to the head of the line.) Fancy marching; left right, left right, (The CAPTAIN leads the "GIRLS" round the back of the stage, down the front, then half right turns to march diagonally down the stage, then round the back and diagonally again to make a criss-cross. They manage it successfully and the "GIRLS" pass through each time. The CAPTAIN leads on round the back, then does the criss-cross again. This time it is not so successful and the "GIRLS" fall in a heap on the floor. The CAPTAIN goes blissfully on round once more singing out "Left, right, left right" then starts another diagonal movement, head in the air. She goes sprawling over the "GIRLS".*

CURTAIN.

S.M. (*in front of the drop curtain*)—Thank you. Mrs. Humbug Minto. That was a splendid display. And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, we finish our programme with a grand Pageant of our Island. The Pageant of Britain. Thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you.

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SCENE IV.

The Pageant of our Islands.

An upturned soap-box covered with red, white and blue crinkled paper stands in the middle of the stage. The middle plank is very thin wood which will break when trodden on. Enter the SCOUTMASTER left.)

SCOUTMASTER— Oh Britannia, Land of the Free
The Boys of Britain honour you . . . er . . . thee.

(The S.M. goes out left. Enter the ENGLISH SCOUT. He is carrying the Cross of St. Patrick. The S.M. rushes on with the Cross of St. George and exchanges the flags.)

ENGLISH SCOUT *(standing right of the soap-box)*—

Oh, England's green and grassy cliffs

Her white and fieldy chalks.

SCOUTMASTER *(prompting left)* — Green and grassy fields, white and chalky cliffs.

ENGLISH SCOUT— Oh, England's grass and fieldy chalks

Her green and cliffy whites.

SCOUTMASTER— No! Green and grassy fields, white and chalky cliffs.

ENGLISH SCOUT — Oh, England's green and white chalks,

Her . . . her . . . Oh well, anyway I'm England.

(Enter the SCOTTISH SCOUT. His kilt is far too big for him and it's on back to front anyhow. His sporran is round his neck. He carries the Cross of St. Andrew and speaks with a broad English provincial accent. He stands left of the box.)

SCOTTISH SCOUT — From Scotland's 'eather-covered 'ills,

Her lochs *(Great effort)* and seas and rills.

SCOUTMASTER *(off left)*—Where's Ireland? Come on, be quick. Here, take that sweet out of your mouth.

IRISH SCOUT—What and waste it? Not me.

(Enter the IRISH SCOUT. He carries the Cross of St. Patrick and chews a, sweet which makes conversation rather difficult. He takes his place behind ENGLAND.)

The Emerald Isle is fair and green.

No fairer isle could e'er be found.

SCOUTMASTER *(off left)*—Seen, it rhymes with green!

IRISH SCOUT—Seen. Ah, that's right.

(The IRISH SCOUT pulls out his sweet and shows it to the ENGLISH SCOUT, who pulls out a whole bag from his pocket.)

SCOUTMASTER *(off left)*—Come on, Wales, buck up.

WELSH SCOUT *(off left)*—I can't find my flag.

SCOUTMASTER—On the piano there.

(The WELSH SCOUT walks on carrying the Stars and Stripes. The S.M. dashes on, takes it from him and gives him the Welsh Dragon.)

WELSH SCOUT—Well, that was on the piano. How was I to know? *(He stands behind the SCOTTISH SCOUT.)*

WELSH SCOUT—A land that's full of hills and dales.

White sand, green pasture; that is Wales.

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SCOTTISH SCOUT—We're all a bit green in parts, aren't
(Enter BRITANNIA. She has a helmet and shield, and is covered with an enormous Union Jack which trips her up. She mounts on the soap-box and holds out her shield.)
BRITANNIA—From the four corners of my Isle
Ye come, boys sweet and pure.
And while ye guard me from all guile
My foundations are secure.
(BRITANNIA stands on the thin piece of wood, and falls with a loud crash.)
CURTAIN.

GOLDEN DAYS. *A Pageant of Scouting.*

The names of people and Patrols in this Pageant can be altered to suit the particular troop which is performing it. Actual names are better used.

SCENE I. - - - The Troop Meeting.
SCENE II.- - - Investiture.
SCENE III.- - - Packing.
SCENE IV.- - - In the Train.
SCENE V.- - - The Panthers' Tent at the Camp.
SCENE VI.- - - The March of the Nations.

COMPÈRE—Ladies and Gentlemen, we present to you a Pageant of Scouting. There is a story running through these scenes, the story of a boy who joins the Troop. If you are expecting to see pictures of life in a perfect Scout Troop you will be disappointed. The scenes that you will see will at least have the merit of being quite natural; you will see just ourselves with all our faults, but happy; happy in our Scouting as a band of brothers. We present to you, Ladies and Gentlemen, "Golden Days", a pageant of Scouting without any varnish and with no excuses.

SCENE I. *The Troop Meeting.*

(It is the Troop Headquarters. The Scouts on the stage are talking and generally ragging about. COLIN, Patrol Leader of the Panthers, enters left bringing in the new BOY who is dressed in shorts and a jersey. All talking immediately ceases and the SCOUTS stare hard at the boy, who looks very nervous. Enter the S.M., A.S.M. and TROOP LEADER left.)

S.M. — An ominous silence. Which gas mantle have you broken or is it a window?

COLIN — New kid wants to join the Troop, Skip,

S.M. — Oh, I see. Hello, Son. Well, give the poor chap some breathing space. You're all looking at him as though he came out of the British Museum. Inspection in two minutes, chaps.

(The PATROLS begin to fall in. The A.S.M. goes to a table on the right and makes notes. The S.M., TROOP LEADER, COLIN and the Boy go right front. The S.M. opens his book and hands it to the TROOP LEADER with a pencil.)

S.M. — Here, Bill, you take his name and address. What is your name?

BOY— John Smith, sir.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

S.M.— Smith? Oh I don't expect our Troop Leader can spell that. He's only learnt as far as Q, bless him.

T.L. — Never mind, Skip, one of these days *you'll* get as far as L.

S.M.— L? Oh, quite clever for one so young! Now, John, tell us why you want to join the Scouts.

BOY (*looking towards COLIN*) — I . . . er . . . I want to do one good turn a day, and to smile and whistle under all difficulties.

S.M. (*to COLIN*) — Coached him rather well haven't you, Colin?

COLIN (*looking innocent*) — Me, Skip?

S.M. — Now, John, tell us really why you want to join the Scouts.

BOY — Well, I don't know, sir. You see, a lot of my pals are in it, and they seem to have . . . to have . . . good times. And I should like to camp out in tents, sir.

S.M.— H'm, that sounds more natural.

BOY (*eagerly*) — Can I join, sir? I do want to, really I do.

S.M.— Well, we're very full up. We might chuck out Bill of course and let you in that way.

T.L.—O.K. Good-night, Skip. (*BILL makes no effort to go.*)

S.M. — Marvellous. (*Looking at BILL*) Oh dear, haven't you gone?

T.L. — Funny, aren't you?

S.M. — Thanks for the compliment. (*To the BOY*) All right, John. I think we can squeeze you in; you're not very fat. You shall go into the Panther Patrol. I'm sorry for you.

COLIN — Sorry for him! You'll learn sense one of these days, Skip.

BOY — Thank you, sir, thank you very much.

S.M. — That's all right, John. Good-luck to you. Take his name and address, will you, Bill?

T.L. — Right you are, Skip

(*COLIN goes off to his PATROL. BILL writes down the name of the new BOY. The A.S.M. blows his jay whistle and the PATROLS fall in. The S.M., A.S.M., and T.L. go round inspecting. The SECOND of the LIONS is not in uniform.*)

S.M. — What's happened to the uniform, Ray?

RAY — Sorry, Skip, it's in the wash.

S.M.— Uniform in the wash. Excuse 3B.

A.S.M. — It ought to be quite clean by now. It's been in the wash for three weeks.

T.L. (*collecting the subs*) — Subs O.K., Skip.

(*They pass on to the ANTELOPES.*)

T.L.— One sub short, Skip.

GEOFF. — Funny thing, Skip. I know I had it when I started but

GEOFF. A.S.M. (*together*) — It must have fallen out of my pocket when I got out my handkerchief to blow my nose.

GEOFF. — Here, how did you know?

A.S.M. — Subscription excuse number 4.

GEOFF — What a man!

(*They move on to the PANTHERS. DONALD, the fat boy is not in uniform. The new BOY is slow at the alert.*)

S.M. — You'll soon get into it, John. Uniform, Donald?

DONALD — Sorry Skip, but my shorts have got a hole in the seat.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

A.S.M. — I'm not surprised. I warned you last week not to sit down in them. They were standing shorts only.

T.L.—Subs all paid.

(They move on to the TIGERS who are all in uniform.)

S.M. — Good show, Tigers. All present, all in uniform. Subs?

T.L.—All paid.

S.M. — Good. Full points. Right, carry on with badge work. *(BILL stands on a chair and signals. Some half-dozen sit on floor and take the message. The PATROL LEADER of the TIGERS takes a class of First Aid. The A.S.M. takes a class of Mapping. COLIN takes a crowd in the compass. The PATROL LEADER of the ANTELOPES takes a crowd in knotting. The S.M. takes the new BOY in Tenderfoot work. After a few moments, they puck up and coming to the front of the stage, sing a rousing chorus.)*

CURTAIN.

SCENE II.

Investiture.

(Before the scene, a SCOUT walks slowly across the in front of the drop curtain, bearing a notice "One month later.")

When the drop curtains are pulled back, the Troop is standing in a semi-circle round the S.M. The A.S.M. stands on the left of the S.M., and the T.L. stands on the right, holding the troop flag. The BOY stands facing the S.M., his back to the audience. They are on a raised dais of platform. Music has been playing until the BOY makes his promise.)

BOY — On my honour, I promise to do my best, to do my duty to God and to the King, to help other people at all times, and to obey the Scout Law.

S.M. — I trust you on your honour to keep this promise. You are now a member of the great Brotherhood of Scouts. *(The BOY shakes hands with the S.M., the A.S.M. and the T.L., salutes them, about turns and salutes the TROOP. As he stands there the SCOUTS sing a hymn. The Scout's Hymn from "Boy Scout" is a suggestion.)*

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

Packing. In front of the drop curtain,

(The BOY stands by a table right. He has a large kit-bag in front of him, full of various requisites and other things which come to light in this scene. On the table are a pair of pyjamas, a toilet bag, gym shoes, and a sweater or jumper. The kit-bag is full and the BOY is about to tie up the neck. There is a knock off left. The BOY goes over to the left.)

BOY *(off left)* — Oh hello, Colin.

COLIN *(entering, followed by the BOY)*—I thought I'd come and see if you had packed everything for Camp all right.

BOY—Jolly decent of you, Colin. I think I've got everything.

COLIN—What are all these things on the table?

BOY—Well, I thought I could do without those.

COLIN *(looking at the things on the table)* — Pyjamas; how do you think you're going to do without them?

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BOY—Oh well, you see, I've got a bathing dress. I thought I might save room by sleeping in that.

COLIN—What! You have got an economical mind haven't you? (*Picking up the toilet bag*) Don't tell me you were leaving your soap behind?

