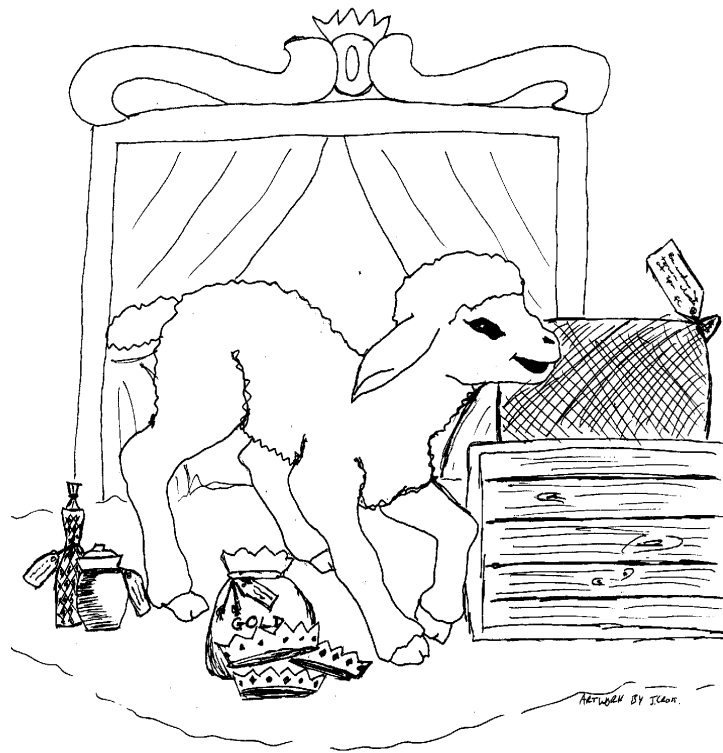


A Lamb and A Surprise.



A Christmas Play. Script by Jennifer Cross.

A Christmas Play (for 18 or more actors)

Join Mary as she searches for her lost Lamb, in the Land of Nursery Rhymes. On her travels, she meets other well-known characters, from Tom the Piper's son to Humpty Dumpty. After asking each one if they have seen her Lamb, they give her things they have found. Each item has the same label alluding to a mysterious FC. Who is FC? and what will happen, on the 24th December at 7pm, by the village clock tower?

This is a musical play, with new twists on the familiar nursery rhyme songs. This is a fun play, which also incorporates a traditional nativity, in the last scene. There are 12 songs (1 of which, has the option of being spoken dialogue instead), there is also scope for 2 dance numbers.

Main Cast List. (18)

Tom / Joseph.	Polly / Angel.	Little Miss Muffet / Angel.
Mary.	Sukey / Angel.	Humpty Dumpty / Wise Man.
Pig / Wise Man.	Jack / Star.	3 Fiddlers / 3 Angels.
Butcher / Innkeeper.	Jill / Angel.	Father Christmas / Narrator.
Mother Hubbard / Innkeeper's Wife.	Little Bo-Peep / Shepherd.	Tom's Dad.
Old King Cole / Wise Man.	Little Boy Blue / Shepherd.	Lambikins.

Extra Cast & Chorus.

Animals.	Angels.	Shepherds.	Villagers.
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Props List.

Gold.	3 Crowns.
Frankincense.	6 Labels.
Myrrh.	Innkeepers door.
Tinsel Halos.	Kettle.
Bag of Straw.	2 Chairs.
Bag for Mary.	Table.
Boulder.	Teapot.
Village Clock.	2 Cups and Saucers.
Broom for Polly.	2 Plates with cake.
Market Stall.	Shopping Bag for Mother Hubbard.
Herbs for Market Stall.	Brown paper bandages for Jack and Jill.
Shepherds' Crooks.	4 fiddles for Old King Cole and the Fiddlers.
Wooden Crate.	A watch for Mary.
Doll.	2 Handkerchiefs for Mary and Sukey.
Book.	

Costumes.

