

SILLY SIMON

A Play for Class 3 (or end of 2) based on the English Folk Tale

Characters

Simon	Butcher	Woodcutter
His Mother	Three Suitors:	Man with the donkey
The Rich Man	Ickles, Eccles, Ockles	Pigs
His Daughter	Farmer	Cows
Doctors	Cowherd	Chickens and hens
Town Crier	Farmer's Wife	Donkeys

Chorus: Anyone not actually playing a part in a particular scene

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CHORUS:

Long ago and far away –
It wasn't here, it wasn't today –
Simon earned silver and he earned gold,
Listen and look! The story is told.

THE RICH MAN:

Doctors, my daughter is dumb,
She cannot speak nor hum!
What shall I do?
I beg help of you.

DOCTORS *whisper among themselves, then get noisier and noisier:*

Yes! – No! Yes! – No! – Yes! – No! – Yes! *in total confusion, then unisono:*
Find a boy or man,
One who can
Make her laugh for joy!
Find that man or boy.

TOWN CRIER:

Listen, listen well,
While I ring my bell!
Listen, listen well,
While I ring my bell!
If any man, be he young or old,
Can make a sad girl laugh for joy,
A bag of silver and a bag of gold
Shall be his own, be he man or boy!
Listen, listen well ...

CHORUS:

The suitors came; there were ninety-nine and more,
But the rich man's daughter sent them to the door.

ICKLES:

Laugh at me! Now don't you frown!
I'm a very fanny clown.

Rich Man's Daughter points to the door.

ECCLES:

Look, my tricks are such great fun,
You ought to laugh at every one!

Rich Man's Daughter points to the door.

OCKLES:

Watch, I'll make my eyebrows wiggle,
That'll make you laugh and giggle!

Rich Man's Daughter points to the door.

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CHORUS:

Far away, in a hut so small
There lived a poor woman who had a son.
He was not small, he was not tall,
He didn't like to work at all:
And so his jobs were never done.

SIMON'S MOTHER:

Get away, you lazybones, do.
I've done quite enough for you.
Tomorrow at the break of day
You'll have to go and make your way.

CHORUS:

So Simon slept all through the night
And left the house at sun's first light.

FARMER:

A farmer I am and my work I do
And I have need of a boy like you.
Drive my pigs to feed till the end of the day,
Then take your wages and go on your way.

They shake hands. Simon minds the pigs.

CHORUS:

So Simon drove the pigs till the end of the day
And the farmer gave him a penny for his pay.

SIMON:

Here is my golden penny, look!
Now I've dropped it in the brook. *Goes to his mother.*
Mother, I earned a golden penny,
But it fell from my hand, and now I haven't any.

MOTHER:

Silly Simon! Stupid lout!
On your ear you'll have a clout!
Put your wages in your *pocket*, that's what I say.
Go to sleep, and then get on your way.

SIMON *to himself*:

Put it in my pocket, Mother said
Before she sent me off to bed. *Goes to sleep.*

*

CHORUS:

So Simon slept all through the night
And left the house at sun's first light.

COWMAN:

A dairyman I am and my work I do
And I have need of a boy like you.
Milk my cows at the end of the day,
Then take your wages and go on your way.
They shake hands, and Simon milks the cows.

CHORUS:

So Simon milked the cows at the end of the day
And the man gave him a jug of milk for his pay.

SIMON:

Here's my fine jug of milk, and I'll do as Mother said.
I'll put it in my pocket! Oh, I've got clever head! *Goes to his mother.*
Now, Mother, I've done just what you said.
I put my wages in my pocket. I have such a clever head.

MOTHER:

Silly Simon! Stupid clout!
On your ear you'll have this clout!
Put you wages on your *head*, that's what I say.
Go to sleep, and then get on your way!

SIMON *to himself*:

Put it on my head, so Mother said
Before she sent me off to bed. *Goes to sleep.*

*

CHORUS:

So Simon slept all through the night
And left the house at sun's first light.

FARMER'S WIFE:

A farmer's wife I am, and my work I do,
And I have need of a boy like you.
Feed my hens till the end of the day,
Then take your wages and go on your way.

They shake hands, and Simon feeds the hens.

CHORUS:

So Simon fed the hens till the end of the day,
And the woman gave him a white cheese for his pay.

SIMON:

Here's a fine white cheese, and I'll do as Mother said,
I'll put it on my head, on my clever head. *Goes to his mother.*
Now Mother, I've done just what you said.
I put my wages on my head, on my clever head.

