

PLAYS FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

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The Delicious Revenge of Princess Rubyslippers

By
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CHARACTERS

RUBY AGED FIVE

JAKE [HER BROTHER] AGED SEVEN

TOM [THEIR FRIEND] AGED SIX

MUM [TO RUBY AND JAKE]

FAIRY GODMOTHER

WOLF

GIANT

WICKED WITCH

PRINCE CHARMING

ACT I

RUBY SITTING ON A BIG BOX.

MUM [OFF] Ruby! Jake!

MUM ENTERS IN CLEANING TABARD WITH MOP AND BUCKET AND TWO SANDWICHES ON PLATES.

MUM [BEAT] Where's Jake got to? [RUBY SHRUGS.] [BEAT] Jake!

JAKE WANDERS IN

MUM [HANDING OUT PLATES] Here.

JAKE Sandwiches?

MUM Yes, sandwiches!

RUBY Urgh!

MUM It's what you said you both wanted.

JAKE Not like that.

MUM Like what, then?

RUBY Like Gran makes them.

MUM Oh. And how would that be?

JAKE With proper bread.

MUM This is stone-ground, organic wholemeal.

JAKE Exactly!

RUBY And she gives us crisps.

MUM You've got crisps!

JAKE Proper crisps!

MUM Mexican corn chips, these, hand-fried in sunflower oil with no added salt.

JAKE Taste like cardboard.

MUM They do not.

RUBY Do.

MUM [TASTING ONE] Don't be ridiculous, they're absolute - [BEAT] Just eat your sandwiches.

JAKE You've put thingies on.

RUBY Beanstalks.

MUM Sprouts.

JAKE Urgh!

RUBY From Brussels?

MUM What? No, from beans.

RUBY Are they magic?

MUM Yes. Make you big and strong.

RUBY Like a giant?

MUM Yes.

RUBY Gran says all this health food's bad for you.

MUM [TIDYING UP] Is that right?

JAKE She says in her day, sunflower seeds were for birds not people.

MUM Just get on with it.

JAKE Gran says you mustn't rush your food.

RUBY Or you'll get the hiccoughs.

MUM Oh, and what else does Gran say? [RUBY AND JAKE SHARE A LOOK...] What? [BEAT] What?

JAKE [BEAT] That you're showing your age.

MUM What?

RUBY And losing your figure.

MUM What!

JAKE And that you shouldn't get yourself so worked up over things.

MUM Worked up!?

RUBY She says you were always getting worked up even when you were a little girl and bringing up kids never stressed her out.

MUM Oh, really? [BEAT] Yes, well your Gran didn't work full time in a shoe shop, did she?

RUBY You're not working today.

MUM No, that's right, I'm not. This is what is laughingly called my day-off when all I have to do is change the beds, mop the floor, mow the lawn, clean out your gerbils and try to get hold of a plumber to mend the tap in the bathroom.

RUBY The wonky one?

MUM Of course the wonky one. I don't want the good one mended, do I?

RUBY Don't you?

MUM No. For goodness' sake.

JAKE You should relax more.

MUM Ha!

JAKE That's what Gran says.

MUM Does she? [BEAT] Yes, well, maybe she's got a point for once... Feet up; dressing gown; magazine: pamper myself a bit... [BEAT] Can I trust you on your own for five minutes?

JAKE Course you can.

MUM Ruby?

RUBY Course.

MUM There was a free face pack... beauty mask thing with my magazine... [BEAT] You won't fall out?

RUBY No.

MUM Promise?

JAKE Promise.

MUM Right then. Five minutes' peace and quiet... Yes. That's what I need... Peace and quiet.

MUM GOES OUT. RUBY HICCOUGHS.

RUBY I told her.

JAKE TAKES HIS SANDWICH AND WAITS BY THE DOOR. RUBY HICCOUGHS AGAIN.

RUBY What have you got?

JAKE Cheese and pickle.

RUBY I've got egg and cress.

JAKE Good for you.

RUBY [AFTER A HICCOUGH] Want to swap?

JAKE No thanks.

RUBY Neither do I.

JAKE [BEAT] Then what you asking for?

RUBY [RUBY PULLS A FACE THEN HICCOUGHS] Do you want to play?

JAKE No.

RUBY [BEAT] Do you want to play dressing-up?

JAKE No, thanks.

RUBY [BEAT] Do you want to play Dressing-up Princesses and you can be Prince Charming and I can be Princess RubySlippers and we can go to the ball and live ever after?

JAKE No, thanks, I'm busy.

RUBY [AFTER A HICCOUGH] Doing what?

JAKE What's it look like?

RUBY [HICCOUGH] I don't know. [PAUSE]

JAKE I'm waiting, aren't I?

RUBY Waiting?

JAKE Yes.

RUBY What for?

JAKE Tom.

RUBY What for?

JAKE Because he's coming.

RUBY What for?

JAKE To play.

RUBY HICCOUGHS, PUTS DOWN HER SANDWICH AND STARTS TO RUMMAGE IN THE BOX.

JAKE What you doing?

RUBY Looking for my shoes.

JAKE Which shoes?

RUBY My dressing-up shoes.

JAKE Why?

RUBY So we can play.

JAKE What?

RUBY Dressing up.

JAKE When?

RUBY When Tom comes. [EMERGING WITH A SHOE AND A HICCOUGH]
Can only find one.

JAKE [BEAT] Tom's coming to play with me.