Each should be dressed as their nursery rhyme character with any accessories you might expect, e.g. Little Boy Blue should have a horn and be dressed in Blue. Little Miss Muffet should be in a dress, with a full apron, and her hair in a mop cap.

Each character should also have the appropriate costume, for their part in the nativity scene. E.g. Jack should have a silver / grey outfit, with a large cut out sandwich board star, or a large star on a headband. Shepherds should have the traditional tea-towel headdress kept on with a ring of rope, and a long tunic in earthy colours or stripes. The Innkeeper and his wife should be in nightclothes.

Musical Numbers.

Scene 1 – Old Mother Hubbard. Tom. The Piper's Son.	Scene 6 – Humpty Dumpty. Little Boy Blue.
Scene 2 – Mary had a little lamb. Old King Cole.	Scene 8 – Dance of the Animals. (lively music needed) Nativity Song.
Scene 3 – Polly put the kettle on.	Mary's Lullaby.
Scene 4 – Jack and Jill.	Dance of the Angels. (Airy music needed)
Scene 5 – Little Bo-Peep.	The End of the Show.

Additional Notes

If you have purchased this script only, then you may like to know that this script can work without music, if nursery rhymes are sung accapella, and the nativity song is used as pure dialogue and Mary's Lullaby is omitted. Should you wish to find your own music then it should be easy to locate music for the nursery rhymes and 'Good King Wenceslas' (aka The Nativity Song'). Music for GKW and Mary's Lullaby (aka Sleep. My Jesus, sleep') can be found in the public domain online at www.cyberhymnal.org. Here are a few suggestions that would work just as well (but feel free to use your own), should you wish to replace Mary's Lullaby:

19. Lullaby, Jesus, my dear one, be sleeping – Carol, Gaily Carol – A & C Black songbook and CD collection.
25. Sleep quietly, my Jesus – Carol, Gaily Carol – A & C Black songbook and CD collection.
6. Inkosi Jesus – Merrily to Bethlehem – A & C Black songbook and CD collection.
13. Lullaby of the spinning wheel. – Merrily to Bethlehem – A & C Black songbook and CD collection.
Little Jesus, sweetly sleep – Oxford Book of Carols.
Or any other lullabies, both old and new, like 'Golden Slumbers'.

Scene 1 – Tom Tells a Story.

(We open on a market scene with several well-known nursery rhyme characters. Main feature is a stall run by a pig, which is located, upstage-centre)

CHORUS : SONG: Old Mother Hubbard.

Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard, to fetch her poor doggy a bone;
But when she got there, the cupboard was bare, so the poor little doggy had none.

Old Mother Hubbard went to the market, to fetch herself something to eat;
But first of all, she stopped at a stall, and she bought that poor doggy a treat.

PIG: *(Calling for custom)* Herbs, herbs. Come buy my herbs. Lovely herbs go well with chicken, fish, lamb and beef.

(Old Lady ENTERS STAGE RIGHT and surveys stall)

PIG: Ah, Mother Hubbard what can I get for you? Any mint? What about rosemary? No! Hmm... Well, can I interest you in any thyme – how about half past three? *(Starts laughing)* Ha Just my little joke.

MOTHER HUBBARD: Joke. What Joke? *(Looks puzzled, then sees the funny side)* Oh, I get it. Herb thyme and clock time: very funny. Now I was looking for some herbs, which will go nicely with the pork chops I've got for my tea.

PIG: *(Looks hurt)* Ah, you shouldn't go mentioning pork to a pig, it hurts my feelings. How would you like it, if I were talking to you about eating a relative of yours?

MOTHER HUBBARD: Oh I'm ever so sorry I never thought. Please forgive me.

PIG: Clear off. You might as well try Old Dot's stall, as I'll not be serving you today. To think you want my lovely herbs, to make one of my relatives taste nice to eat.

MOTHER HUBBARD: I truly am sorry. I didn't mean to offend you, or hurt your feelings.