Boy—It does take up room, Colin. I thought I might be able to use your soap in Camp,

COLIN—Oh you did, did you? (*Looking at the sweater*) And I suppose you thought you would use my sweater as well.

BOY—Oh no, Colin, but I've got a rug instead if it's cold.

COLIN—Gosh! Look here; didn't Skip tell you what to take last week?

BOY—Yes, he did as a matter of fact, but I've forgotten what he said.

COLIN—Yes, he gave you a list

BOY—But it was . . . er . . . jolly decent of him, wasn't it?

COLIN—Well, where is the list?

BOY—Yes, well you see . . .

COLIN—Lost it, I suppose.

Boy—Oh no, I haven't lost it. I've just put it somewhere.

COLIN—What a hope! It's a good job I came. Here, let's see exactly what you have got in that kit-bag of yours. Empty it all out. (*The kit-bag is upturned, and outfall six rugs, half-a-dozen plates, three mugs, an alarum dock, a toy boat, a bathing dress, and a kitchen candlestick. COLIN looks nonplussed.*) Well, I don't know. (*Counting the blankets*) 1-2-3-4-5-6. Six blankets! Where do you think we're going to camp? At the North Pole? Three blankets at the very most. Skip told us all that last week; don't *you* remember?

BOY—Yes, I remember that.

COLIN—Well, what do you want to go and stick six in for, Fathead?

BOY—Well, you know, he said afterwards that he was going to take double precautions this Camp, so I thought I'd better have six.

COLIN—Double precautions for bathing, you idiot. Anyway you seem to have taken treble precautions over a mug. What do you want three mugs for?

BOY—I thought I'd better have one for tea, one for cocoa and one for soup.

COLIN—The idea being to save washing up, I presume. Here, throw two out. Get three rags in. Now put your pyjamas *and* the bathing dress in; and the soap, and the gym shoes. Now what do you suppose this alarum clock was for?

BOY—Oh, in case we don't wake up in time.

COLIN—Put it away.

BOY—What time do we get up in Camp, Colin?

COLIN—When Skip happens to wake up. If we want a lie-in in the morning, we put a sleeping draught in his cocoa the night before. If you bring that toy boat to Camp you'll never see it again.

BOY—Why? -

COLIN—Because Skip and the Rovers will be playing with it all day. Now let's see what else is there? You want to be methodical over packing or you leave things, behind.

BOY—Have you done your packing, Colin?

COLIN—Yes, I did it an hour ago; everything's in. You don't catch me forgetting things. Now what else do you want? Change of clothes, spare stockings, handkerchiefs . . . oh . . . handkerchiefs, yes handkerchiefs . . . Well, you can get on with it now. I must go.

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Handkerchiefs.

BOY—Are you going round to see Skip?

COLIN—No, I'm going to put some handkerchiefs in my kit-bag. So long!

CURTAIN.

Scene IV

In the Train.

(The drop curtain is raised shewing the side of a corridor coach running the length of the stage. The TIGER PATROL and some others are standing behind the coach and talking. PIP, the SECOND of the TIGERS, has a watch in his hand.)

LAWRENCE—There you are, Pip. Now, what are we doing?

PIP—I make it . . . well, if we went a mile in 50 seconds . . . what's that?

LAWRENCE—A mile in 50 seconds? Oh, that's easy.

PIP—What is it, then?

LAWRENCE—It's . . . well it's 50 miles an hour.

PIP — It isn't. Look here now. In 50 seconds the train goes 1 mile, that's 1760 yards: therefore in 1 second it goes 1760 divided by 50; or is it multiplied? Oh, I don't know.

LAWRENCE — Well, anyway, we're going at a good lick. Look at that church.

JOHN — I saw your Barbara at the station, Pip.

PIP — Nice of her to come and see us off wasn't it? I say, did Skip see her?

LAWRENCE — He wouldn't mind if he did. His own girl was there as well.

JOHN — Yes, I saw her. Nice bit of stuff, too.

PIP — Not bad. A bit old, of course. Quite middle-aged.

TOMMY — How old would she be, do you think?

PIP — Oh, at least 25, I should say.

GEOFFREY (*waving and whistling through the window*) — Hello!

BRIAN — Here, what d'you think you're doing, letting us down like that? (He waves) I always did like red hair.

LESLIE — I don't like girls in shorts.

JOHN — No, it's a man's privilege, isn't it?

PHILLIP — How much longer now?

LAWRENCE — About half-an-hour.

KENNETH — I can smell the sea already

BRIAN — That's not the sea you can smell . . . It's cheese from the dining-car.

Robert — Gosh, I'm longing to have a bathe.

RAYMOND — Can you swim?

ROBERT — Yes, if it's not too deep

RAYMOND — What do you mean: if it's not too deep?

JOHN — If it's not too deep he can keep one foot on the bottom.

KENNETH — Oh, what was the name of that station?

PIP — Mazawattee.

PHILIP — No, it wasn't, it was Bovril.

JOHN — I thought it was Cheltenham.

KENNETH — Cheltenham? No, what you saw began with a G.

LESLIE — Oh, look at that cow. I wonder what it feels like to be a cow.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

LAWRENCE—You ought to know.

ROBERT—I do hope it will be fine at Camp. What will we do if it rains?

TOMMY — Get wet, I shouldn't be surprised.

PIP—You didn't forget to bring your umbrella with you, did you?

JOHN—Which Patrol will be on duty to-morrow?

PHILIP—Antelopes; we're always on first. That's the worst of being a Patrol that begins with A.

PIP – Antelopes, is it? That means that the milk will be half-an-hour late, the flag will never be broken, and there won't be any cocoa to-morrow night. Otherwise it will be quite a good day.

BRIAN—Shut up, Pip; I'll slosh you one in a minute.

LAWRENCE—Oh, stow it, you two. Hello, there's Donald.

GEOFFREY—He's just given up his seat to two ladies who got in at the last station.

BRIAN—I'd give up this piece of corridor to anyone with pleasure.

PIP (*shouting off left*) — What d'you say? Oh boys, Skip's giving out biscuits and chocolate in his compartment.

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.

The PANTHERS' Tent at the Camp. (The tent stands back right. The PANTHERS are busy tidying up and putting out their kit in line.)

COLIN—Come on, you mugs, buck up.

DONALD—When's inspection? Skipper said it would be in half-an-hour.

GEORGE —When did he say that?

DONALD—About an hour ago.

COLIN—Oh, well, it might be any time now.

(ROLAND and RAYMOND start off with towels to go and wash. They do not in the least hurry. COLIN rushes up to them.)

COLIN—Idiots! Why didn't you wash before? What a Patrol! What have I done to deserve such a crowd? Come here, you.

(COLIN takes RAYMOND'S towel and washes round his ears. ROLAND tries to escape back but COLIN pounces on him and examines him.)

Now, for goodness sake, hurry up. Get your kit straight. Here, John, you're ready, get inside the tent and bring out that toffee paper I left there last night.

(A blast from a horn off left.)

COLIN—That's done it. With any luck he'll go to the Lions first. Here, come on, George, you nit-wit, do something with that orange peel. (GEORGE hastily pushes the orange peel under the ground-sheet. COLIN looks critically at the kits in front of him.) Got that toffee paper, John? Here, give it to me. He starts to bury it, then looking up quickly, puts it in his pocket.) Look out, they're coming. Hurry up, fall in.

(The PATROL falls in in line behind their kit. COLIN hauls out the new BOY.) Here you, look at the point of your scarf.

BOY (*trying to screw his head round and look at the back of his neck*) – Now that would be clever, wouldn't it?

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COLIN—You're getting worse every day for cheek. You ought to have joined the Brownies instead of the nice kind Scouts. They would have bullied you out of it years ago. Look out; here they are. Patrol, fall in. (*The S.M., A.S.M., and TSOOP LEADER enter left.*)

COLIN—Patrol, alert. Good-morning.

S.M. – Good-morning. All well?

COLIN—Yes, thanks, Skip; but we could do with a spot of Eno's. (*PATROL all look very solemn except ROLAND, who stands with a broad grin on his face after the manner of the famous advertisement.*)

S.M.—Even,' picture tells a story. Righto, look round the tent will you. Bill? If you'll look at the kit, John, I'll snoop round the kitchen.

(*S.M. exits right, BILL goes into the tent. The A.S.M. inspects the kit. He looks under GEORGE'S ground-sheet and discovers the orange peel which he holds up to view.*)

COLIN—Idiot, George; why didn't you shove it in your soap-bag? (*Bill comes out of the tent and hands a match stalk and a piece of toffee paper to the A.S.M.*)

A.S.M. (*holding them up*)—Exhibit A, ye orange; exhibit B, half a forest; exhibit C, very sweet. Can you explain these objects?

COLIN—We have to test your observation sometimes, Mate. And George was practising axemanship on the match stalk.

S.M. (*returning left and seeing the exhibits*)—Kitchen good. Oh, hallo, exhibits. You know we really ought to start a troop museum with so many. The Panthers would about fill the British Museum after a week in Camp.

COLIN—Oh, yes. We ought to have a troop waxworks show and all (*pointing to the S.M., A.S.M. and T.L.*) Famous trio to be seen in the Chamber of Horrors.

S.M. (*laughing*) – Fall in round the Flagstaff for Prayers and Flag up.

(*All exeunt left, except the S.M. and the new BOY. The S.M. sits on a log in the middle of the stage, and the BOY runs into the tent right. The S.M. writes up the points in his notebook. The BOY comes out of the tent, then goes off slowly left. The S.M. calls him back.*)

S.M.—Well, do you like Camp?

BOY—Yes, rather. Skip. I knew it would be good, but I never thought it would be as good as this.

S.M.—Well, some time it's going to be better still. We're going to the jamboree. You know when you made your Promise at your Investiture and I said "You are now a member of the great Brotherhood of Scouts"?

BOY—Yes. Skip.

S.M.—Well, at the Jamboree you'll see that it means some thing very real. You'll meet Scouts from every country in the world: from France, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland, North America, South America, Japan, Australia. Oh, from all over the world.

(*The S.M. gets up and goes off left. The BOY comes forward thoughtfully to the front and the drop curtains are drawn behind him. The stage is cleared of the Camp.*)

BOY (*at the front of the stage and looking out into the auditorium*) Scouts of all the world: France, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, America, Asia, Africa . . .

The March of the Nations.

(*The SCOUTS will have gathered at the back of the Hall, each with the flag of a nation where SCOUTS are to be found. When the BOY on the stage has finished his words, the music of a slow*

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march begins. (Purcell's "Trumpet Voluntary" is very suitable.) As the music begins, the SCOUTS all march up the centre aisle of the hall, each carrying the flag of his nation in front of him, in single file. When the line of Scouts reaches the front of the stage, it divides into two and the two files go up on to the stage on either side, forming a semi-circle facing the audience. The BOY greets each flag as it arrives. When all are on the stage, he stands left.

There is a space in the middle of the semi-circle and at the conclusion of the March the curtains are drawn aside a little to reveal a large portrait of the CHIEF SCOUT. All flags are lowered in salute and the BOY gives the Scout Salute.

CURTAIN.

(The flags can be borrowed from Scout Headquarters in London, 25 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.1.)

IDEAL CAMPS.