RUBY We can all play together. It's better with three: then you can have a
Princess and a Prince and a Fairy Godmother and a Wicked Witch.

JAKE That's four.

RUBY [HICCOUGH] Well, Mum can play as well.

JAKE No.

RUBY She will.

JAKE No! You can play with Mum if you like but Tom's playing with me.

RUBY Says who?

JAKE Says Mum.

RUBY Since when?

JAKE Since yesterday. Tom's mum came round and Mum said: "That's no
problem, Tom can come and play with Jake after dinner." And you
weren't even there, so there.

RUBY So?

JAKE So?

RUBY So?

JAKE So?

RUBY So?

JAKE So?

RUBY There!

SHE HURLS A DRESSING-UP SHOE AT HIM. THEY FIGHT. THE DOOR OPENS. IT'S MUM, HER FACE A LURID GREEN EXCEPT FOR TWO CLEAR CIRCLES ROUND HER EYES.

MUM What's all the noise?

RUBY & JAKE Aarrgh!

MUM What? [BEAT] It's me.

RUBY You're all green

MUM Only my face. It's a "rejuvenating face mask".

JAKE What's it for?

MUM Makes you look younger.

RUBY AND JAKE SHARE A LOOK

MUM Yes, well I've to take it off yet. You put it on; relax for five minutes – remember? - and then, hey presto: ten years younger!

RUBY Is it magic?

JAKE I'd have to be.

MUM It's avocado and cucumber... something. [TIDYING UP] Now what was all the shouting?

RUBY Jake won't let me play.

MUM He will.

RUBY He won't.

MUM He will: now let her play.

JAKE But you said –

MUM What? Mm? Supposed to be relaxing. Never look ten years younger at this rate.

JAKE You said Tom was coming over to play with me, not Ruby.

MUM Tom?

JAKE Yes.

MUM Coming over?

JAKE Yes!

MUM Since when?

RUBY Since yesterday.

MUM What happened yesterday?

JAKE Tom's mum came round and said that Tom's dad might be late today and you said she could bring him over after dinner and when she goes to work.

MUM I don't remember –

JAKE Yes and you said he could play with me until his dad gets back.

MUM And that was yesterday?

RUBY And you said we could have ice-cream and chocolate flake.

JAKE You weren't even there.

RUBY I was.

MUM I don't think that was yesterday.

JAKE It was.

RUBY It was.

MUM I don't see how. I'm hardly like to forget what happened yesterday, now, am I? I mean, if Tom's supposed to be here, then where is he?

THE DOORBELL CHIMES.

JAKE See.

MUM [BEAT] Probably the plumber.

RUBY And can we have ice-cream and chocolate flake?

MUM No.

RUBY But you said –

MUM Well, did you eat your dinner? [PAUSE] Oh, no; what's this? Two lovely sandwiches: cheese & pickle and egg & cress –

JAKE And bean sprouts.

MUM - one half-eaten, the other hardly touched.

RUBY I had the hiccoughs.

MUM Is that right?

RUBY Yes.

MUM Well, you don't seem to have them now.

RUBY You must have frightened them away.

MUM Really?

THE DOORBELL GOES AGAIN.

JAKE I ate mine.

MUM Not your crusts.

JAKE Tch!

MUM You know the rule: if you're not hungry enough for your dinner, you're not hungry enough for afters.

JAKE Gran lets us.

MUM Yes, well, I'm not Gran, am I?

RUBY No, you're Mum who won't give us any ice-cream.

MUM That's right. That's who I am. That's me.

JAKE I'm going to phone Jamie Oliver.

MUM He'd make you eat your crusts.

JAKE It's cruelty.

MUM It's wholemeal bread.

JAKE Same thing.

RUBY But Tom's coming.

MUM I don't care: you're not having any ice-cream and that's that.

JAKE Not fair.

MUM No, well, that's the way life is sometimes.

THE DOORBELL GOES FOR THE THIRD TIME.

MUM [GOING] All right, all right; I'm coming. [PAUSE]

JAKE She never said the bit about the ice-cream yesterday.

RUBY I must have made it up, then.

JAKE You can't just make things up, you know.

RUBY You can. I do it all the time.

MUM ENTERS WITH AN APPREHENSIVE LOOKING TOM.

MUM Well, look who's here: it's Tom! He's come to play while his dad gets home cos his mum has to go to work. [BEAT] Yes.

RUBY Have you had your dinner?

TOM Yes. I had fish and chips. And mushy peas.

JAKE We just had sandwiches.

MUM Well...

RUBY And we was going to have some ice-cream.

TOM Oh!

JAKE But Mum won't let us have any.

TOM Oh.

MUM I never said –

RUBY You did, just now. You said: I don't care if Tom's coming; you're not having any ice-cream and that's that.

MUM Honestly, Ruby, you do tell fibs! You'll have Tom thinking I'm a cruel mother.

JAKE AND RUBY LOOK AT MUM.

JAKE Can we have some, then?

MUM I'm not –

RUBY Can Tom have some, as well?

MUM He might not even like it.

JAKE No, he does.

MUM Is that what you'd like, then: ice-cream?

RUBY & JAKE Yeah!

MUM And how about you, Tom? Would you like some?

TOM Yes please.

MUM And would you like a flake in yours?

TOM Please.

MUM Thank you. How nice to meet someone with manners.

JAKE And can we have hundreds and thousands?

RUBY And millions?