PIG: You should learn to think before you speak then.

MOTHER HUBBARD: Oh I will. I will.

(Mother Hubbard EXITS STAGE RIGHT. Butcher ENTERS STAGE LEFT – he comes on muttering to himself, and looking for something - Pig hides behind his stall)

BUTCHER: Wait 'til I get hold of him. He'll never know what's hit him. Thinks he can run off with my prize pig does he. Well I'll show him. If he thinks he can swap my prize pig for a teddy, and I won't notice, then he must think I'm soft. Just you wait 'til I catch him, he won't think I'm soft then... *(EXITS STAGE RIGHT)*

(Pig reappears and busies himself with his stall)

CHORUS: SONG: Tom. The Piper's Son.

Verse 1.

Tom, Tom, the piper's son,
Stole a pig and away did run.
With brand new trainers on his feet;
He ran away down Market Street.

Verse 2.

Tom, Tom, the piper's kid,
Ran away with the pig and hid.
The Butcher searches high and low.
Will he find them? We don't know.

(Tom ENTERS STAGE LEFT)

TOM: Phew! Pig that was close he nearly got you.

PIG: Well he wouldn't be after a new pig, if you hadn't nicked his precious Lavinia, would he? What did you go and do that for anyway?

TOM: Well, he was getting on my nerves. He kept yelling at me, if I even got near Vinia. I could be on the other side of the world, and it would still be too close. Besides, I've only hidden her in his garden shed.

PIG: You shouldn't do it, Tom. Your dad will ground you for weeks, when he finds out what you've been up to.

TOM: It's worth it, just to see that weasel running all over town looking for her. An oaf like he is, wouldn't see something that was right in front of him; even if it bit him on the nose.

PIG: *(He starts packing up his stall)* Well, now that you've made him mad, I'm gonna pack up. I think I'll be safer at home while he's on the prowl: plus Little pig needs picking up from his friends. On second thoughts though, I might just leave him there, as he'll probably go wee wee wee all the way home again, and give me a headache. Now clear off, unless you're going to make yourself useful, and help me pack up.

TOM: What and leave you with nothing to do. Nah! I'm off too, you know how it is; things to do; people to see. Speaking of which...

(SPOTLIGHT on Tom – backstage darkens as Pig finishes packing and EXITS STAGE LEFT)

TOM: *(Walks to front of stage, looks around, and starts to address audience.)* Well. I see I've gathered quite a crowd. I hope you're all comfy; you're going to be there a while. If you've got any squiggles; coughs; or sneezes, then I suggest you get rid of them now. I don't want any wriggling or noise, while I tell my story. Right, on the count of three get rid of your wiggles. 1, 2... Wait for it... 3... Finished? Then I'll begin; after all, you did come to hear one of my tales, didn't you? Ok. Well here goes... *(He SITS ON CORNER OF STAGE RIGHT, and makes himself comfortable, takes a deep breath and gives a big sigh)* It happened one Christmas, a long, long, long, long, long, long time ago... actually, it was just last year, but I thought a long, long, long, long, long, long time ago would sound better; don't you agree? Now where was I? Umm... In this very market place, on a Christmas long ago, a little girl named Mary was sitting on her own crying, as only girls can...

Scene 2 – Mary meets Old King Cole and his Fiddlers.

(LIGHTS UP on Mary sitting on the floor, leaning against the market stall, which is still upstage-centre. She has a bag by her side. She's weeping gently as villagers pass by crossing the stage in opposing directions)

CHORUS:

SONG: Mary Had A Little Lamb.

(verses 2,3,4 & 5 can be omitted in order to shorten the song)

Verse 1.

Mary has a little lamb,
Little lamb, little lamb.
Mary has a little lamb.
Its fleece is white as snow.

Verse 2.

And everywhere that Mary goes,
Mary goes, Mary goes;
Everywhere that Mary goes,
The lamb will go as well.

Verse 3.

It followed her to school one day,
School one day, school one day.
It followed her to school one day,
Which was against the rules.