1. THE SERGEANT-MAJOR'S IDEAL CAMP.

COMPÈRE—Ladies and Gentlemen, we are going to shew you how Scoutmasters of three honourable professions would run their ideal Scout Camps. First of all, we will shew you how the Sergeant-Major would run his Camp.

SCENE.

(There is a camp-fire in the middle of the stage, with a dixie hanging over it. The PATROL LEADER is stirring imaginary porridge in the dixie. Enter the SCOUTMASTER briefly right. He marches to the middle of the stage, left turns smartly, and takes two paces forward to the camp-fire. The PATROL LEADER leaves the dixie and jumps to the alert, saluting and facing right.)

S.M.—Anything to report. Scout Jones?

JONES—Porridge ready, sir.

S.M. *(saluting again)*—Carry on.

(The SCOUT salutes and continues to stir the porridge. The S.M. about turns and blows a series of short blasts on his whistle. The TROOP (four SCOUTS) double on from the right. As they pass the S.M. they salute by turning their heads left. Each SCOUT carries a plate in his left hand, and a spoon in his right hand—all in uniform manner. When they are about in the middle of the stage, the S.M. roars "Halt". They do so.)

S.M. – Troop—two paces step forward, march. Plates for porridge, forward stretch.

(The Scouts hold out their plates in a line with their left hands. The PATROL LEADER in a series of strict drill movements ladles out porridge to each SCOUT, saying:

One—two—three. *(He gives himself three times as much as the others.)* Spoons ready.

(THE SCOUTS raise their spoons in their right hands above their plates.)

Eating porridge by numbers. Commence. On the command One, the Scout will dip his spoon into the porridge. On the command Two, he will convey a spoonful of porridge to the mouth. On the command Three, the Scout will lower the spoon to position One, at the same time masticating the porridge twelve times. Now then, watch for it. Eating porridge commence: One—two—three. *(This goes on for a bit.)* Troop, halt! Plates on the ground. Lay. *(They do so,)* Two paces step back, march. *(They do so.)* Orders for to-day. Scout Jones on washing up fatigue. Scout Smith will volunteer for water fatigue. Scout Robinson for

potato peeling fatigue. Scout Jenkins will be S.M.'s batman today. He will make his bed and press his Sunday shorts. Scout Wilson will be off duty for one hour when he will report to me at my tent. At the camp-fire tonight, Scout Wilson will sing "Annie Laurie"; Scouts Jenkins and Robinson will sing "My little grey home in the West". The remainder will applaud, bringing the hands together to make the noise known technically as a clap, twelve times. To your duties, dismiss.

(The SCOUTS right turn and salute.)

CURTAIN.

2. THE RACING MOTORIST'S IDEAL CAMP.

COMPÈRE —And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, we will shew you how the racing motorist would run his ideal camp.

Scene

(A camp-fire in the middle of the stage. 1st SCOUT is frying chops in a frying-pan. He holds a watch in his hand. 2nd SCOUT rushes at full speed across the stage right to left. 3RD SCOUT rushes on left with a dixie, and puts it on the fire.)

3RD SCOUT —How long so far?

1ST SCOUT—Five minutes 10 seconds.

2nd SCOUT—We shall do it. Yesterday's record was 6 minutes 25 ³/₈ seconds, wasn't it? *(3rd SCOUT rushes off right; Enter the S.M. left, carrying some sticks which he puts down by the fire.)*

S.M.—Chops done? *(he digs a fork into them.)* Give them 20 seconds more. By Jove, what a record! *(The S.M. rushes to the back of the stage and blows his whistle and waves a flag. The SCOUTS come rushing on from both sides, each with a plate, knife and fork.)*

S.M.—Time! *(1ST Scout lifts the frying-pan from the fire. The S.M. consults his match.)* Another record smashed! These chops have been cooked today in 5 minutes 54 ⁷/₈ seconds.

(The SCOUTS all cheer, and go up to receive their chops in turn. The chops are quite black. The 2nd SCOUT finds his chop so heavy that he drops his plate and it is broken.)

S.M.—H'm, brakes working well.

(The 3rd and 4th SCOUTS hold their plates firmly, and though weighted down by the chops are just able to hold them. The 4th SCOUT looks at his dubiously, and tries to stick his fork in it. He is not successful.)

4th SCOUT—These records are all very fine but this chop is a bit overdone.

S.M.—Quiet, you're giving too much gas.

(The SCOUTS are all endeavouring to eat their chops.

The 2nd SCOUT manages a bite, then begins to choke.)

S.M.—Too much choke. Throttle down.

(The 3RD SCOUT begins hiccupping.)

S.M.— Ha! Water in the carburetter. Gear down to second. *(The S.M. notices the 4th SCOUT ruefully regarding his chop.)*

S.M.—What's wrong? Self-starter not working?

4th SCOUT *(working his face)*—Clutch slipping, sir.

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S.M.—H'm, needs making tight. Drink two glasses of rum. That will make you tight.

1st SCOUT—I . . . er . . . I don't feel very well, sir. (*Lies down.*)

2nd SCOUT—Nor do I, sir. (*Lies down.*)

3rd SCOUT—I feel rotten. (*Lies down.*)

4th SCOUT—Oh, I feel awful. (*Lies down.*)

S.M. (waving his flag)—Competitors retire in the first round. Race abandoned!

CURTAIN.

3. THE LAWYER'S IDEAL CAMP.

COMPÈRE—And lastly, Ladies and Gentlemen, how a lawyer would run his ideal camp.

Scene

(*A camp-fire in the middle of the singe. A dixie stands over the fire. The 1ST SCOUT—(PATROL LEADER)— stands by the fire, stirring imaginary cocoa in the dixie. The 2ND SCOUT (SCOUT WARD) stands by with a packet marked "sugar" in his hand.*)

PATROL LEADER—The cocoa is ready. Add the sugar, Les.

(*SCOUT WARD pours from the packet into the Dixie. The P.L. stirs for a moment then takes the dixie off the fire and calls out "Cocoa is ready". Enter the S.M. and three SCOUTS right, carrying mugs.*)

S.M.—I will now taste the concoction known as cocoa; see recipe 204, page-58, Mrs. Beatem's Cookery Book.

(*S.M. tastes the cocoa and pulls a face.*)

How has this happened? Someone has put salt instead of sugar into the cocoa. (SCOUT WARD *looks hurriedly at the packet and tastes it with his finger.*) Who has added salt instead of sugar to the cocoa?

SCOUT WARD – If you please, sir, I think I must have done it, but it was not my fault; it says sugar on the packet.

S.M.—Ah! One moment. I warn you that anything you say will be taken in evidence against you.

SCOUT WARD —Well, how was I to know if . . . er . . . ?

S.M.—Silence in the court. We must get this on a proper basis. Scout Ward, I charge you with the crime of wilfully adding salt in place of sugar to the cocoa, to the detriment and inconvenience of the whole Troop. Guilty or not guilty?

SCOUT WARD—Not guilty, sir . . . er . . . me Lud.

S.M.—The court will now sit. Scouts Robinson and Wheeler will act as jury. Scout Jones will be Counsel for the Defence. I will be Judge. To your places.

(*S.M. sits in the middle, the JURY sit on his right. SCOUT WARD stands on the left. SCOUT JONES and the PATROL LEADER sit in front of the S.M.*)

S.M.—The case will now begin. Scout Leslie Ward has pleaded not guilty to the charge of wilfully putting salt in place of sugar into the cocoa. I call upon the witness. Patrol Leader Jackson.

PATROL LEADER—I beg to state. Your Worship . . . er . . . me Lud, that on the 5th instant at 8.17 p.m. I was stirring the cocoa. I instructed the accused to add some sugar to the aforementioned cocoa. He then appears to have added salt instead of the said sugar.

S.M.—Did the accused make any remark when requested to add the sugar to the cocoa?

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PATROL LEADER—Yes, me Lud; he remarked “O.K., Les.”

S.M.—What does “O.K.” mean?

SCOUT JONES—O.K., me Lud, is an American expression signifying the positive answer to a question.

S.M.—O.K. H’m . . . thank you. I will now call the Counsel for the Defence.

SCOUT JONES—Gentlemen of the Jury. You see before you my client, accused of a dastardly crime. With commendable honesty he has told the court that he did in all innocence pour salt into the cocoa. It is for you, Gentlemen of the Jury, to decide whether or no he did this act wilfully. Could anyone on seeing the innocent expression on his face, imagine for one moment that he could commit such a crime? (*To SCOUT WARD*) Look miserable, you idiot. (*SCOUT WARD who has been smiling, suddenly changes his smile to an expression of innocent sadness.*) What is more, me Lud, I can prove definitely that Scout Ward is not guilty of the crime of which he is accused. (*He picks up the empty packet.*) I wish to ask a question of the witness. (*To the PATROL LEADER*) Did you fetch this packet from the store tent?

PATROL LEADER—I did.

SCOUT JONES—Was it full?

PATROL LEADER—It was.

SCOUT JONES—Thank you. You will see, Gentlemen, that it is definitely written on the packet, one pound of sugar. When was the packet placed in the hands of the accused?

PATROL LEADER—Just two minutes before I told him to put it in the cocoa.

SCOUT JONES—Thank you. The witness has stated that the accused put the contents of the packet into the cocoa at 8.17 p.m. We know now that it came into his hands two minutes before, that is to say at 8.15. I take it that the packet was unopened when you handed it to the accused?

PATROL LEADER—That is so.

SCOUT JONES—Thank you. Now we will suppose that Scout Ward did with wilful intent empty the packet of sugar and refill it with salt. All this would have to have been done in the space of two minutes. Where would he put the emptied sugar? There is no sign of it on the ground or in the fire, therefore I can only suppose that he must have eaten it. To eat a pound of sugar in the space of less than two minutes would undoubtedly cause anyone to feel ill. I ask you, Gentlemen of the Jury, does my client look ill? (*To SCOUT WARD*) Smile, drat you. (*SCOUT WARD hurriedly changes his expression of misery to a smile.*)

S.M.—You have heard the evidence, Gentlemen. There now devolves upon you the heavy responsibility of deciding whether the accused be let off to enjoy his supper in peace—fortunately we have some tea in the store tent—or whether he be given six of the best with a signalling flag. (*The JURY go off right and return at once.*)

SCOUT ROBINSON—The unanimous decision of the Jury, me Lud, is “Not Guilty.”

S.H.—I discharge you, Scout Ward, without a blemish on your character. I sentence to six of the best a person or persons unknown; in all probability the grocer. A brilliant defence, Scout Jones.

SCOUT WHEELER—We’ll catch that grocer bending when he comes with the cart.

CURTAIN.

THE SPIRIT OF THE SHIP.
A Short Fantasy for Fourteen Scouts.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

ALBERT }

DAVID } TWO BOYS

THE SPIRIT OF THE SHIP.

1st CABIN BOY.

2nd CABIN BOY.

THE CAPTAIN.

THE MATE.

THE LEADER OF THE MUTINEERS.

THE VOICE OF TIME.

FIVE MUTINEERS.

SCENES.

1. In the Hold of the Ship.

2. On the Deck of the Ship.

3. Same as Scene I.

4. Same as Scene II.

5. Same as Scenes I and III.

SCENE I.