MUM [MAKING TO GO] Don't push your luck.

JAKE Should Ruby come and help you?

MUM No, I don't need any help.

RUBY Thank you.

MUM I want her to stay in here.

JAKE Does she have to?

MUM Yes she does.

JAKE Why?

RUBY Why not?

MUM Because I'm your mother and what I say goes.

RUBY You're not Tom's mother.

MUM No.

JAKE Not fair.

RUBY That's the way life is sometimes.

JAKE I want to play with Tom.

MUM Well, no-one's stopping you. You can all play together, can't you?

TOM NODS.

MUM There you, you see: Tom doesn't mind.

JAKE Yes he does.

TOM No.

JAKE KICKS TOM.

TOM Ow!

MUM Jake! Sorry Tom.

RUBY I blame the parents.

MUM [BEAT] There must be a game you all like. [JAKE LOOKS AT HER] Well, there must be a game you all know. [JAKE LOOKS HARDER] Anyway, I'm leaving you in charge.

JAKE Tch.

MUM This is your chance to show Tom how grown up you can be.

JAKE That's what you always say when you want me to do something I don't like.

MUM Is it? Yes, well, there's no such thing as a free lunch.

JAKE What does that mean?

MUM It means I want five minutes' peace and if I get five minutes' peace then you get your ice-cream but any trouble – any trouble - and it's no deal. Deal?

RUBY Can we play in the garden?

MUM No.

RUBY Can we play upstairs?

MUM No, I want you to stay in here.

JAKE Oh!

MUM And I can do without that. You've got the dressing-up box. What more do you want? [JAKE OPENS HIS MOUTH TO SPEAK] And don't answer back.

JAKE Tch.

MUM I'm leaving you in charge, remember?

JAKE Yeah, yeah.

RUBY Will you leave me in charge?

MUM No.

RUBY Will you leave Tom in charge?

MUM No, Jake's in charge.

JAKE How long will you be?

MUM Five minutes.

RUBY Five whole minutes?

MUM Five whole minutes. I'm sure you can last out that long. Now remember, stay in here, all of you, and play nicely, yes?

RUBY Yes.

MUM Yes?
TOM Yes.
MUM Yes?
JAKE Yes...
MUM Yes, well don't sound too excited. Right.

MUM EXITS. PAUSE.

TOM Your mum's all green.
JAKE It's just her face.
TOM Oh.
RUBY [AFTER A PAUSE] Your mum's gone to work.
TOM I know.
RUBY And your dad's not home yet.
TOM I know
RUBY And that's why you're playing with us.
JAKE He knows!

RUBY PULLS A FACE. PAUSE.

RUBY Do you want to play, then?
TOM If you like.
RUBY What should we play?
TOM Don't mind.
RUBY Shall we play in the garden?
JAKE No.

RUBY Shall we play upstairs?

JAKE No, we've got to stay in here.

RUBY PULLS A FACE. TOM LAUGHS. JAKE IS NOT AMUSED.

TOM I've got a pencil sharpener shaped like a pig.

RUBY Oh!

JAKE That's not a game.

TOM Just saying.

RUBY [PAUSE] I know! We could play Dressing-up Princesses.

JAKE No we couldn't.

RUBY [OPENING BOX] Yeah.

TOM What's that?

JAKE [CLOSING BOX] It's nothing.

RUBY [OPENING BOX] I'm Sleeping Beauty, right? And you're the prince and you have to kiss me.

JAKE [CLOSING THE BOX] No.

RUBY [OPENING THE BOX] Or I could be Snow White and you could be another prince and you have to kiss me again.

JAKE [CLOSING THE BOX] He doesn't want –

RUBY [OPENING THE BOX] Or Cinderella. Yeah. You could be the prince who gives me a shoe.

TOM And do I kiss you?

RUBY If you like but anyway we have a ball.

TOM [TO JAKE] Do you want to play?

JAKE [CLOSING THE BOX] No.

RUBY [OPENING THE BOX] Jake can be the Fairy Godmother.

JAKE Ha ha.

RUBY Or the Wicked Witch.

JAKE Very funny.

TOM Or Prince Charming!

RUBY Ha!

JAKE [CLOSING THE BOX] We're not playing dressing-up.

RUBY [OPENING THE BOX] We are.

JAKE [CLOSING THE BOX] No, cos I'm in charge.

RUBY [OPENING THE BOX] You're not.

JAKE [CLOSING THE BOX] I am cos mum says.

RUBY Mum-sez, tum-sez, stick it up your bum-sez!

JAKE [BEAT] Right, I'm going to tell.

RUBY And I am.

THEY MAKE TOWARDS THE DOORS.

TOM Your mum said any trouble and we don't get any ice-cream.

JAKE [BEAT] Yes. We've got to stay in here and play.

RUBY [PAUSE] So what we playing, Mr I'm-in-charge?

JAKE We're playing...

RUBY What?

JAKE We're playing...

RUBY Yes?

JAKE We're playing...

RUBY Dressing-up Princesses.

JAKE No!

TOM I Spy?

JAKE What?

TOM I Spy.

RUBY I don't know –

JAKE Yes!

TOM Is that right?

JAKE Yes.

RUBY I spy?

JAKE I spy with my little eye, something beginning with... And then you say what it begins with and you have to guess.

TOM Or give in.

JAKE Yes. And that's what Tom wants to play and so do I and if you want to play with us you've got to play that cos that's what we're playing.