Verse 4.

And so the teacher turned it out,
Turned it out, turned it out.
And so the teacher turned it out,
But still it waited near.

Verse 5.

Why does the lamb love Mary so?
Love Mary so? Love Mary so?
Why does the lamb love Mary so?
The eager children cry.

Verse 6.

Why, Mary loves the lamb, you know.
Lamb, you know, lamb, you know.
Mary loves the lamb, you know.
The teacher did reply.

Verse 7.

Now, Mary's little lamb is lost,
Lamb is lost, lamb is lost.
Mary's little lamb is lost
And it cannot be found.

Verse 8.

Mary's lamb has gone away,
Gone away, gone away.
Mary's lamb has gone away,
And Mary's very sad.

MARY: Oh Lambikins. My Lambikins, where have you gone? *(She starts crying again and calls out to passers by "Have you seen my Lamb?")*

TOM: *(To audience)* Stupid name, I know – Lambikins – but what else would you expect from a girl. Now Killer, that's a good name; or maybe Tyson; or Bruno...

(Old King Cole, followed by three fiddlers, ENTER STAGE LEFT– each is carrying a fiddle – they stop and have a discussion)

CHORUS: SONG: Old King Cole.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul, and a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe, and he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.

Every fiddler had a fine fiddle, and a very fine fiddle had he;
Oh there's none so rare as can compare,
With King Cole and his fiddler's three.

MARY: *(Sees Old King Cole, and rushes up to him)* Excuse me Sir, have you seen my lamb? I've lost him you see.

OLD KING COLE: You've lost him, well that was a silly thing to do, incredibly silly. We're you trying to lose him? Though come to think of it, I did hear talk of a lamb when I went past Polly's house. I can't say whether it's your lamb or not, though. Talking of lost things, you haven't seen my pipe and bowl anywhere, have you? I seem to have mislaid them myself..

MARY: *(Wiping her tears on her apron)* No Sir, I haven't, but I'll keep an eye out for them.

OLD KING COLE: Thank you my dear: I'll keep an eye out for your pig as well.

MARY: Lamb Sir.

OLD KING COLE: Lamb? Have you lost a lamb as well? Well, you really should take more care of your things dear.

MARY: *(Tries to interrupt)* No, I lost a lamb not a pig...

OLD KING COLE: *(Shows Mary bag of gold)* Here, I found this where my pipe and bowl should've been. I've got enough of the stuff and I know it's not mine. Maybe you can take it, and find out who owns it. *(Gives gold to Mary)* Well, I mustn't stand around here chatting all day, I've got things to do, you know. It's very hard work being a king. *(He slowly starts to walk off, followed by the fiddlers)*

(SPOTLIGHT on Tom)

TOM: *(To audience)* Ha.. Work, the only work he does, is work out how to smoke his pipe, and eat at the same time.

(SPOTLIGHT off Tom – Old King Cole and Fiddlers EXIT STAGE RIGHT, as Mary notices a tag on the gold)

MARY: Hmm.. 'Be under the town clock at 7 O'clock on the 24th December, signed FC" .What a strange message? *(Mary puts the Gold in her bag looking puzzled over the message)* Well, if Polly's been talking about a lamb, maybe she knows where Lambikins is. I must go there straight away; my Lambikins will be missing me so much. *(EXIT STAGE LEFT)*

(LIGHTS DOWN – SPOTLIGHT on Tom)

TOM: So Mary is heading to Polly's house: I hope she's prepared for a long stay if Polly's sister's there.

(SPOTLIGHT off Tom)

Scene 3 – Tea with Polly.

(LIGHTS UP on stage on Polly's kitchen. Centre stage there's a table laid with 2 cups and saucers, a teapot, and 2 plates of cake. There are also 2 chairs and a cooker/fireplace that the kettle can be set to boil on. Polly is putting the kettle on and starts humming to herself as she's sweeping the floor)

CHORUS: SONG: Polly Put The Kettle On.

