

Spotlight Publications

Sleeping Beauty

A mini-panto in verse
By Dave Buchanan



Sleeping Beauty (in rhyming couplets)

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CAST

Grotte the Grim, an evil witch

Mouldy & Gruff, Grotte's Personal Assistants

Lord Basil, the Royal Chamberlain

Nurse Merryweather

King Willy XIV of Harmonia

Queen Dilly

Fairy Gentle, a good fairy

Princess Titanya

Prince William, Titanya's brother

Prince Johnny, Titanya's other brother

Princess Anne (Annie), a friend of Titanya's

Prince Eric of Romagna

Chorus of Courtiers & Grottlings

Time - long ago

Place - the Kingdom of Harmonia

Sets - the Palace throne room, Grotte's grotto

MUSICAL NUMBERS

1. "Funeral March of a Marionette" (Gounod) (Grottlings)
2. "The Welly Boot Song" (Trad. Words Billy Connolly) (Nurse, William, Johnny, Titanya and Annie)
3. "My Favourite Things" (Sound of Music) (new words by D Buchanan) (Titanya)
4. "Can't Get You Out Of My Head" (Kylie Minogue) (Nurse & Dancers)
5. "Thriller" (Michael Jackson) (Dancers)
6. "Celebration" (Kool & the Gang) (Company)

Sleeping Beauty in Verse

Scene 1

Front of curtain. Enter Lord Basil, the Lord Chamberlain R

Basil Good evening, all, it is my duty
To tell the tale of the Sleeping Beauty.
A wondrous tale, I have to say,
Set in Harmonia, far away.
A kingdom fair, and ruled by Willy
The Fourteenth, and his consort Dilly.
As time went by the royal pair
Were keen to have a royal heir.
Their prayers were granted, you see,
With not one, not two, but three
Children, their pride and joys—
One daughter, and two little boys.
They were so proud, and soon the King
Announced: “We’ll have a christening!”
The Big Day approached, and invites were sent,
And everyone got one that was meant
To, but not on the list
Were those who wouldn’t be missed ...

Blackout

Scene 2

Sinister music, and a flash!

Enter, stage left, Grotte the Grim. She is dressed in black, with a pointed hat. She chuckles in crescendo as she comes centre stage to boos

Grotte Heh heh heh ha ha hee hee!

Hello, children, it's only me.

(Beat) Are you booing the great Grotte?

You think I care? Not a lot!

Her expression changes

Oh no, oh no, it's the Festive Season,

I can't think of any reason

Why people like Christmas. Do you?

Cries of "Yes!" Adlib

You really think it's tickety boo? (*"Yes!"*)

It's the pits, I've had enough

Of Christmas cards and plum duff,

And Santas going "Ho ho ho!",

I think it's simply got to go!

Oh yes it has!

"Oh no it hasn't!"

She thinks for a moment then ...

Ah! Eureka! Fab idea!

It has just occurred to me-ah.

I'll cancel Christmas! What do you say?

Delete it, make it go away!

Get rid of carols, I suppose

And maybe hijack Santa Claus –

Nobble his team of reindeer –

That'd make a Happy New Year!

She cackles

No more sleigh bells in the snow,

Tinsel, holly or mistletoe.

No more stars in eastern skies,

Or repeats of Morecambe and Wise.

No more old religious frescoes,

No more songs by Slade in Tesco's.

No more turkey Xmas dinners,

Or weeping, wailing X Factor winners.

(Pointing to a man in the audience) Look, that bloke is nodding his head,
Agrees with everything I've said!

I know, I'll trend it on Twitter!

#cancelxmas, that's better!

But wait – I've had a sudden thought,

I'm gutted, sad, distraught –

My broomstick – my horseless carriage

Is getting fixed at (*local*) garage!
 Oh sorrow, sorrow!
 (*Changes expression*) I'll do it tomorrow!

Audience reaction. At this point, Mouldy and Gruff, Grotte's personal assistants, enter R. Mouldy is the more dominant, while Gruff is mentally challenged. Gruff holds a bag

Gruff I've got it, Your Honour, in my bag,
 Your copy of the Daily Rag.
Mouldy Then give her it, you stupid twit!
Gruff Look, I may be simple, but that's it.
 I'm not stupid! (*To Grotte*) Am I, Your Honour?
Grotte No, dear boy, you're a wally, a goner.
 A muppet, of that there is no doubt.
 On the day that brains were given out
 You had an away day, not there –
Gruff That's right, I went to the Fair,
 On the dodgems, helter skelter –
Grotte (*to audience*) I could give him such a belter!
 Now give me the paper, you fool!