(In front of the drop curtain. In the hold of the old ship. The light is subdued. There is an old box on the right of the stage. Voices are heard off left, shouting.)

ALBERT *(off left)*— Pull her over to starboard!

DAVID *(off left)*— Aye aye, sir.

ALBERT — Beautifully done. Help me to drop anchor. Good, she's safely moored. Now let's go below and have a swill of grog.

(ALBERT and DAVID, dressed in shorts and open shirts with bare legs, come running on left. They sit down right by the box, and drink in turns from a bottle of lemonade.)

ALBERT—It's been a fine voyage, except for that rough bit in the Bay of Biscay.

DAVID—Yes, I thought we might have sunk at any moment. I'm glad we're safe in harbour.

ALBERT—So am I. That part round the Cape of Good Hope was pretty tough going. Gosh! David, I love this old ship.

DAVID—And I do. She must have been a fine ship in her day. What adventures she must have had. Real adventures, I mean, not make-believe ones.

ALBERT—I wish she could speak to us and tell us her story.

(The SPIRIT OF THE SHIP enters quietly right and stands just behind the BOYS. The SPIRIT is dressed in a long flowing robe.)

SPIRIT—Your wish shall be granted, young boys. *(The BOYS jump up and retire towards the middle of the stage looking rather frightened. They cling to one another.)* Fear not, I am the Spirit of the Ship. For many years I, once a proud ship, filled with the glory of a roving life on the Seven Seas, have lain on the snore, a sorry wreck of my past glory. My masts have gone; of my deck which once gleamed like drifted snow in the warm sunlight of many a tropical shore but little is left. My ribs which have battled valiantly with heavy seas stick out ominously in many places. For years, men and women have passed me by, some with a laugh, some with a sneer, and some with just an idle glance. You boys have taken me to your young hearts, and by your happy games of voyages in me you have awakened in me, once more, life and pride in my long

ALBERT *(moving right towards the SPIRIT, and pulling DAVID with him)*— Oh please tell us of your career, Good Ship.

SPIRIT—Gladly would I tell you of my career, but, alas! there is one part of my life which it

shames me to tell. The one unhappy blot in a career of service to mankind.

DAVID—Tell us, oh tell us, Good Ship.

SPIRIT—Then I will tell you, young boys, since you have said that you love my old timbers. And I will tell you first of the evil part in my career, that I may try to forget it.

(The SPIRIT OF THE SHIP moves to the extreme right, and the two BOYS sit at his feet.)

It happened one day as we lay becalmed off the coast of Portugal. The crew were the roughest, most villainous lot that ever went to sea, but the Captain and the Mate were two of the finest sailors afloat. For this very reason the villainous crew hated them and planned a mutiny. The Captain had two cabin boys, about as big as yourselves, and though they were small their hearts were as black as the rest of the crew. These cabin boys were bribed by the promise of a large reward, to join the crew in a mutiny against the Captain and his Mate . . .

(The drop curtain is raised. The SPIRIT OF THE SHIP and the two BOYS remain on the extreme right of the stage.)

SCENE II.

(On the main stage. The deck of the ship. The deck of the old ship in the hey-day of her career. On the right is the CAPTAIN'S cabin with a door facing the stage. Only two sides of the cabin need be shewn. The side of the ship can be represented by hessian pinned on to a frame running the length of the stage along the front. The CAPTAIN and the MATE are in the cabin. The members of the CREW are sitting left. They look very sullen and cast glances at the CAPTAIN'S cabin. One- of the CREW shuffles up to the cabin, listens at the door, then returns quietly to the others. The two CABIN BOYS enter left. The CREW stand up, two of them clutch the Boys and all stand at the extreme left of the stage.)

LEADER OF THE MUTINEERS—Now's our time, you lads. You know what you've got to do. *(To the FIRST BOY)* You rush up to the bows, then holler for all you're worth. *(To the SECOND BOY)* You run to the cabin and yell for help. Tell the Captain that your friend has broken his leg, or his blasted neck, if you like. That will get the Captain and the Mate out of the way. Then we'll all creep into the cabin, and when the officers *(he spits)* return all we've got to do is to surround them in the cabin, and the ship is ours. Got it, men? Now, you lads, get on with it. If you succeed you get £3 a-piece: but if you fail us you'll both get the biggest flogging of your young lives. See? Go on, get on with it.

(The CREW go off left, while the first BOY creeps past the cabin and runs off right. After a few seconds, there is a howling off right. The SECOND BOY runs up to the cabin and bangs on the door.

CAPTAIN *(from within)*—What is it?

SECOND BOY—Please, sir, Bill's fallen. I think he must have broken his leg.

CAPTAIN—Where is he?

SECOND BOY—Up in the bows, sir. Oh, do go and help him.

CAPTAIN *(running out and calling to the MATE)*—Bring a rug, will you? *(The CAPTAIN runs off right, followed by the MATE carrying a rug. The SECOND BOY tiptoes to the left and beckons the MUTINEERS, who creep along and enter the cabin. A moment later the CAPTAIN and the MATE return, the former carrying the BOY wrapt in the rug. They enter the cabin, the SECOND BOY bangs the door to, then stands laughing loudly. The drop curtain is lowered behind the SPIRIT OF THE SHIP and the two BOYS.*

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

Scene III.

(In front of the drop curtain. As SCENE I. The SPIRIT OF THE SHIP raises his right arm.)

SPIRIT—And so the gallant kindly Captain and Mate were overpowered. The mutineers set them adrift in a small boat, and after many dangers – they landed on a desolate part of the Portuguese coast. *(There is silence for a few seconds.)* If only I could have that time over again with a happier ending, I could spend my last days joyfully in happy memories of a perfect life.

DAVID—If only we two could be the cabin boys!

SPIRIT—If only!

(A deep voice off left begins speaking. It is the VOICE OF TIME. When the VOICE starts, the SPIRIT OF THE SHIP and the two BOYS are startled, then listen intently.)

VOICE—I am the Voice of Time. Thou, O Great Ship, hast served time faithfully for many years. If thou so desirest, thy wish shall be granted, and the day of thy shame shall be lived over again. These two boys, if they have the courage, shall have their wish also, and shall live it over again with thee as the cabin boys. If their courage fails them not, they shall change the story of that day long ago from tragedy to victory.

ALBERT—O we'll do it, we'll do it. Good Ship.

SPIRIT *(joyfully)*—They will do it, they are not afraid. So be it, O Voice of Time.

(The drop curtain is raised. The SPIRIT OF THE SHIP and the two BOYS go off right.)

Scene IV.

(On the main stage. As ACT II.) (As in SCENE II, the MUTINEERS are sitting left. They had better sit a little longer in order to give the two boys time to don a pair of seamen's trousers and a jersey each. One of the CREW shuffles up to the cabin door as before, listens at the door, then returns quietly to the others. The two Boys, now dressed as CABIN BOYS enter left. They look nervous, specially DAVID. The CREW stand up, and, two of them clutching the two BOYS, they stand as before on the extreme left of the stage.)

LEADER OF THE MUTINEERS—Now's our time. You know what you've got to do.

ALBERT *(at first nervously, then gaining confidence)*—Aye aye, we know what to do. He goes to the bows and hollers for help; then I go to the Captain and Mate and pretend he's broken his leg. While they're out of the way, I give you the signal to rush into the cabin, then you can overpower them and take the ship. How much do we get out of it?

LEADER OF THE MUTINEERS—If you succeed you get £3 a-piece but if you fail you'll both get the biggest flog your young lives. See? Go on, get on with it.

(The CREW go off left, and the two BOYS are left alone on the stage.)

DAVID—What are we going to do, Albert?

ALBERT—Listen, David. I've thought it all out, but there's no time to explain. You do your part and leave it to me. When the Skipper comes to you in the bows tell him the crew have mutinied.

DAVID — Righto, Albert, I'll do my best.

ALBERT—Good kid, David.

DAVID *(looking round)*— I say, Albert, she is fine, isn't she?

ALBERT— Yes, she's a beauty. Just as I always imagined her to be.

DAVID—And me. We mustn't let her down, must we?

ALBERT—No, we mustn't. Good-luck, David.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

DAVID—Good-luck, Albert.

(DAVID *squeezes* ALBERT'S hand then runs off right. ALBERT looks wonderingly around for a moment or two, then he becomes very alert. There is a prolonged cry from DAVID off right. ALBERT pauses a moment, then runs to the cabin door and bangs on it.)

CAPTAIN (*from within*)—What is it?

ALBERT—Please, sir, he's fallen. I think he's broken his leg.

CAPTAIN (*opening the door*)—Where is he?

ALBERT—Up in the bows, sir. Oh, do go and help him.

CAPTAIN (*running out and calling to the MATE*)—Bring a rug will you? (*The CAPTAIN runs off right, followed, by the MATE carrying a rug. ALBERT looks furtively left, creeps to the open door of the cabin and removes the key from the inside. Then he gives a low whistle and beckons left. The CREW quietly come on and creep into the cabin. When they are all within, ALBERT slams the door to and locks it. There are angry cries from inside and a banging on the door.*

At that moment, the CAPTAIN and the MATE come running on right, followed by DAVID.)
ALBERT—I've locked them in the cabin, sir. They were going to take the ship. Here's the key. (*He hands the key to the CAPTAIN.*)

CAPTAIN—I know, I know. Good lads, you've saved the ship. We'll not forget this. Now go below while we deal with the mutineers.

(*The BOYS run off left. The CAPTAIN and the MATE draw revolvers.*)

Now, men, we've got you covered. I am going to unlock the door, and you will walk quietly out, your hands above your heads, when I open the door. (*The drop curtain is lowered.*)

SCENE V.

Same as SCENES I. and III. The SPIRIT OF THE SHIP is standing on the extreme right of the stage.

VOICE OF TIME (*off left*) – Art thou satisfied, Good Ship?

SPIRIT OF THE SHIP—Yes, O Voice of Time, I am satisfied and I am happy. (*The two BOYS run on left. They are dressed once again in shorts and shirts. They stand breathless by the SPIRIT OF THE SHIP.*)

ALBERT—Did we save you, Good Ship?

SPIRIT OF THE SHIP—Yes, you have done your work well and with a good courage. (*Louder*) Yes, Voice of Time, thanks to two brave young hearts, evil memories are blotted out, and now I can live to the end of my days with happy thoughts of a long and unsullied career. Now I can tell you the whole story of my career, but not tonight, not tonight. Tomorrow," if you will play your games again in me, then I will tell you all my story. Till then, farewell.

(*The SPIRIT goes off right. The BOYS stand still and look after him. They remain silent for a few moments, then ALBERT becomes wide-awake again.*)

ALBERT—Come on, David, it's tea-time.

DAVID—I'm glad we managed to save the old ship, Albert, *our* ship.

ALBERT—Tomorrow we will go for a voyage to New Zealand, then afterwards, afterwards .

DAVID—We shall hear the story of the ship.

ALBERT—Yes, the story of *our* ship. Come on, David. (*The BOYS go off left.*)

CURTAIN.

SAINT GEORGE FOR THE WOLF CUBS.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

A Short Play for Twelve Wolf Cubs.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

SAINT GEORGE.

BOBBY - Sixer.

Wolf Cubs of the Brown Six

BARRY, MALCOLM, JOHN, LESLIE, CYRIL

OLD WOMAN

RAGGED CHILDREN (4 or 5).