Polly put the kettle on.

Polly put the kettle on.
Polly put the kettle on.
We'll all have tea.

(A knock is heard off stage and Polly goes to answer the door EXIT STAGE LEFT– Sukey ENTER STAGE RIGHT, turns the kettle off and then EXIT STAGE RIGHT)

Sukey take it off again.
Sukey take it off again.
Sukey take it off again.
They've all gone away.

(Polly and Mary ENTER STAGE LEFT)

Have a cup of tea with me.
Have a cup of tea with me.
Have a cup of tea with me,
And piece of cake.

POLLY: Mary, it's so lovely to see you. Do sit down. *(Mary sits down)* You will stay and have a cup of tea, won't you? I've just put the kettle on. Please, have a piece of cake while we wait for the kettle to boil. *(She hands Mary some cake and then spots the kettle on the side)* Oh Silly me! I must have forgotten to put it on.

(Polly puts the kettle on – turns and sits down – and Sukey ENTERS STAGE RIGHT, behind the others, takes kettle off again and then exits STAGE RIGHT)

POLLY: Would you like to stay for dinner, Mary? I haven't seen you for such a long time, and I've so much to tell you, we must have a natter,

(SPOTLIGHT on Tom)

TOM: *(To audience)* Wanna know why girls never stop chatting? It's because their tongues, are hung in the middle and waggle at both ends, meaning they can talk twice as much.

(SPOTLIGHT off Tom)

MARY: I'm sorry Polly, but I haven't got time today. I only popped round to see if you had seen Lambikins. Old King Cole said he'd heard you talking about a lamb; and I wondered if it was my lamb that you were talking about.

POLLY: Oh, I'm sorry Mary. I'm afraid I was talking to Sukey, about having lamb for tea. Our nice friend the butcher, gave us some lovely lamb chops. He wasn't in a very good mood though, as Tom stole his pig again. That boy will be in so much trouble when his father gets hold of him.

(She gets up to make the tea, and spots that the kettle is off and puts it on again. She returns to talk to Mary, and Sukey ENTERS STAGE RIGHT, takes the kettle off again, and then EXITS STAGE RIGHT)

MARY: *(Looking disappointed)* Oh! Never mind. I'm sure I'll find him eventually. Still, I better get going, as I don't know how long it's going to take to find him. *(She gets up to leave)*

POLLY: Oh do stay, I wish you would. I know I can't stop you going, but before you do, I'd like to show you something. *(Picks up Myrrh)* I found this Myrrh in my button box yesterday; but, I've no idea how it got there. Will you take it, and see if you can find its owner? *(Gives Mary Myrrh)* Now, are you absolutely sure you haven't got time to stay for a cup of tea? The kettle should've boiled by now. *(Polly goes to check kettle and discovers it's been taken off again. Look of realisation dawns on her face and she EXITS STAGE RIGHT shrieking)* Sukey, Sukey you leave that kettle alone. Do you hear? When I want some tea I want some tea....

MARY: Well, I wouldn't like to be in Sukey's shoes now. It serves her right though; she's always playing tricks on poor Polly. *(Looks at myrrh and sees a tag)* Hmm.. "Be under the town clock at 7 O'clock on the 24th December, signed FC". It's same message as on the gold. I wonder what it means. *(Mary puts myrrh in bag and EXITS STAGE LEFT)*

(LIGHTS DOWN – SPOTLIGHT on Tom)

TOM: So parcels she has numbering two; but, where to go next? She hasn't a clue.

(SPOTLIGHT off Tom)

Scene 4 – Jack and Jill.

(LIGHTS UP on Mary sitting dejectedly on a boulder set upstage -left.)

CHORUS:

SONG: Jack And Jill.

Verse 1.

Jack and Jill went up the hill,
To fetch a pail of water.
Jack fell down, and bumped his crown;
And Jill came tumbling after.

Verse 2.