She snatches the paper and reads it

(*Reading*) Local News, Community, School –
 Aha! Look at this, interesting,
 “Announcement of Royal Christening.
 Two hundred guests, etc. blah blah.
 A-list celebrities, la-di-dah ...
 Invites sent on 5th November.”
 Stone the crows – it's late December!
 They've left me out, I've got the sack,
 Made redundant – but I'll be back!

Mouldy and Gruff are cowering apprehensively. She turns to Mouldy

Come here, Mouldy. I want you, yes.
Mouldy You want *me*, Your Grumpiness?
Grotte Listen, birdbrain. And listen good,
 Or I'll turn you into – What? – a toad.
Mouldy Okay, I'm listening, somehow.
Grotte My broomstick. Go and get it now.
Mouldy What then, Your Honour, that's not clear?
Grotte You stupid jackass, bring it here!

They exit hastily

Revenge will be sweet. Let's not be hasty,
 I'll think up something really nasty!

Heh heh heh heh heh!

Blackout as she exits cackling

Scene 3

The throne room in the Royal Palace of Harmonia, which is thronged with courtiers. There are two thrones centre: the right hand throne is occupied by King Willy, the left one by Queen Dilly. R is Lord Basil

The three babies are brought on by attendants to applause

King Willy walks down to the first baby, accompanied by the Queen

King Now listen, all, I name this ship—

Laughter. The Queen nudges him

—please forgive my little slip.
Wrong occasion—I name this boy—

The Queen nudges him again

Er, girl—I think I have forgot
Her name, was it Monica, or Dot?

The Queen whispers to him

Of course, of course—blah blah blah!
I name her Princess Titany-a.

Applause. He moves on to the next one

This one? Edward, or maybe Sam—
No, I name this boy Will.i.am.

Queen For goodness sake, it's William, Willy!
You're a right royal silly Billy.

Laughter. He moves on to the third

King And now this charming little boy,
Who's a bit like me—I'll call him Roy.

Queen His name is John, as you well know,
We decided that a month ago.

King Titanya, Johnny and Willy too,
My royal triplets—(*bends down*) Cootchee-coo!

There is a loud burp

Basil I now present Your Majesties
With something that is bound to please.
Your spirits too are bound to lift,
Here's Fairy Gentle, with a gift.

Enter Fairy Gentle R to applause

Fairy Gentle For William a gift I bear,
A handsome face and ample hair.
A personality to boot,
And plenty of charm to suit.

Applause. She moves on to Johnny

For little John, I prophesy
Dextrous hands and lightning eye,

With dazzling skills to show
 His expertise at video
 Games like Donkey Kong,
 Grand Theft Auto, Pokemon.

Applause. She moves on to Titanya

Now for Titanya the little Princess,
 A radiant beauty and winsomeness—

Gentle's words fade as the King and Queen come down centre

Queen Oh Willy, what a happy day!

King I know, my dear, I have to say
 That Grotte's not here, that would be bad.

Queen She's not invited? (*He shakes his head*) I'm so glad.

There is a flash!, accompanied by sinister music

Enter UL, Grotte the Grim

Grotte So! Kingy, you were so delighted

That I, Grotte, was not invited?

King (*spluttering*) I think it was an oversight,
 You didn't get the invite, right?

Queen We meant to invite you, dear Grotte.

Grotte Oh no you didn't! You did not!

King (*encouraging the others*) Oh yes we did!

Grotte Enough! For this slight, you will pay dearly.

Hear me now and listen clearly.

When she's eighteen, the Princess shall prick

Her finger and at once fall sick!

This will lead to her demise—

Grotte's gift—surprise, surprise!

She cackles evilly. There is a gasp of horror from the company

Gentle Grotty, that's a dreadful thing to do!

Grotte You think I care? Poo poo to you!

I'm out of here—a sharpish exit,

What you might call Grotty's Grexit!

There is another flash!, and Grotte disappears, still cackling

There is a moment of silence, then the Queen rushes to the baby princess and takes her in her arms

Queen What a nasty thing to do!

Willy, it's really up to you

To make our little baby daughter

Safe from that Grotty rotter.

King She's worse than that, my dear, she's mental—

I know!—it's time to summon Fairy Gentle.

They turn toward Gentle

Gentle Alas, Your Madge, it's a potent spell,

And one as far as I can tell

That's fixed. I just can't end it.

All I can do is try to bend it.

Queen Bend it?

Gentle Give it a tweak and then amend,
Adjust, and in the end
The Princess shall not die,
But merely sleep, and by and by—
King Sleep? And wake up when?
Gentle In a hundred years.