SCENE I.

The Pack Headquarters.

Mtain. The members of the t various Cub tests.

(In front of the drop curtain. The members of the BROWN Six are engaged in various Cub tests. BOBBY THE SIXER sits on the table right, his legs dangling, teaching knots to CYRIL. BARRY is teaching Semaphore to JOHN, and Malcolm is teaching LESLIE the Saints of the Flag. JOHN is a very unwilling learner and looks thoroughly bored.)

BARRY—Oh, come on, John, you'll never learn to signal unless you buck up.

JOHN—Oh, what's the good of learning to signal? What do they have telephones for anyway?

BOBBY—Well, Akela said we ought to do some Re . . . Re . . . something or other, some . . . you know, going over things again in case we'd forgotten them.

BARRY—Revision, Bobby.

BOBBY—Who?

BARRY—It's not a who. It's an it.

BOBBY—*What* do you mean?

BARRY—Revision; that's the word Akela used.

BOBBY—Oh that! Well I knew that, of course. All right, we'll do some of that of the Saints of the Flag. I expect you've all forgotten them.

(The CUBS gather round BOBBY who is still on the table.)

Er . . . let's see . . . who is the Patron Saint of Ireland?

BARRY—Do you mean of Northern Ireland or of Eire?

BOBBY—I don't know, it doesn't say. You always know too much, don't you? It just says Ireland. I expect they have to share the same saint as there aren't enough to go round. Anyway, it's St. Patrick. Mind you remember that.

MALCOLM—I like St. George. He killed dragons. I'd love to kill a dragon.

JOHN—Kill a dragon? Why, you couldn't even kill that fly in the jam-pot when we had that Saturday outing.

MALCOLM—What's a fly anyway? But a dragon, a great big horny dragon breathing out fire! But life is all so dull now.' There aren't any dragons any more, not even in the Zoo.

(There is a sudden blackout, then a spotlight is shone on the middle of the drop curtain revealing ST. GEORGE standing on a low pedestal. He wears a, helmet, a long white surcoat with the cross of St. George; in his right hand he carries a sword, and in his left a shield bearing the Cross of St. George. The CUBS jump up and retire to the right of the stage, staring at the figure)

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

ST. GEORGE—Ye are wrong, young Wolf Cubs, for I tell you that dragons abound in these days as much as in my days; nay, more.

MALCOLM—It's St. George, St. George!

BARRY—Please, sir, I'm sure you're right about the dragons. You must be because you're a saint, but please, Mr. St. George . . . er St. Mr. George . . . er Your Saintship, we've never seen a dragon. Where are they?

ST. GEORGE—Yea, thou hast seen them. Boy; but thou knowest them not.

BOBBY—Where are they, Sir Saint. They've none in the Zoo.

ST. GEORGE (*laughing*)—Nay, Boy, they are not to be found there. They are free and they roam everywhere.

LESLIE—Oh, I would love to see a dragon, St. George.

ST. GEORGE—Then, Wolf Cubs, come with me if ye have the courage. They have made me the Patron Saint of all Scouts. Come with me, Wolf Cubs, come to the Enchanted Forest and ye shall see.

CYRIL—Will it be dark?

ST. GEORGE—It will be very dark in places, but if ye see aright, there is also great beauty in the Enchanted Forest. Do ye come?

CYRIL—Are you going, Bobby?

BOBBY—Of course I am going.

CYRIL—Then I will come too.

LESLIE—So will I.

MALCOLM—And I will.

JOHN—And me.

BARRY—Go on, Bobby, lead the way.

ST. GEORGE (*raising his sword*)—Come, Wolf Cubs, follow me to the Enchanted Forest.

(ST. GEORGE *turns and walks through the drop curtains. The CUBS follow in a mass behind BOBBY. Music plays loudly, then softly all through the scenes in the Enchanted Forest. Murmurs of the Forest from Wagner's "Siegfried" makes a lovely background to the Forest scenes.*)

SCENE II.

The Enchanted Forest.

(*On the main stage. The light is rather subdued. If possible there are representations of trees, or real bushes, about the stage. ST. GEORGE enters slowly left, followed by the CUBS in a cluster.*)

BOBBY—The Enchanted Forest!

CYRIL—It's . . . it's rather dark, isn't it?

BOBBY—You're not frightened, are you, Cyril?

CYRIL—Oh n. . . n . . . no, Bobby.

(ST. GEORGE *stands back centre and watches.*)

JOHN—Are there really dragons in this Forest, St. George?

ST. GEORGE—There are. Are ye afraid. Wolf Cubs?

BARRY—Not while you are with us, St. George.

(*Enter an OLD WOMAN right. She is dressed in a long black cloak and carries painfully a load of wood. She passes slowly in front. The CUBS about the stage stand and watch her. The OLD WOMAN stops in the middle of the stage, puts down her sticks and looks exhausted. The CUBS are still watching. BARRY makes a forward movement towards her, then looking round, draws back.*)

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

The OLD WOMAN makes to pick up her wood. This time BARRY and CYRIL go forward and pick up the bundle. They go off left, the OLD WOMAN smiling her thanks.)

ST. GEORGE (*joyously holding up his sword*)—On! On! Further into the Enchanted Forest!

CURTAIN.

SCENE III.

Another Part of the Enchanted Forest.

(In front of the drop curtain. Enter ST. GEORGE followed by BOBBY, LESLIE, MALCOLM and JOHN left. In the middle of the stage there is an ugly pile of litter-paper, tins, boxes and so on. The BOYS are talking excitedly to ST. GEORGE.)

BOBBY—Do you live in the Enchanted Forest, St. George?

ST. GEORGE—No. My home is everywhere, watching Scouts in all lands.

JOHN—I would like to see a real dragon.

LESLIE—Oh, you wouldn't, John. You'd run for miles.

JOHN—I wouldn't. Where, are the dragons, St. George?

ST. GEORGE—The dragons are everywhere. Canst thou not see them? *(They are near the litter on the ground.)*

MALCOLM—Oh, look at all that litter. What a shame to spoil this lovely wood!

(ST. GEORGE stands still on the right and watches.)

JOHN—They ought to be fined for that.

(The BOYS move on towards the right, then hesitate and look back at the pile of litter. BOBBY turns back.)

BOBBY—I say, what about burning and burying all this stuff?

LESLIE—Oh yes; have you got a match, Bobby?

BOBBY—Not here, it's too dangerous under the trees. Let's take it up to that clearing and burn it there on that bare earth we saw.

LESLIE—Righto, I'll come and help you.

(BOBBY and LESLIE go off right with the pile of litter. ST. GEORGE raises his sword.)

ST. GEORGE (*joyously*)—Further on into the Enchanted Forest.

CURTAIN.

SCENE IV.

Another Part of the Enchanted Forest.

(There is a table right laden for a meal. ST. GEORGE and the remaining two CUBS enter right.)

MALCOLM—Oh look! *(He rushes to the table and looks at it.)*

JOHN—Gosh, what a spread! Er . . . may we eat some of this, St. George?

MALCOLM—Oh! Where will we start, John?

JOHN—What couldn't I do to that cream horn?

MALCOLM—Look at that jelly, all lovely and wobbly. I'm starting on . . . Oh, but, John, what about the others,

JOHN (*pointing round the table*)—Sponge cakes, bananas . . . the others? . . . chocolate biscuits . . . oh, the others? Yes, we must get them here before we start.

MALCOLM—Please, St. George, how can we find the others?

ST. GEORGE—Ye learn to Semaphore in your Pack?

JOHN—Oh . . . oh yes, I can signal, at any rate as far as the letter S. But they'd never

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

see it in this thick forest.

ST. GEORGE—Everything can be seen in the Enchanted Forest.

MALCOLM—Send a message, John.

JOHN—Well, I . . . well, we haven't got the flags have we? What a pity.

MALCOLM—You don't need flags. I've seen Akela do it with two handkerchiefs.

JOHN (*without enthusiasm*)—*Oh . . . well, er . . . what will I send?*

MALCOLM—Suppose you send "Come here; food"—that ought to fetch them right enough.

JOHN—All right, I'll try. Lend me your handkerchief. I never thought Semaphore was any real use.

(JOHN goes to the left of the stage and signals the message very slowly and with much pausing to the left. While JOHN is signalling, four or five very ragged and ill-kept CHILDREN enter right. They stand and gaze wistfully at the food. The remainder of the CUBS come rushing on left.)

BARRY—Oh, I thought we would never find you again. Lucky you sent that message. Who sent it anyway?

MALCOLM—John did.

BARRY—John! It couldn't have been; he got it right.

JOHN—Shut up, Barry. Look what we've found.

MALCOLM—Jellies and cakes and . . . BOBBY (*rushing up to the table*)—H'm, I'm beginning to like Enchanted Forests.

(The CUBS make a rush for the table, look at all the food, and show signs of joyful anticipation. Suddenly BARRY notices the ragged CHILDREN. He looks at them, then at the table. He nudges the other CUBS who do the same, then all quietly leave the table and BARRY, half-ashamed of his good act, shoves the ragged CHILDREN to the table, and he and the other CUBS retire to the left.)

ST. GEORGE (*joyously*)—The Cub gives in to the Old Wolf. The Cub does not give in to himself. To the Pack Headquarters!

CURTAIN.

SCENE V.

The Pack Headquarters.

(In front of the drop curtain. Enter ST. GEORGE through the curtain, followed by the WOLF CUBS. The music has stopped.)

BARRY—Headquarters again. I could never have found the way back.

CYRIL—It was lovely in the Enchanted Forest, wasn't it? I was not a bit afraid either.

BOBBY—But we never saw a single dragon.

MALCOLM—No, we didn't. I would have killed it easily all by myself. You would have helped me all of you, wouldn't you?

ST. GEORGE—Wolf Cubs, can ye not understand that ye saw four of the greatest dragons that there are, and that ye killed all four? Today there are four less dragons in the Enchanted Forest.

LESLIE—Four dragons? I never saw four dragons. Where were they, St. George?

(The music begins softly again.)

ST. GEORGE—The first was the Dragon of Selfishness, and lo! two of you killed him. Two of you gave up seeing a part of the Enchanted Forest to help an Old Woman to carry a heavy load. The second was the Dragon of Litter, who, when he is loose, spoils God's beautiful countryside. Two of you killed him. The third was the Dragon of Laziness, and one of you

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killed him, by attention to the work ye are learning as Wolf Cubs. The fourth and last of the dragons was the Dragon of Greed, and him ye killed all together. Listen, Wolf Cubs, listen to your Patron Saint. All your life is an enchanted forest, and every minute of every day there are fierce dragons to be killed. Do as ye have done today, and ye will make good Cubs and bring happiness to the world ye live in.

BOBBY—It's all right when you're with us, St. George. But it all seems different when you're not there.

ST. GEORGE—I am always with you. Now I go. But remember, though ye see me not, yet always, always, I am with you

(The music of the Forest plays louder.)

BOBBY—Cubs; our thanks and three cheers for St. George.

(The CUBS cheer, led by BOBBY. ST. GEORGE holds his sword high, then lowers it over BOBBY'S head. At the last cheer, ST. GEORGE disappears behind the curtain.)