RUBY [AFTER A BEAT] All right.

JAKE You don't even know how.

RUBY I do.

JAKE Go on, then.

PAUSE. RUBY PULLS A FACE. TOM LAUGHS.

JAKE I spy...

RUBY I know. [PAUSE] I spy...

JAKE With my little eye..

RUBY Little eye...

JAKE Something beginning with...

RUBY What?

JAKE No, you have to say.

RUBY Why?

JAKE You started.

RUBY So?

JAKE So... Ugh!

RUBY Anyway, you started.

JAKE Didn't.

TOM Did. [JAKE SHOOTS HIM A LOOK] You did.

RUBY Yes.

JAKE All right, I'll start. I spy with my little eye, something beginning with...

RUBY [SOUNDING IT] t.

JAKE No... Ugh!

TOM [SOUNDING IT] t...

RUBY Yes.

JAKE [SOUNDING IT] t..?

RUBY Do you give in?

JAKE No.

TOM t...

JAKE Are you sure?

RUBY Yes.

TOM t...

JAKE Telephone.

RUBY No.

TOM t...

JAKE Television.

RUBY No.

TOM t...

JAKE Table.

RUBY No.

JAKE Tummy.

RUBY No.

JAKE Tom.

RUBY No. Give in?

TOM All right.

JAKE Go on, then.

RUBY Terrible monster thing!

JAKE [BEAT] Oh, yeah; where?

RUBY Here! [AND SHE MAKES LIKE A MONSTER]

JAKE You don't... You can't just... Right; you're not playing.

RUBY I am.

JAKE No, cos you're too little and you don't know how.

RUBY I do. Look: I spy –

JAKE No, because I'm not talking to you.

RUBY You are.

JAKE Not.

RUBY Just did.

JAKE No.

RUBY He did, didn't he?

TOM Well...

RUBY See!

JAKE Anyway, I'm not even listening to you.

RUBY What?

JAKE I can't even hear what you're saying.

RUBY Can't you?

JAKE Did someone say something?

RUBY Yes, it was me.

JAKE Can't hear a thing.

RUBY He can't hear me.

TOM Can't he?

RUBY No, listen: Jake's got a face like a dog's bottom!

JAKE Have not!

RUBY Did someone say something?

TOM Should we play something else?

JAKE [AFTER A BEAT] Like what?

TOM I don't know.

RUBY I do. [AND SHE OPENS HER MOUTH TO SPEAK]

JAKE And don't say Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty or Snow White. [RUBY IS AGAIN ABOUT TO SPEAK] Or any other stupid dressing up game where you have to be kissed all the time cos we don't want to play it, do we, Tom?

TOM Well –

JAKE No, we don't. You can play it if you like but me and Tom are going to play something else.

TOM Are we?

JAKE Yes. And it's something not allowed for girls.

RUBY Oh!

TOM What?

JAKE We are going to play...

RUBY Don't even know.

JAKE Do. Just not telling.

RUBY Cos you don't know.

JAKE That's what you think!

RUBY What is it, then?

JAKE It's...

RUBY What?

JAKE It's...

RUBY Ha!

JAKE It's...

TOM Hide and seek?

JAKE Yes.

TOM I guessed again!

JAKE Yes, Tom and me are going to play Hide and seek and you're not.

RUBY I am.

JAKE No.

RUBY Let me.

JAKE No, you'll spoil it.

RUBY Won't.

JAKE You will, I know you –

TOM But your mum said we all had to play together.

JAKE [IF LOOKS COULD KILL]

TOM She did. Together. She said.

JAKE All right. But this is your last chance. You have to play properly or you're not allowed.

RUBY OK.

TOM OK.

JAKE OK.

RUBY Can I hide?

TOM And me?

JAKE We have to decide. We have to find out who's It.

RUBY Can I be It?

TOM Yeah!

JAKE [TO RUBY] I thought you wanted to hide.

RUBY I do.

JAKE You can't be It and... Never mind. Are you ready?

RUBY Yes.

TOM Yes.

JAKE [SOLEMNLY] One potato, two potato, three potato, four; five potato, six potato, seven potato –

RUBY Eight potato, nine potato, ten potato –

TOM Mash potato! –

JAKE Right. That's it. You're not playing. Both of you. [PAUSE] No, not Tom. Tom's playing and you're not.

RUBY Oh!

JAKE No. You had your chance, but you don't know how to play.

RUBY Tom did it, too.

JAKE No.

RUBY He did.

TOM I did.

JAKE Yes, but you started it and he's a boy.

RUBY So?

JAKE So this is Hide and Seek for boys and girls can't play.

RUBY Oh yes they can.

JAKE Oh no they can't.

RUBY Not fair.

JAKE Well, that's the way life is sometimes.

RUBY RETRIEVES HER SHOE AND HEADS FOR THE BOX.

RUBY Anyway, I'm Princess Rubyslippers and I'm going to play all by myself and hide where you can never find me ever, ever, ever.

JAKE Good, cos we don't want to find you, do we?

TOM Er...

RUBY And then you'll be in trouble and you won't get any ice cream.

JAKE You won't.

RUBY You won't.

JAKE You won't.

RUBY You won't. [OPENING THE BOX] Anyway I hate you and I wish you're not my brother.

JAKE Well, I wish you'd just get lost!