Up Jack got and home did trot,
As fast as he could caper.
He went to bed, and wrapped his head,
In vinegar, and brown paper.

Verse 3.

Jill went to the corner shop,
For to buy a plaster.
When she got home, and saw Jack in bed,
She couldn't stop her laughter.

Verse 4.

Jack and Jill went out today,
To fetch a wooden crate.
If they are slow and mooch along,
They'll really be quite late.

(Jack and Jill ENTER STAGE LEFT, carrying a wooden crate, with a bag of straw sitting on top – Jack and Jill's heads are wrapped in brown paper – as Mary hails them and rushes up, startling Jack, who drops his end of the crate and making the bag of straw fall off. This also makes Jill drop her end on her foot.)

JILL: *(She hops around clutching her foot)* Yeowwww! *(Shouts at Jack)* Jack will you give me a warning, before you stop and drop it.

JACK: I didn't mean it, and how can I give you a warning? It was an accident, and accidents don't warn you before hand, and say, "Oh sorry sir, but I'm going to slip out of your hands now, and flatten your sister's foot". Accidents just happen: that's why they're called accidents!

MARY: Sorry. I didn't mean to make you jump and drop it Jack.

JILL: Oh don't you worry Mary, it's not your fault; it's my nincompoop of a brother's fault. I swear he coats his hands with butter, just so he can drop things on me. Don't be fooled by his bandages either: he didn't get that by falling down the hill this time; he got that by running into a door. I was chasing him at the time, as he'd been in the hayloft and dropped a bucket on my head.

JACK: Yeah ,well you shouldn't have eaten my tarts. The Queen of Hearts made them especially for me, not you.

JILL: Oh get over it, greedy-guts. You eat anymore and you'll be fatter than Pig.

JACK: Oi! Who you calling fat? I'll have you know, I lost three pounds last week.

JILL: Oh yeah. What did you do, have a hole in your pocket?

JACK: Why you little...? *(Starts chasing Jill round the stage)*

(Mary starts to shout)

MARY: Jack! Jill! Stop! Stop! I need your help!

JACK and JILL: *(Both stop running)* Well, why didn't you say so before?

JACK: We like giving help, we do. What can we help you with?

JILL: Hope it doesn't involve carrying things. I don't want any more bruises.

(Jack gives Jill a withering look)

JACK: Ha, ha, ha: very funny: I'm splitting my sides with laughter. No seriously Mary, what can we help you with?

MARY: Well. I've lost my lamb. I don't know where to find him, and I was wondering if perhaps you'd seen him.

JACK: Nope. Sorry, I haven't seen him. Have you Jill? (*Jill shakes her head*) Maybe you should talk to Bo-Peep. She's always losing her sheep.

MARY: What a good idea. I never thought of that. I'll go and find her right now. Any idea where she is?

JILL: She's in the meadow over the hill. (*To Jack*) Come on lump, let's get moving with this (*She kicks the crate*), and don't drop it this time. Bye Mary

JACK: (*Pulls a face at Jill*) Bye Mary. Good Luck

(*They pick up the crate again, while leaving behind the bag of straw, and then both EXIT STAGE RIGHT*)

MARY: (*To herself as she crosses stage to exit*) I wonder where they're off to with that crate? (*Spots the bag of straw on the ground*) Oh look; they've left this bag behind. (*Sees a tag*) Wait a minute "Be under the town clock at 7 O'clock on the 24th December, signed FC". I wonder what this can mean... Oh well: never mind. (*She EXITS STAGE LEFT*)

(*LIGHTS DOWN – SPOTLIGHT on Tom*)

TOM: So Mary is heading up the hill. She'll find Bo-Peep. Oh yes, she will.

(*SPOTLIGHT off Tom*)

Scene 5 – Little Bo-Peep.