MALCOLM—He's gone. Oh, I did like him.

JOHN—Barry, Barry, come and help me with my Semaphore, will you?

CURTAIN.

THE TOYS ENTERTAIN.

A Short Play for Eighteen Wolf Cubs.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

KENNETH	A Wolf Cub.	4 TH SOLDIER
GOLLIWOG		5 TH SOLDIER
MR. NOAH		6 TH SOLDIER
MRS. NOAH		1 ST LION
STATION MASTER		2 ND LION
MRS JONES – Lady Passenger.		1 ST SAILOR
COLONEL		2 ND SAILOR
2 ND SOLDIER		3 RD SAILOR
3 RD SOLDIER		4 TH SAILOR

SCENE I. Kenneth's Nursery (in front of the drop curtain).

SCENE II. The Toys' Cup

SCENE III. As Scene I.

SCENE I.

In front of the Drop Curtain

(KENNETH is sitting on the floor. He has in front of him a box into which he places various small toy people which are lying on the floor in front of him. There are six (or four) TIN SOLDIERS, four (or two) TIN SAILORS, MR. and MRS. NOAH with their ark and a few animals including two LIONS, a GOLLIWOG, a STATION MASTER and a LADY PASSENGER from a set of model railway people.

KENNETH (picking up the GOLLIWOG and standing him by the join of the drop curtains) – Well, it's time for bed. Why do we have to go to bed? It's such a waste of time. You're the oldest,

Golly, so you can watch while I put the others away. Now, Soldiers, you've had a busy day. That was a terrific battle you had this afternoon. Sailors, you've had a lovely sail in the soap-dish in the bath. Now, Mr. and Mrs Noah, did you enjoy your day? The Ark looks nice and tidy since I dusted it for you. Go and make all the animals sleep well. Mr. Station Master, you'll have to wait till tomorrow to have the trains out, then you can give Mrs. Jones a ride in the Great Western. (KENNETH *shuts the lid of the box and places it out of sight behind the drop curtain He sits damn beside the. GOLLIWOG in the centre of the stage.*) You shall sleep on my bed tonight. Golly. Oh Golly, do you think I look after the toy people well? I do try to give them some fun every day. (KENNETH *leans over the GOLLIWOG, thus hiding him. The GOLLIWOG is drawn back behind the curtain, where the real GOLLIWOG is standing ready to spring forth.*) Oh, Golly, how I wish you could all speak to me, then you could tell me if you are happy in my care. I do try to look after you and give you all a good time. Do you like being my toys? (The real GOLLIWOG *springs out from the curtains. KENNETH, seeing him, steps back right in surprise.*)

GOLLIWOG—Yes, Kenneth, we are all very happy, and we do like being your toys. You look after us and give us a real good time. See, I come with a message from the toy people. Because you have been so good to us and have taken such care of us, we invite you to come to us and we will try to give you a good time in return. Will you come, Kenneth?

KENNETH—I never thought you could speak, Golly. I wonder if all the others can speak too. Oh, yes, Golly, I will come. Thank you, how lovely.

GOLLIWOG—Come then; follow me to the toy shelf. (KENNETH *and GOLLIWOG go through the parting of the drop curtains.*)

SCENE II.

On the Main Stage.

(*The living toy people are all standing in a line, right to left SOLDIERS, SAILORS, MRS. JONES, the STATION MASTER, MR. NOAH, MRS. NOAH, and two LIONS. The STATION MASTER carries a whistle and a green flag, and MRS. JONES has a green umbrella. The toys remain absolutely still as KENNETH and GOLLIWOG come through the drop curtain. KENNETH goes along the line of the TOYS looking at them all curiously. As he and GOLLIWOG come to the centre after looking at them, the TOYS spring to life. The SOLDIERS stiffly take two paces forward, the SAILORS jump into line, the STATION MASTER and MRS. JONES come into line like a railway train. Last of all, MR. and MRS. NOAH take up their positions in the line, leaving the LIONS behind. KENNETH and GOLLIWOG have taken up their positions on the extreme right of the stage.*)

GOLLIWOG—I have the honour to present to you your own toy family.

KENNETH—Er . . . this is a surprise, how do you do, everybody?

(*The 1ST SOLDIER and the COLONEL come forward and stand in front of the line.*)

COLONEL—Atten-shun!

MRS. NOAH (*bustling up to the COLONEL*)—Thanks awfully. Colonel, I love them.

COLONEL—What do you mean, Madame? I said “Atten-shun”.

MRS. NOAH—Oh dear, how disappointing. I understood you to say “Have a bun.” (MRS. NOAH *retires to the line again.*)

GOLLIWOG—MRS. Noah is very deaf, you know; the brush slipped when they were painting her ears on.

COLONEL—Toys, present arms!

(The SOLDIERS do so in the correct manner, the SAILORS salute, the STATION MASTER presents his green flag smartly and MRS. JONES presents her green umbrella. MRS. NOAH looks at them all, wondering what they are doing. MR. NOAH rushes up to the COLONEL with his arms outstretched and shakes his hands.)

COLONEL—What are you doing, Mr. Noah?

MR. NOAH—Did I not understand you to say “Present arms”?

GOLLIWOG *(to KENNETH)*—I think you had better start inspecting them quick, before they all have a fight.

(MR. NOAH retires to the line, KENNETH and GOLLIWOG walk slowly down the line inspecting them all. When he has finished the COLONEL bawls out “Stand at ease”. MR. NOAH comes forward very importantly with a large scroll in his hand. The Colonel retires to his place in the line.)

MR. NOAH—H’m, dear Mr. Kenneth. On behalf of the Toys gathered on this suspicious occasion, I wish to welcome you to our humble habitude. *(The TOYS cheer.)*

GOLLIWOG *(to KENNETH)*—Mr. Noah loves long words but he doesn’t always get them right.

MR. NOAH—Your presence here, Kenneth, gives us great gravitation. We hope this evening to repay you some of the oblongations we owe to you by regulating you with an entrainment. Although quite unrehorsed, we trust that you will enjoy same.

GOLLIWOG—What he really means, between you and me, is that for a change the Toys are going to entertain you.

KENNETH—Oh, I see, how nice of them.

MR. NOAH—The first itinerary on the propaganda will be given by the SOLDIERS.

(The SOLDIERS march forward, to the centre of the stage. The other TOYS stand round at the back or wings of the stage watching. KENNETH and GOLLIWOG stand right.)

COLONEL—My gallant men. We are now to have the honour of entertaining Kenneth. We are only six (or four) but we will not flinch from our duty. Shall we have a battle or shall we have a grand military tattoo instead?

MRS. JONES—Oh dear, I do hope they’ll not have a battle. It’s so dangerous because they’re not very clever at aiming those spouts of theirs. I shall put up my green umbrella, then perhaps they’ll think I’m a gas attack and keep away.

2ND SOLDIER—Oh, gallant Colonel, we would wish to entertain Kenneth with a good battle.

COLONEL—So be it, my men.

MRS. JONES—Oh dear *(she pats up her green umbrella,).*

COLONEL—Mr Kenneth, we Soldiers wish to present for your entertainment a very thrilling battle which will be fought on the best lines. This battle will be known to history as the “Battle of Kenneth,” and will be fought between the Red and the Green troops. The Green troops will win.

STATION M.—How does he know that the Green troops will win? I always thought the whole idea of a battle was to see who would win-

GOLLIWOG—Ah, but you mast remember, Mr. Station Master, that there can never be any doubts in the Colonel’s mind’ besides, he’s on the side of the Green troops himself.

MRS. NOAH—Who’s going to ride through green hoops?

MR. NOAH—No, no, my dear, the Colonel said . . . ah, one moment, my love; here is the Colonel. *(They confer in whispers.)* Indeed, yes, Mr. Colonel, I will consider it a great honour to start the battle. I shall say the words “One—two—three—Go.”

(The SOLDIERS line up, two (or three) on either side of the stage. MR. NOAH stands in the middle, his right arm upraised holding a handkerchief. MR. NOAH calls out "One—two— three—Go," and drops his right arm. The SOLDIERS immediately shoot at each other with their pop guns. MR. NOAH, who has not had time to get out of the way, runs off to the back of the stage, rubbing his hind quarters. MRS. JONES has put up her green umbrella. Music plays and the SOLDIERS advance in time to the music. They shoot at each other again and all promptly fall down "Dead". They rise, use their guns as bayonets and all "Kill" each other a second time. The battle then becomes a kind of war dance in time to the music. At the end of it the Colonel raises his sword or gun and cries "Halt". The SOLDIERS all shake hands and the onlookers cheer. The COLONEL goes up to KENNETH and salutes stiffly. The other SOLDIERS line up on the left of the stage. The music stops.)

KENNETH—Thank you, Mr. Colonel, that was a beautiful battle.

MRS. JONES—Thank goodness, that's safely over! Last time they had a battle one of them got his head knocked off. We had an awful time finding the glue, before we managed to get it stuck on again.

GOLLIWOG—What's the next item on the programme, Mr. Noah?

MR. NOAH—H'm, I have to perform you that the next . . . the next . . . er . . . well what you said, will be our own Circus, the Noah's Ark Circus. This consists of our perforating Lions.

GOLLIWOG *(to KENNETH)*—He means performing Lions.

MRS. JONES—Lions! Goodness gracious! I shall put up my green umbrella, then perhaps they'll think I'm a tree in the jungle.

(The SOLDIERS grasp their guns, MRS. JONES puts up her umbrella, the SAILORS clench their fists. MR. and MRS. NOAH go off left, and return with the two LIONS on a leash. The LIONS tug MR. and MRS. NOAH on to the stage. Arrived in the middle, the LIONS growl at one another. MR. and MRS. NOAH unleash them, then run quickly to the left of the stage.)

MR. NOAH—The display will now commence. These Lions are able to understand what is said to them. They will obey my orders. I will order them to lie. Lions lie. *(The LIONS remain standing)* H'm, lie! *(Very loudly)* Lie. *(MR. NOAH looks worried, then smiles as though an idea has struck him. He raises his hat with a flourish to the audience.)* That is their first trick.

STATION M.—But they're not lying, Mr. Noah. They're standing up.

MR. NOAH—There, my dear sir, I fear you are quite wrong. These lions promised to obey my commands, but they have not done so. In that case you will agree that they are liars. Therefore they *are* lying.

GOLLIWOG— Well, I suppose that's right, but it seems queer to me somewhere. What do you think, Mr. Station Master?

STATION M.— Oh, well, if Mr. Noah says it's right, it must be. He *is* so very clever you know.

MR. NOAH— And now my second command. Lions— march. *(The LIONS start dancing and capering about, jumping up in the air, and generally frolicking round. MR. NOAH looks worried, and he keeps calling out "March-march". The LIONS continue with their frolics. At length MR. NOAH has another brain-wave and smiles.)* Thank you, very good, Lions, thank you.

MRS. JONES— But that didn't seem much like a march to me, Mr. Noah,

MR. NOAH— My dear lady, when I gave these Lions the command "March", it was my intention that they should illustrate the month of March which, as you will know, is called the mad month. To my mind, Madam, they did it to perfection.

GOLLIWOG— Well, I don't know, I suppose it's all right.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

KENNETH— He certainly *is* clever, isn't he?