RUBY IS ABOUT TO THROW HER SHOE AT JAKE. TOM DUCKS. SHE CHANGES HER MIND, CLIMBS INTO THE BOX AND CLOSES THE LID ON HERSELF.

RUBY Right!

JAKE Oh, that's a really grown-up place to hide. I bet we'll never find her now.

RUBY [OPENING THE BOX FOR A MOMENT] Don't want you to, so there.

JAKE I wonder where she is?

JAKE BANGS ON THE BOX.

TOM She's in the box.

RUBY [FROM WITHIN THE BOX] Go away. I'm not here.

JAKE In that case...

JAKE JUMPS ONTO THE BOX AND STAMPS HIS FEET. RUBY SCREAMS.

TOM Your mum'll hear.

RUBY [WITHIN] Stop it! Stop it!

JAKE But you're not there, you just said.

THE STAMPING AND SCREAMING REACH A PITCH. TOM COVERS HIS EARS. THEN ALL IS QUIET. ONE FINAL STAMP FROM JAKE; ONE FINAL WINCE FROM TOM. PAUSE. JAKE GETS DOWN OFF THE BOX. PAUSE.

JAKE [TO THE BOX] All right. You can come out now. [PAUSE. TOM IS LOOKING WORRIED.] She's just trying to scare us. [PAUSE. TOM IS LOOKING FRIGHTENED.] [TO THE BOX] Stay in there all day for all I care.

PAUSE. SILENCE. JAKE WALKS AWAY. TOM GOES UP TO THE BOX AND LISTENS. HE KNOCKS. NOTHING. HE OPENS THE LID A LITTLE; A LOT; THEN CLOSES IT.

TOM Er...

JAKE What?

TOM She's not there.

JAKE What?

TOM She's not there.

JAKE She must be.

TOM No.

JAKE [HE LOOKS] Where is she then?

TOM She's not there.

JAKE I know she's not. Stop saying that.

TOM She's disappeared.

JAKE She must be somewhere.

TOM No.

JAKE She must be hiding. Ruby. Ruby?

TOM Your mum'll kill you.

JAKE What?

TOM You won't get any ice-cream and then she'll kill you.

JAKE No.

TOM She left you in charge.

JAKE So?

TOM So you were supposed to be looking after Ruby but you wouldn't let her play and she got in the box and now you don't know where she is.

JAKE Neither do you.

TOM I wasn't in charge.

JAKE [BEAT] Come on, Ruby. We won't get any ice-cream. Ruby. Come on, you can play if you like. Didn't mean it. Honest. Only joking. Ruby, where are you?

TOM She isn't here.

JAKE Ruby!

TOM No, she's gone.

JAKE Then we've got to find her: you look upstairs, and I'll look in the garden.

TOM But your mum said –

JAKE Never mind about all that, just go!

THE BOYS RUN OFF THROUGH DOORS. RUBY POPS UP FROM THE BOX BUT DISAPPEARS AGAIN AS THE BOYS RUN BACK ON AND EXIT THROUGH THE OPPOSITE DOORS. TRANSFORMATION..!

ACT II [WHICH FOLLOWS WITHOUT A BREAK]

THE FAIRY GODMOTHER ENTERS.

FGM I've been back and to through this palace more times than our cat's had kittens. I'm quite worn out. Look at that: my wand's gone all wobbly. Five minutes' peace and quiet - that's what I need. Oh, hello. [SHE PICKS UP THE SANDWICHES] Well... waste not, want not. [FGM SITS ON THE BOX AND EATS. RUBY HICCOUGHS.] Oh, beg pardon. Egg and pickle: it was asking for trouble. [ANOTHER HICCOUGH. FGM STANDS.] Half a mo. It isn't me at all; it's this box. [TO THE BOX] Is anybody there? Knock once for yes and twice for no. [WE HEAR TWO KNOCKS.] That's all right then. [FGM SITS DOWN AGAIN. A THIRD HICCOUGH. SHE STANDS.] Now, just hold on! If there's no-one there; who's making these noises? You mark my words, there's someone in this box or my name's not... You know I can't remember anything these days. It's terrible. Now what was I doing? [RUBY HICCOUGHS] Oh, yes. Come on, you. Come out of there this instant or I'll...I'll... Wiggle my wand and turn you into a tomato.

RUBY [OPENING THE BOX] Don't you mean a pumpkin?

FGM I know what I mean. And don't you go getting ideas above your station.

RUBY Why, who are you?

FGM Never you mind; I'm the one asking the questions.

RUBY Are you?

FGM Yes, I am. [BEAT] Now, who am I?

RUBY I don't know.

FGM No, that's the trouble, neither do I.

RUBY Are you something beginning with [SOUNDING IT] w?

FGM Like what?

RUBY Like what... or wolf... or witch...

FGM Oh, no.

RUBY Or [SOUNDING IT] p, like prince or something?

FGM No, I fancy I begin with [SOUNDING IT] f, like –

RUBY Frankenstein...

FGM Or –

RUBY Frog...

FGM Or flower or –

RUBY Fairy.

FGM Yes. That's it. That's what I am: a fairy.

RUBY Are you really?

FGM Well I don't dress like this for fun.

RUBY Suppose not.

FGM Look, I've got wings and everything. Even a wand.

RUBY It's a bit wobbly.

FGM Thank you; I'm aware of that.

RUBY What sort of fairy are you?

FGM Stressed.

RUBY No, are you a good fairy or a bad fairy?