(*LIGHTS UP on Bo-Peep leaning against a boulder, reading a book. Mary ENTERS STAGE RIGHT, looking puffed out after climbing the hill*)

LITTLE BO-PEEP: Hello Mary. Have you been running up that hill? You ought to take it easy. Sit down and have a rest. You've always got so much energy; not like young Tom. Did you know, he was worn out after simply doing the washing up? I have never known anyone, as lazy as that boy is.

(*SPOTLIGHT on Tom*)

TOM: (*To audience*) In my defence, I did have flu at the time.

(*SPOTLIGHT off Tom*)

MARY: Hello Bo. I can't stop. I'm in a hurry and I need your help.

LITTLE BO-PEEP: Anything to help you, Mary: but, would you mind helping me as well? You see, I found this frankincense, and I don't know whose it is. (*Hands frankincense to Mary*) Can you find out for me? I can't go. I have to wait for my sheep to get back, and they'll be worried if they can't find me.

MARY: Ok. I seem to be collecting a lot of things today, and this frankincense has the same label as all the other things I've collected. (*She puts the frankincense in her bag*)

LITTLE BO-PEEP: Really. I hadn't even noticed it had a label. Does it say whose it is?

MARY: No, it just says "Be under the town clock at 7 O'clock on the 24th December, signed FC".

LITTLE BO-PEEP: Um...What a mystery. Now, what was it you needed my help for?

MARY: I'd like to know if you have seen Lambikins. He's missing, and I can't find him anywhere.

LITTLE BO-PEEP: No, sorry dear, I haven't. Try not to worry. I'm sure he'll come back, wagging his tail behind him, just like my sheep. They always come home when it's bedtime.

MARY: Oh, but I am worried. He's never been out for this long on his own before.

LITTLE BO-PEEP: I'm sure he's fine, although if I see him, I'll be sure to send him straight home.

MARY: Thank you. I suppose I'd better keep looking then. I hope your sheep, also come home, safe and sound.

LITTLE BO-PEEP: Oh thank you dear, and don't worry. I'm sure Lambikins, and my sheep, will all be fine.

CHORUS: SONG: Little Bo-Peep.

Verse 1.

Little Bo-Peep has lost her sheep,
And doesn't know where to find them.
She'll leave them alone, and they'll come home,
Wagging their tails behind them.

Verse 2.

Mary, Mary, has lost her lamb,
And doesn't know where to find him.
She'll continue to look, for as long as it takes,
'Til she's walking right beside him.

(Little Bo-Peep EXITS STAGE RIGHT, and Mary starts to wander around)

(LIGHTS DOWN on Mary - SPOTLIGHT on Tom)

TOM: So, which way now should Mary go? I'm sure that you, and I, don't know.

(SPOTLIGHT off Tom)

Scene 6 – Humpty Dumpty and Little Boy Blue.

(LIGHTS UP on Mary still wandering around the stage)

MARY: Oh Lambi, Oh Lambi, Oh where can you be? Oh Lambi: Oh Lambi: please come back to me. *(She sits on a boulder and starts to cry)*

CHORUS: SONG: Humpty Dumpty.

Verse 1.

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the King's horses,
And all the King's men,
Couldn't put Humpty together again.

Verse 2.

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall.
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
He shouted for help;
And he called for his friends;
And they all put Humpty together again.

Verse 3.

Humpty Dumpty sits on a wall.
Humpty Dumpty has a great fall.
But he's never worried;
He knows he'll be mended.
Because of the people he's met and befriended.

(Humpty Dumpty ENTERS STAGE LEFT, carrying two crowns and wearing one)

HUMPTY DUMPTY: *(Sees Mary and stops)* Howdy Mary. Hey, what's happened? Why all the tears?

MARY: *(In between sobs)* It's Lambikins... he's lost...

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Now now Mary, don't feel so glum. I'm sure he's ok; you'll find him soon. Maybe, if you go home, you'll find he's there already; waiting for you. Dry those tears, and find your smile. Everything will be all right, you'll see.

MARY: *(Starts to dry eyes)* Oh. Do you really think so? Do you really think he's at home, waiting for me?