MR. NOAH — The last itinerary in our Circus will be a most daring ride on the Lions around the arena. The Lions will run at break-neck speed.

GOLLIWOG — I wonder how he's going to get out of this one.

(MRS. NOAH *most gingerly mounts on the back of the two LIONS, one knee on the back of each, and holds on to the leashes for dear life, pulling them tight. She is very nervous. The LIONS staff off very slowly round the stage, MRS. NOAH pulling hard on to the leashes. MR. NOAH bows to the audience.*)

KENNETH— Very good, Mr. Noah. But I thought yon said that the lions would run at break-neck speed.

MR. NOAH— And so they are doing. To keep the Lions at such a slow speed, my wife has to tug so hard at the reins that she is well-nigh breaking their necks. I am sure you must all agree that it is a break-neck speed.

GOLLIWOG—What a man!

MR. NOAH—Stop! (Mrs. NOAH *promptly falls off*) What did you do that for?

MRS. NOAH—Well, you said "Drop", didn't you?

(MR. and MRS. NOAH *take the reins of the LIONS, and bow gracefully to the audience. The LUDNS stidddenly rush off to the left, dragging MR. and MRS. NOAH with them whilst they are in the middle of their bow.*)

GOLLIWOG—And now, who's next? What-ho, Sailors, heave-ho, me hearties.

IST SAILOR—Aye aye, sir.

GOLLIWOG—What have you got for us?

IST SAILOR—Shiver me timbers, would you like a hornpipe?

KENNETH—Oh rather, that would be fine.

MRS. JONES (*lowering her umbrella*)—I always think that hornpipes are so much safer than battles or lions.

(*The SAILORS come to the front, and dance a simple hornpipe to music. The others stand or sit round the sides. MR. and MRS. NOAH return with the LIONS and all sit at the back of the stage. At the conclusion of the hornpipe all clap.*)

KENNETH—Thank you, that was topping.

GOLLIWOG—And now everybody seems to have done an item except the Station Master, Mrs. Jones and myself. We have a . . . a . . . surprise item. We have . . . h'm . . . written a short poem for the occasion.

KENNETH—Oh, how nice. I like poems; that is if they are not too full of long words, you know.

MRS. JONES—That's all right, we don't know any big words.

KRNNEETH—Oh, I am glad.

GOLLIWOG—Come on, Mr. Station Master.

(GOLLIWOG, *with the STATION MASTER on his left and MRS. JONES on his right, stands in the middle of the stage. They all look rather self-conscious and nervous.*)

Golliwog }

Station m. }

Mrs. Jones }

Three toys from the nursery cupboard are we,

A Golliwog, a Station Master and a Ladye.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

GOLLIWOG—

I'm Golliwog!
I dance and jog!
Lie still as a log
Or jump like a dog.

STATION M.—

I'm Station Master
On the line
Of Kenneth's trains
I like it fine

MRS. JONES—

As passenger
I'd like it more
But for that bad
Curve by the door.

GOLLIWOG—

I'm far too big
For your small train;
If I got on
T'would break in twain;

STATION M.—

I love the trains.
That come and go!
Some are fast
And some are slow.

MRS. JONES—

If they were safe
I'd like them too,
But accidents
Have made me blue.

Golliwog }

Station m. }

Mrs. Jones }

Three toys from the nursery cupboard are we,

A Golliwog, a Station Master and a Ladye.

(They bow and the onlookers clap.)

KENNETH—Thank you, that was jolly good. I'm sorry about the bad curve, Mrs. Jones, but father is giving me a new set of rails for my birthday the day after tomorrow so it will soon be all right.

GOLLIWOG—Now it's your turn, Kenneth. Could you teach us Arithmetic? You know, how much is eleven divided by three or something?

KENNETH—Eleven divided by three? Oh, I couldn't do that, it doesn't go.

MRS. JONES—Doesn't go! Dear me, what is the good of having Arithmetic if things don't go?

STATION M.—What about some history? Now, when did Queen Elizabeth come to the throne?

KENNETH—Did she? Oh yes, of course she did. But that was a very long time ago. I don't

GOLLIWOG—

I sleep on Ken –
Neth's bed at night,
The eiderdown
Is warm and bright.

STATION M.—

I blow my whistle
And wave my flag:
Trains are on time
They must not lag.

MRS. JONES—

Today we had
An awful crash
That L.M.S.
So fast does dash.

GOLLIWOG—

I thank you, Ken-
Neth, for the care
Bestowed on me
I think it's rare.

STATION M.—

For trains that come,
And trains that go
I thank you, Ken-
Neth, ever so.

MRS. JONES—

Good rides on trains
I owe to you,
But that bad curve
Do please renew.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

think it matters much now. I'll tell yen what. Would you like me to teach you a game?

MR. NOAH—Ah, a most expellent preposition, Mr. Kenneth.

GOLLIWOG—Yes, we could play it in the cupboard at nights.

KHNNETH—Do you know Blindman's Buff?

GOLLIWOG—No; do shew it to us.

KENNETH—Well, someone has a bandage over his eyes so that he cannot see. Then he has to try to catch one of the others and guess who it is.

IST SOLDIER—Are we allowed to use heaw artillery?

KENNETH—I'll be on first, if you like, just to shew yon.

MRS. JONES—Here's a cloth. I'll bind your eyes.

(MRS. JONES *binds KENNETH'S eyes with a strip of butter muslin so that he can see; otherwise he might crash the footlights.*)

KENNETH—Right. Now I'm going to catch one of you. (KENNETH *gropes round for a few seconds, the TOYS dodging him. Then he gropes his way to the front of the stage. The drop curtains, are drawn quietly behind, and KENNETH is alone in front of the drop curtain. The box of toys is put back and the toy golliwog is placed just in the join of the curtains.*)

Where are you all? You're very clever. I believe you are all hiding. That's not fair, you know. If you don't come out, I shall take off the bandage. I shall count ten. 1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8—9—10.

(KENNETH *takes off the bandage.*) Why, they've all gone! Hello, are you there; Mr. Station Master, Mrs. Jones, Mr. Noah, Mrs. Noah? Oh of course, you're deaf [*shouting*] Mrs. Noah, Soldiers, Sailors. Oh dear Golly. (*Seeing the toy golliwog*) Oh, there you are. Golliwog. (KENNETH *picks him up.*) Oh, Golly, that was a good poem you know and it rhymed beautifully. (KENNETH *picks up the toys from the box.*) Soldiers, what a battle! Mrs. Jones, I am sorry there have been so many accidents in the railway lately. Yes, it's that curve by the door I know. But I'll not put you on any more trains until the new lines come. Thank you. Toys, for the jolly time you gave me. I am so glad you think I treat you well, because I like you all so much and I do try to look after you and give you all a good time. And I believe you arranged it all, Golly, you clever old thing.

CURTAIN.

KEEPING SHOP. *A Short Play for Wolf Cubs.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

OLD LADY

DAVID } - Two Wolf Cubs.

WALTER }

SMALL BOY

SMALL GIRL

OLD GENTLEMAN

SCENE.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

(A sweet shop. A counter is piled high with boxes of chocolates and jars of sweets. There is a shelf behind the counter with more boxes of chocolates behind. Dummy or empty boxes can be used. One chair is in front of the counter and one behind. The counter should be placed slightly diagonally across the stage. The OLD LADY is standing behind the counter arranging boxes. She looks rather worried.)

(Enter two WOLF CUBS.)

DAVID—'Afternoon. Two pen'oth of liquorice-all-sorts, please.

WALTER—What time is it, David?

DAVID—Quarter-past two.

WALTER—We shall have to buck up; the meeting's at half-past, isn't it?

OLD LADY—Quarter-past two, did you say it was?

DAVID—Yes, just turned.

OLD LADY—Oh dear. I wonder if either of you lads can tell me what time the London train gets in?

WALTER—Yes—2.35.

OLD LADY—Oh dear, I do hope she'll be all right, but I do feel that anxious about her.

DAVID—What's up, Missus; has something gone wrong?

OLD LADY—Well, you see, it's my little granddaughter what's coming home all alone by train. Mrs. Jones said she'd come and mind the shop for me while I went to meet her, but she's not turned up, and it'll be too late soon. My granddaughter's only six and I'm sure she'll get lost.

WALTER—Oh David, come here, I've got an idea. *(Beckons DAVID towards the door.)*

DAVID—You've got an idea; well, take care of it, you may never get another.

WALTER—Now, don't be an ass. Listen; what about keeping shop for her while she goes to the station?

DAVID—But what about the Pack meeting?

WALTER—Akela will understand when we tell him. After all, it will be a pretty useful "good turn" won't it?

OLD LADY—Here's your sweets, sonny, and fourpence change.

WALTER—Go on, tell her, David.

DAVID—No, you do it, it's your idea. Go on.

WALTER *(coming forward)*—Er . . . my friend and I want to know if you'll let us look after the shop while you go and meet your little girl.

OLD LADY—Oh, but you couldn't manage it.

DAVID—Oh, yes we can, but you'll have to hurry, the train will be in in a quarter of an hour.

WALTER—Yes, you'll just do it if you go at once. Goodbye.

OLD LADY *(putting on her coat and hat and fussing)*—Oh, I don't know what to say, I really don't, suppose . . . where's my hat . . . that's the till, look . . . chocolate bars are seven for sixpence . . . I am grateful to you lads, I am really. Be careful when you get those top jars down, won't you? Well, I shall not be long.

DAVID—Goodbye, and don't worry.

WALTER — We'll have a fortune for you when you come back.

(Exit OLD LADY.)

DAVID— I reckon Akela will call this a real good turn.

WALTER— So do I. Well, come on now, let's get to work. We'll do a record business for the Old Lady while she's away.

Nine Scout And Cub Plays

(DAVID *stays behind the counter*, WALTER *is in front.*)

DAVID— Yes, then she will be pleased when she comes back.

WALTER— You know what you want in business is the right manner. You want to be very polite to the customers and make them feel at home, then they buy an awful lot of stuff just to please you.

DAVID— I know. Listen. You stand at the door and be a shop-walker like those men in the big stores, and I'll stand behind the counter and sell the stuff.

WALTER— Right you are, that's a great idea; we ought to make lots of money that way.

DAVID — I'll tell you what, let's have a practice. We'll pretend there's a very swell lady just come in.

WALTER— O.K. I'll talk and you sell. Are you ready?

DAVID— Yes, go ahead.

WALTER (*at the door*) — Good afternoon, Madam. Very nice weather, isn't it?

DAVID — I should leave the weather alone; get down to the point.

WALTER— All right. I'll start again then.

DAVID— Good afternoon, Madam, is there anything I can shew you? Bars of chocolate, certainly, Madam; step this way, please. Mr. Jones, chocolate bars please.

WALTER— Chocolate bars, oh yes, just a little further down the counter, please; yes that's right, just opposite the humbug jar. Take a seat, Madam. Oh, I beg your pardon, there isn't one. Mr. Smith, kindly bring a seat over here from the . . . er . . . liquorice department will you?

DAVID— Certainly, Mr. Jones, certainly.

(DAVID *moves the chair in front of the counter towards the left.*)

WALTER—How many bars will you take, Madame, we're selling a great quantity of these just now. You'll take a dozen? Certainly, Madam. Shall we send them round to you or will you take them? You'll take them.