FGM Oh. Good, I think. Yes. Mostly.

RUBY Are you the Tooth Fairy?

FGM Tooth... No, that doesn't ring a bell.

RUBY Only, my brother - his name's Jake - and once, when one of his teeth came out, he put it under the pillow and in the morning he got fifty whole p.

FGM Did he really? [RUNNING HER TONGUE OVER HER TEETH] How much for a full set, do you reckon?

RUBY I don't know. [NO PAUSE] Are you a fairy at the bottom of the garden?

FGM Oh, don't I wish! Perched on a toadstool all day, I could do with some of that.

RUBY Well, are you my Fairy Godmother?

FGM What?

RUBY My Fairy Godmother.

FGM You know, I think you might be right. Yes. I am. I'm your Fairy Godmother! So that makes you....

RUBY I'm –

FGM No, don't tell me. It's something beginning with...

RUBY [SOUNDING IT] p.

FGM p...

RUBY Princess...

FGM Yes, that's right, Princess. Princess...

RUBY RubySlippers?

FGM Princess RubySlippers. Course you are! I knew it all along. And who am I again?

RUBY You're my -

FGM Fairy Godmother. Yes. Well, I'm glad we've got that sorted!

RUBY Yes.

FGM But if you're a princess –

RUBY And I am.

FGM That's right - what were you doing in this box?

RUBY Hiding. No. Running away. [BEAT] Hiding and running away.

FGM Oh, who from?

RUBY Well, you see, the thing is, right, my mum, well sometimes she's a witch - well anyway, she's all green - and she locked me up with Jake and a boy called Tom - and anyway they wouldn't let me play or go to the Ball or anything.

FGM The rotten things.

RUBY Well, Jake wouldn't.

FGM They sound a bit like Ugly Sisters.

RUBY Yes they are, only both of them are boys.

FGM And now you've run away, what happens next?

RUBY I'm not quite sure. I haven't made the next bit up.

FGM I suppose I could give you three wishes.

RUBY Could you?

FGM Well, I am a Fairy Godmother.

RUBY Oh, so you are!

FGM Let's have a look, then; see what we've got.

FGM SEARCHES HER HANDBAG AND, AFTER A FEW UNLIKELY OBJECTS, FINDS A NOTE.

FGM Fairy lights; fairy cakes; Fairy Liquid - No, that's my shopping list. [SHE TURNS THE NOTE OVER] Oh, here we are! I wish you'd shut up; I wish you'd leave me alone; I wish you'd go away and never come back ever, ever, ever. How do you fancy them?

RUBY Have you got any others?

FGM How about: I wish I had a million pounds; I wish it wasn't school time; I wish it could be Christmas every day.

RUBY I don't think so.

FGM No. I mean, who'd want it to be Christmas every day? Not me. Very tricky time for fairies, Christmas.

RUBY Really?

FGM I'll say! Sitting on top of a tree? Pff! One false move and it's Ding-Dong Merrily on High.

RUBY Oh. [BEAT] What I really wish is that... I wish I was a true princess; I wish I could go to the Ball; and I wish I'll have some ice-cream and chocolate flake.

FGM Well I don't see why those shouldn't come true. I mean, it's not as if you didn't eat your dinner, is it?

RUBY I had hiccoughs...

FGM Oh, yes. so you did.

RUBY But you made them better.

FGM Did I?

RUBY Yes.

FGM I must've wiggled my wand while I wasn't watching.

RUBY You must have.

FGM Mm... I shall have to keep an eye on that. Now you get on your box and I'll see what I can do.

RUBY Are you going to waggle your wand again?

FGM Wiggle; wiggle: never waggle. Wagging is altogether something else and really rather common. Now brace yourself.

RUBY Are you going to do a spell?

FGM I am.

RUBY Does it begin with Abracadabra?

FGM Certainly not! I'm not a magician. It begins with fish and chips.

RUBY Fish and chips?

FGM Yes. Are you quite ready?

RUBY Quite. [RUBY GETS ONTO THE BOX]

FGM Fish and chips and mushy peas: let Ruby have her wishes, please.

FGM WAVES HER WAND ABOUT.

RUBY Is that it?

FGM Do you know what patience is?

RUBY Is it a card game?

FGM It's a virtue, my girl. Just you wait and all your wishes will come true.

RUBY Are you sure?

FGM Am I your Fairy Godmother or what?

RUBY I suppose.

FGM Yes, well don't sound too excited.

RUBY But I can't go to the Ball like this, can I?

FGM No?

RUBY I've got to look all beautiful and I've only got one shoe.

FGM [BEAT] All right then, get in the box: let's see what we can come up with.

RUBY GETS INTO THE BOX. FGM IS ABOUT TO WAFT HER WAND WHEN SHE STOPS AND KNOCKS ON THE BOX. RUBY OPENS THE LID.

FGM What am I doing, again?

RUBY Making me look like a true princess.

FGM Oh, yes. Are you ready?

RUBY Yes.

FGM Here goes, then.

RUBY CLOSES THE LID OF THE BOX ON HERSELF AND FGM WAFTS HER WAND AS SHE SPEAKS.

FGM Cheese and pickle; egg and cress: make Ruby look like a true princess.

A WISP OF SMOKE AND RUBY EMERGES UNCHANGED.

RUBY I don't look any different.

FGM No. It's this wand. It just won't wiggle as I want. Get back in and I'll try again.