MOTHER:

Silly Simon! Stupid lout!
On your ear you'll have this clout!
Carry home your wages in your *hands*, I say!
Go to sleep, and then get on your way!

*

SIMON *to himself*:

Carry home my wages in my hands, Mother said
Before she sent me off to bed. *Goes to sleep.*

CHORUS:

So Simon slept all through the night
And left the house at sun's first light.

WOODCUTTER:

A woodcutter I am, and my work I do,
And I have need of a boy like you.
Tie up my sticks till the end of the day,
Then take your wages and go on your way.

They shake hands, and Simon ties up sticks.

CHORUS:

So Simon tied up sticks till the end of the day,
And the woodcutter gave him a log for his pay.

SIMON:

Here's a fine log, and I'll do as Mother said,
I'll carry it in my hands – oh, it's rolled away instead. *Goes to his mother.*
Now, Mother, I've done just what you said,
But my fine big log was heavy, and I dropped it instead.

MOTHER:

Silly Simon! Stupid lout!
On your ear you'll have this clout!
You should *pull* your wages home on a good strong *rope*;
Now go to sleep, you silly old dope.

SIMON *to himself*:

Pull my wages home on a rope, Mother said
Before she sent me off to bed. *Goes to sleep.*

CHORUS:

So Simon slept all through the night
And left the house at sun's first light.

BUTCHER:

A butcher am I, and my work I do,
And I have need of a boy like you.
Sweep my floor till the end of the day,
Then take your wages and go on your way.
They shake hands and Simon sweeps the floor.

CHORUS:

So Simon swept the floor till the end of the day,
And the butcher gave him a leg of mutton for his pay.

SIMON:

Here's a fine leg of mutton to pull home on a rope.
Now Mother will be happy, so I hope! *Goes to his mother.*
Mother, look, I've done just what you said,
And pulled home this leg of mutton, I've got such a clever head!

MOTHER:

Silly Simon! Stupid lout!
On your ear you'll have this clout!
Carry home your wages on your *shoulder*, I say!
Go to sleep, then get on your way!

SIMON *to himself*:

Carry home my wages on my shoulder, Mother said
Before she sent me off to bed. *Goes to sleep.*

*

CHORUS:

So Simon slept all through the night
And left the house at sun's first light.

DONKEYS:

Bray hee-haw, bray hee-haw!
Eat four thistles and then three more!

DONKEY-DRIVER:

A donkey driver I am, and my work I do.
And I have need of a boy like you.
Clean the stables till the end of the day,
Then take your wages and go on your way.

They shake hands. Simon cleans the stables.

CHORUS:

So Simon cleaned the stables till the end of the day,
And the man gave him a donkey for his pay.

SIMON:

Here's a dear gray donkey, and I'll do as Mother said,
I'll heave it to my shoulders – haven't I got a clever head?

Goes on his way with the "donkey" across his shoulders.

CHORUS:

But who is coming down the road so sadly?
Who is hanging her head so badly?
It's the poor Rich Man and his daughter at his side,
Who has never in her life either spoken, laughed or cried.

RICH MAN'S DAUGHTER:

Ha, ha, what a sight!
He, he, what a joke!
Here's a poor silly bloke
With a donkey, ho, ho,
On his shoulders, down the road
He is trying to go.
Ha-ha, he-he, ho-ho!

RICH MAN:

After many a year and many a week
You've made my daughter laugh and speak!
I thank you and I'll give to you
All that I promised I would do.
Set the donkey down and give me your hand! *They shake hands.*
You'll be the richest man in the land.
Your mother will live to be happy and old
When you bring her these bags of silver and gold.

SIMON:

I'll carry a bag in either hand. – Mother! Hey, Mother!
You're the richest woman in the land.
And the donkey shall come with me today
And get thistles and water and beautiful hay.

DONKEY:

Bray hee-haw, bray hee-haw,
I shall never have to work any more!

*

CHORUS:

So Mother came,
Her mouth was dumb,
She couldn't speak,
She couldn't hum –
But then she cried and laughed for joy.

MOTHER:

My darling boy! My clever boy!
Gold in your left and silver in your right
Have made my eyes and my life so bright.

CHORUS:

“Simon, the Clever”, is now his name,
And the story is over. – We're glad you came.

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Have the play begin and end with a song of your choice.

The changes in metre are deliberate, so that speech can speed up or slow down as the case may be. Four accented syllables to a line – two to a short line – are generally aimed at.

Magda Maier