DAVID—That's lucky, because we couldn't send them, you idiot.

WALTER—Never mind, it's the right thing to say.

DAVID—Well, I shouldn't risk it if I were you.

WALTER—No, perhaps you're right, we'll wash out that last bit then. Thank you. Madam, that will be two shillings if you please. Thank you. Much obliged, good afternoon.

DAVID—Good afternoon, very much obliged, thank you, Madam. (DAVID *bows imaginary lady to the door.*)

WALTER (*returning*)—Well, that was all right, wasn't it?

DAVID—Yes, not bad, but I think you overdid it a bit.

WALTER—No, they like to be flattered a bit, you know. They'll come again, and tell their friends to come.

DAVID—Oh, look, here's a real customer.

WALTER—Oh lor! So it is. I feel all nervous now.

DAVID—It's all right, it's only a kid. Go on, do your stuff. (*Enter a very untidy SMALL Boy.*)

WALTER—Good afternoon, sir, what can I shew you?

SMALL BOY—Eh?

WALTER—I said, what can I show you? Would you care to see some nice . . . er . . . cream bars or . . . er . . . pear drops?

SMALL BOY—I ain't come 'ere to see things, I've come 'ere to eat 'em. What d'you think you

are anyhow, the Lord Mayor's Show or summat?

DAVID—What a rude boy!

WALTER—Look here, I'm not going to have any cheek from you.

SMALL BOY—Oh, you aren't, aren't you? Do you know what I'd do if I had a face like your'n?

DAVID—Here, let's turn him out, Walter.

WALTER—Get out before we throw something at you.

SMALL BOY—Right, but you'll lose all the money I was going to spend here. An 'ole threepence. I'll go to a decent shop I will where they treats you civil. (SMALL BOY *goes out followed to the door by indignant* WALTER.)

WALTER—Well, that's that. There's threepence gone west.

DAVID—Never mind. It wasn't worth it. If he'd stayed another minute I'd have thrown this jar at his head. Look out, here's someone else coming. It's a girl this time. Be gentle with her, Walter. (*Enter a* SMALL GIRL.)

WALTER—Trust me. I'll be like a father to her. She's only about eight. Good afternoon, Missie. What can we do for you?

SMALL GIRL—I want some sweets.

WALTER—Some sweets, certainly, Missie' now what kind would you like?

SMALL GIRL—I don't know.

WALTER—Well, perhaps I can help you to choose. Now, these fruit drops are very nice. Would you like some of these?

SMALL GIRL—Nao.

DAVID—Well, what about pear drops?

SMALL GIRL—Don't like them.

WALTER—Do you like peppermints?

SMALL GIRL—Nao—too hot.

DAVID—Jujubes?

SMALL GIRL—Too soft.

WALTER—Chocolate almonds?

SMALL GIRL—Too hard.

DAVID—Chocolate creams?

SMALL GIRL—Too sweet.

WALTER—Lor! what else have we, David?

SMALL GIRL—Oh, look at them boxes of chocolates up on the shelf.

WALTER—Would you like one of those?

SMALL GIRL—Oh, yes, I like them.

WALTER—Fetch them down, David. Here, I'll hold the chair for you.

DAVID—Right, have you got it? Here we are.

WALTER—Look out or you'll have them all down.

(SMALL GIRL *begins to giggle*.)

DAVID—H'm, she seems to think it's rather funny. Oh, bother, look out!

(*Great crash as boxes come tumbling down. SMALL GIRL roars with laughter.*)

DAVID—You wobbled the chair.

WALTER—I didn't. You shouldn't have looked round.

DAVID—Well, let's pick them up and put them on the counter then she can choose which she wants.

(Fallen boxes are placed on the counter.)

DAVID—Now, which one would you like? This one is, let me see, oh, yes, seven shillings; this one is five and six; and then these are . . . er . . . oh, yes, half-a-crown.

SMALL GIRL—That's a nice 'un, ain't it?

WALTER—Yes, that's a beauty, good weight too. It landed right on my head so I know.

(SMALL GIRL begins to giggle again.)

DAVID—That one is seven shillings. Would you like to take that one?

SMALL GIRL—Nao.

WALTER—Well, what would you like?

SMALL GIRL—I'll have a hap'orth of aniseed balls.

DAVID—Lor!

WALTER—All that for a halfpenny. Here you are, Missie. Phew!

SMALL GIRL—Goodbye, and thank you for being so funny.

(Exit the SMALL GIRL.)

DAVID—Funny?

WALTER—Funny be blowed. Now we'll have to get all those boxes back, I suppose.

DAVID—Walter, we've only gained a halfpenny so far, and the Old Lady will be back from the station soon. I did hope we'd be able to make her a lot of money.

WALTER—Yes, it's rotten; but we've done our best though, haven't we?

DAVID—Look, there's an Old Gentleman looking at the window. Perhaps he'll come. He's our last chance. Look out; he's coming.

(Enter OLD GENTLEMAN.)

WALTER—Good afternoon, sir. What can I show you?

OLD GENTLEMAN—Well, now, I want a nice box of chocolates for my little grandson. It's his birthday tomorrow. Have you got a nice big box?

WALTER—Oh, cheers, not half, we've got some beauties on the counter. Er . . . I mean to say . . . Yes, sir, if you will kindly step this way my colleague will attend to your wants.

DAVID—Yes, sir: this one is seven shillings and these are five and six, and the others . . . well, really, this is a beauty at seven shillings and if you'll buy that one – we'll wrap it up very neatly and put string round it . . .

WALTER—All for nothing, of course, no extra charge.

OLD GENTLEMAN—That's very kind of you. You seem to be very anxious to sell me that box of chocolates.

DAVID—Well, you see, sir, we were hoping to make some money for the Old Lady who owns the shop.

WALTER—We're minding the shop for her while she's gone to the station to meet a little girl.

OLD GENTLEMAN.—I see, you're doing a good turn, are you?

DAVID—Yes, sir, that's the idea, but I'm afraid it's not been a very good one so far. We had a fight with the first customer and the next one only spent a halfpenny.

WALTER—Er . . . you would like that box of chocolates, wouldn't you, sir?

OLD GENTLEMAN—Oh yes, I'm going to have the chocolates all right, and now I come to think of it, there are several other things I want as well.

DAVID—Oh, thank you, sir; that's topping of you.

OLD GENTLEMAN—Nothing of the sort. I just want to buy some presents for my grandson, that's all. When are you expecting the Old Lady to come back?

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WALTER—She ought to be back in a few minutes now.

OLD GENTLEMAN—Well, I'm in rather a hurry, so I'll give you the order now, then you can deliver the goods to my house tomorrow at four p.m. Of course I shall only allow you to do this on condition that you come in your uniform and stay to tea.

DAVID—Oh, rather; we'll come, thank you.

WALTER—Thank you, sir. That's jolly decent of you.

OLD GENTLEMAN—Now then to business. Take down my order, young man.

DAVID—Yes, sir, certainly, sir, and the next, sir.

WALTER—Idiot, you haven't had the first yet.

DAVID—Oh no, of course not, sorry. (*ALL laugh.*)

OLD GENTLEMAN—Well, to begin with, I want this box of chocolates, that's seven shillings.

DAVID—Chocolates . . . er - .. let me see CHOCKA-LAITS. Is that right, sir?

OLD GENTLEMAN—Near enough, then I want 2 pounds of fruit jellies.

DAVID—Oh . . . er . . . they're fourpence a quarter. What's that, Walter? That'll be long division or something, won't it?

WALTER—Not if it's got factors- Er . . . let me think, one quarter is 28 pounds. That must be wrong somewhere. It's beyond me.

OLD GENTLEMAN—Perhaps I can help you. It means four-pence for a quarter of a pound, that's 1/4 for a pound, 2/8 for 2 pounds.

WALTER—Isn't he quick? Excuse me, but are you a schoolmaster, sir?

OLD GENTLEMAN (*laughing*)—No, I'm afraid I'm not. Now to continue, I want one of those sets of smoker's outfits in chocolate which I saw in the window, a half-crown one, then I want five of those chocolate sailors, the shilling ones, and to finish up with I want this nice tin of slab toffee. How much is it?

WALTER—That's half-a-crown, sir. Oh, you *are* spending a lot of money.

OLD GENTLEMAN—Well, birthdays only come once a year, you know. Now then, Sonny, how much is all that?

DAVID—Oh . . . er . . . I'm not very good at sums; here, you have a go, Walter.

OLD GENTLEMAN—Suppose I add it up for you, shall I?

WALTER—Yes, sir, that would be fairest as you're going to pay for them. (*Slight pause.*)

OLD GENTLEMAN---Nineteen and eightpence. I'll tell you what, I'll have four penny bars of chocolate to make it up to the pound then you needn't give me any change for the note.

DAVID—You are a sport, sir, the Old Lady won't half be bucked.

OLD GENTLEMAN—Now don't forget you're to deliver the goods at four o'clock prompt at my house tomorrow. Here's my address. We'll have a real jolly birthday party. My grandson is a Wolf Cub too, and he and you will get on fine together. (*Hands his card to DAVID.*)

WALTER—Thank you very much, sir. Goodbye.

DAVID—Goodbye, sir, and thank you.

OLD GENTLEMAN—Goodbye till tomorrow.

(*Exit OLD GENTLEMAN.*)

WALTER—I say, what an old sportsman!

DAVID—Not half. Come on, let's get his things packed up, then we can call for them tomorrow. (*They begin to pile boxes together.*)

WALTER—The Old Lady ought to be here soon. I hope she's met the little girl, all right.

DAVID—If she comes soon, we shall be able to catch up the rest of the Pack. I think I know

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where they have gone to.

WALTER—We shall have plenty to tell them, shan't we? Oh, here they are.

(Enter the OLD LADY with a SMALL GIRL.)

OLD LADY— I got my little girl all right, but she'd 'a got lost as sure as fate if I 'adn't been there to meet her. That frightened she was, weren't you, duckie? Well, how did you two get on? Not much business doing these days, but it don't do to close the shop, for you never knows. Have you 'ad anyone in?

DAVID—Yes, quite a lot and we've drawn one pound.

WALTER—And a halfpenny.

DAVID—Oh ah! I nearly forgot that. One pound and a halfpenny.

OLD LADY – What! You've sold one pound's worth?

DAVID—Yes, here's the order, all paid for, and we're going to deliver them for you tomorrow.

OLD LADY—Well, really, I'm that grateful to yon, I don't know what to say.

WALTER—Oh, that's all right, Missus, we've enjoyed ourselves no end, haven't we, David?

DAVID—I should jolly well think we have. We shall just about do it, Walter, if we run.

OLD LADY—Here, wait a minute before you go; here's a small tin of toffee for you and the rest of your friends. You deserve a great deal for the help you've given me.

(OLD LADY hands a tin to the BOYS.)

WALTER—Thank you, it will be a peace-offering for being late.

DAVID—Thank you, Missus. See you tomorrow.

WALTER—Allow me to open the door for you, sir. We are very much obliged to you, sir. Shall I call a taxi?

DAVID *(laughing)*—Oh, stow it idiot. We shall have to run like rabbits.

(Door closes.)

THE END.