RUBY CLOSES THE LID AND FGM WAFTS AWAY.

FGM Cheese and pickle; egg and cress: make Ruby look like a true princess.

ANOTHER WISP OF SMOKE BUT RUBY'S UNCHANGED .

RUBY No.

FGM I think there must be something wrong with my spell.

RUBY What does it begin with?

FGM Cheese and pickle.

RUBY Do you know one that begins with avocado and cucumber?

FGM Oh, pardon me, my Lady; I'm afraid I don't.

RUBY Then try ice-cream and chocolate flake. My Gran swears by it.

FGM Does she?

RUBY CLOSES THE LID AND FGM WAFTS.

FGM Pink ice-cream and chocolate flake: a true princess of Ruby make.

AN ENORMOUS PUFF OF SMOKE. RUBY IS REVEALED AS A POOR OLD WOMAN.

FGM Oh dear. I've turned you into a Poor Old Woman collecting firewood.

RUBY And I've still only got one shoe.

FGM I was never very good at spelling. You see, that's the trouble with ice-cream: if you're not careful, it goes all soft and you make a mess.

RUBY So what do I do now?

FGM You'll have to wait for Prince Charming to come along and make everything all right.

RUBY How will he do that?

FGM He'll kiss you awake; give you a shoe and guess your real name. [BEAT]
Trust me, I'm a fairy.

RUBY But what if I'm not asleep?

FGM Pretend.

RUBY And what if the shoe doesn't fit?

FGM Of course it'll fit; it'll fit like a glove.

RUBY And what if he guesses my name all wrong?

FGM Then you'll stay a Poor Old Woman forever and ever.

RUBY That's not very fair.

FGM No, well that's the way life is sometimes.

RUBY Can I not just tell him I'm really Princess RubySlippers?

FGM Oh, no; he's got to guess or you won't know if he's a true Prince
Charming. That's the story. Now, you wait here and before you know it
you'll be off to that Ball with the Prince and having your ice-cream. But
remember, first he's got to kiss you awake; give you a shoe and... What
was the other one?

RUBY Guess my name.

FGM Oh yes. Now don't forget.

RUBY I won't.

FGM I'd best be off then: no rest for the wicked.

RUBY I thought you were good.

FGM Well no-one's perfect.

RUBY Good-bye then, Fairy Godmother.

FGM Good-bye then, Princess... Princess... Oh, it's no use.

FGM EXITS

RUBY Right then: all I have to do is wait for Prince Charming to come along and I can be all changed into a true Princess and go to the Ball and have Ice-cream and chocolate flake. But I must be sure he's a true Prince Charming or I'll stay like this forever and ever. [BEAT] Oh, someone coming!

JAKE ENTERS

JAKE Oh, where are you? You must be somewhere...

RUBY Hello there, little boy.

JAKE [STARTING] Agh! Who are you?

RUBY I'm just a Poor Old Woman, collecting firewood in the forest.

JAKE Yes, well you shouldn't go making people jump like that.

RUBY Why, what are you doing?

JAKE Looking for Princess Rubyslippers if it's any of your business.

RUBY Is she the fairest in all the land?

JAKE Not particularly.

RUBY Are you absolutely sure?

JAKE Positive. In fact she's really horrible - a bit like you.

RUBY Then why you looking for her, Mr Cleverclogs?

JAKE Because - Mrs. Noseyparker - if I don't find her in the next four minutes the witch is going to eat me in a pie for tea.

RUBY Which witch?

JAKE Which witch? The Wicked Witch. Which witch do you think?

RUBY Oh, dear!

JAKE You don't sound very bothered.

RUBY No.

JAKE It wasn't my fault Princess Rubyslippers disappeared.

RUBY You were in charge.

JAKE How do you know?

RUBY I know lots of things.

JAKE Oh, yeah?

RUBY I know that you're called Jake. [PAUSE] And I know something else as well.

JAKE Like what?

RUBY Like where the princess is.

JAKE I bet you don't.

RUBY All right, I don't.

JAKE All right then: where?

RUBY If I tell you will you promise to take her to the Ball?

JAKE The Ball?

RUBY Yes, the Ball.

JAKE I suppose so.

RUBY Well, don't sound too excited.

JAKE All right; all right: I'll take her to the Ball!

RUBY [AFTER A TIME] No, I'm sorry.

JAKE What!?

RUBY You see, the thing is, right, Princess Rubyslippers is only allowed to go to the Ball with a true Prince Charming.

JAKE Why?

RUBY Because that's the story.

JAKE Not very fair.

RUBY No, well, that's the way life is sometimes.

JAKE [BEAT] Anyway, I am a true Prince Charming.

RUBY I thought your name was Jake.

JAKE Yes. I'm Charming Prince Jake. So there.

RUBY You don't seem very charming to me.

JAKE I am.

RUBY All right then, prove it.

JAKE Do you want me to kill a dragon or something?

RUBY No, you've got to kiss me.

JAKE Kiss you?

RUBY Yes. Kiss me awake.

JAKE But you're a Dirty Old Woman.

RUBY I'm not dirty; just poor.

JAKE And you're not even asleep.

RUBY I am now. [AND SHE IS] So kiss me.

JAKE I'd rather kiss a dragon.

RUBY I don't think that's a very charming prince thing to say.

JAKE Who cares?

RUBY Right then. Now you can't give me a shoe.

JAKE I wasn't going to.

RUBY And you're not allowed to guess my name.

JAKE Don't have to guess. I know it: Poo Face.

RUBY I'm a princess!

JAKE All right: Princess Poo face.

RUBY [OUTRAGED] I knew you weren't a true Prince Charming. You're too much like an Ugly Sister.

JAKE No, cos I'm a boy, so how can I be a sister?

RUBY Yeah, but you can still be ugly! [JAKE THROWS ONE OF HIS SHOES AT RUBY BUT MISSES] Right, that's it. Now I'm really not telling you where Princess Rubyslippers is.

JAKE I bet you don't know anyway.

RUBY Oh yes I do.

JAKE Oh no you don't.

RUBY Oh yes I do.

JAKE Oh no you don't.

RUBY Oh yes I - what's that noise?

JAKE [BEAT] What noise?

RUBY It must be the Witch come to eat you for tea.

JAKE Which witch?

RUBY Which witch? The Wicked Witch. Yum-yum: boy pie, my favorite!

JAKE [BEAT] Well anyway, I'm going now because –

RUBY You're scared.

JAKE Because I've got to go and look for Princess RubySlippers. And I hope the Witch puts you in a pie and eats you up.

JAKE EXITS AS RUBY BLOWS A RASPBERRY. JAKE RETURNS AND BLOWS A RASPBERRY OF HIS OWN. HE EXITS AGAIN. RUBY BLOWS ANOTHER AND JAKE RETURNS ONLY TO SEE THE WOLF ENTER, HOWLING.

JAKE Oh!

WOLF It's all right.

JAKE Is it?

WOLF It's me!

JAKE Who?

WOLF [BEAT] Don't you recognize your dear old Gran?

JAKE Er...

WOLF Course you do, my pretty. [BURPING] Oh, pardon!

JAKE Are you sure you're my Gran?

WOLF Yes!

JAKE I'm not.

WOLF I expect you think I look too young!

JAKE No.

WOLF Well, that's because I can never get five minutes' peace.

JAKE I think you're a wolf!

WOLF Wolf?

JAKE Yes.

WOLF Whatever gives you that idea?

JAKE Oh, you know: eyes, ears, teeth...

WOLF [BEAT] All right, so I'm a wolf!

JAKE Yes! A wolf in... Gran's clothing.

WOLF Your point being?

JAKE I never knew there were lady wolves.

WOLF If there were no lady wolves there'd be no wolves at all.

JAKE Oh yeah. [BEAT] Except in stories.

WOLF That's true enough. Stories are full of things you don't get anywhere else.

JAKE Like what?

WOLF Oh, pumpkins that turn into coaches; a frog that's really a prince... and children who eat their dinners and let their mothers have five minutes' peace.

JAKE [BEAT] Do I know you?

WOLF Perhaps we've met in the woods.

JAKE I've not been in the woods. [BEAT] Honest.

WOLF Oh, no?

JAKE [BEAT] I was looking for Princess RubySlippers.

WOLF Were you, now? [BEAT] Why, where is she?

JAKE Well, we were playing Hide & Seek and now I can't find her.

WOLF I thought that was the idea.

JAKE I know but I was supposed to be in charge.

WOLF So you were.

JAKE Maybe I should go and see Gran.

WOLF Oh.

JAKE What?

WOLF I wouldn't bother if I was you.

JAKE Why?

WOLF [BURPING] No reason.

JAKE Then why say it?

WOLF I'm guessing she might not be there, that's all.

JAKE Why, have you seen her?

WOLF Might have.

JAKE And she was going somewhere?

WOLF You could say that.

WOLF BUPRS AND LOOKS SHEEPISH.

JAKE [BEAT] You've eaten her, haven't you? You've eaten Gran!

WOLF Well...

JAKE Admit it!

WOLF All right, so I've eaten Gran.

JAKE How can you stand there and say that?

WOLF "Gran says this"; "Gran does that"! You're lucky I've been so long about it.

JAKE And now you're going to eat me!

WOLF Am I?

JAKE Aren't you?

WOLF I don't think so.

JAKE I've read the story.

WOLF I'm sorry?

JAKE I've had the story read to me.

WOLF Thank you.

JAKE And I know what happens next.

WOLF Yes, well, that's where you're wrong. That Gran of yours was pretty tough going: she's quite given me indigestion. [BURPS] What did I tell you?

JAKE I'd watch out, if I were you: there might be a woodsman about with an axe to grind.

WOLF When did you last see a woodsman round here?

JAKE Well...

WOLF It's hard enough to find a plumber.

JAKE I know, our bathroom tap's been wonky for ages.

WOLF I rest my case.

JAKE You haven't got a case.

WOLF Well, if I had one I'd be resting it. [BEAT] So what you waiting for? I'd get looking for Princess RubySlippers if I were you or that Witch'll be having you for tea.

JAKE The Wicked Witch?

WOLF The very one.

JAKE Not very fair.

WOLF No, well, that's the way life is sometimes. [BEAT] Go on then: be off with you!

THE WOLF SNARLS AND JAKE RUNS OFF.

WOLF Right: let's see if I can manage five minutes! [TO THE AUDIENCE] And you lot may as well take a break as well cos there'll be nothing happening here till after the interval. [BEAT] I'm not joking. [BEAT] Oh, please yourselves!

THE WOLF GOES. THE BOX OPENS AND A SIGN APPEARS SAYING: BACK IN 15 MINUTES!

INTERVAL