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Quite possibly my dear. Now, dry those eyes; head off home; and see what you shall see.

MARY: Thank you, Mr Dumpty. I'm going to rush home, and see if he is there, bye.

(Mary STARTS TO RUN OFF TOWARDS STAGE RIGHT, but Humpty calls her back for a minute)

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Oh Mary. Before you go, would you mind stopping by the big field, and asking Little Boy Blue to meet me at the village clock. You might have to wake him up, you know how lazy he is. Take these crowns too: see if you can find out whose they are.

MARY: Will do. Bye

HUMPTY DUMPTY: Bye Mary. I hope you find your lamb.

(Humpty Dumpty EXITS STAGE RIGHT – Mary looks at crowns, then puts them in her bag.)

MARY: Hmm... Well I never! These have got the same labels as the others. "Be under the town clock at 7 O'clock on the 24th December, signed FC". I really wish I knew who this FC is? *(EXIT STAGE LEFT)*

(LIGHTS OFF THEN UP AGAIN on Little Boy Blue asleep in a corner. Mary ENTERS STAGE LEFT)

MARY: *(Calling)* Little Boy Blue! Little Boy Blue! Where are you? I bet he is asleep *(Looks all around and then spots him)* Wake up Little Boy Blue, Wake up.

(Little Boy Blue stirs and wakes up really slowly throughout the song.)

CHORUS: SONG: Little Boy Blue.

Verse 1.

Little Boy Blue, come blow your horn.
The sheep in the meadow;
The cows in the barn;
Now, where's the boy who looks after the sheep?
He's under a haystack, fast asleep.
Will you wake him? No, not I,
For if I do, he's sure to cry.

Verse 2.

Little Boy Blue, it's time to awake.
There's no time for sleeping;
There's work to be done.
Now, is the time to show what you can do.
Someone is calling; calling for you.
Will he help her? Yes, he will,
Otherwise she'll be there still.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: *(Yawns)* Oh, hello Mary. I was having a really weird dream. It was about pink cows, drinking apple juice out of a swimming pool, with firemen's hoses.

MARY: That does sound weird. Sorry I woke you, and I'm glad to see you're not crying.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: Crying? Why would I be crying?

MARY: I just thought...Well, you know, that line in the rhyme, "For if I do he's sure to cry".

LITTLE BOY BLUE: I thought you had more sense. You shouldn't believe everything you hear in nursery rhymes. Besides, don't you know anything, big boys never cry.

MARY: But you're little.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: *(Stands up straighter)* I am not! Just because I'm called Little Boy Blue, it doesn't mean I am little. I mean I'm not blue am I?

MARY: Hmm... Never mind. Humpty Dumpty, asked me to give you a message.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: Oh, ok. Well, what does he want? Hope he doesn't want me to put him back together again. It took me 4 days last time.

MARY: Oh no, that's not it; he just said, 'meet him at the village clock'.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: I wonder why he wants me to meet him there today... What day is it Mary?

MARY: Um...it's the 24th December.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: Oh yes. Now I remember.

MARY: What? What do you remember?

LITTLE BOY BLUE: Sorry Mary, I can't tell you. It's a secret. I'd better hurry though, or I'm going to be late. Can you take this doll? I found it on top of my haystack. I don't know who owns it, but I don't want to leave it here on its own.

MARY: Ok. I'll put it with the other things I've got to find owners for; and see you later.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: Bye Mary; and thanks for waking me up. They'll be having kittens if I'm late.

(Little Boy Blue runs off and EXITS STAGE LEFT)

MARY: I wonder what he's late for. Oh well. *(She starts to put doll in her bag and as she does it she notices the label)* This doll has got the same label as all the other things I've picked up. Hang on a minute it's the 24th today, maybe I can find out who all these things belong to. What's the time? *(Looks at watch)* 6:45 Hmm...I've got 15 mins to get back to the village. I can make it if I hurry.

(Mary hurries off and EXITS STAGE LEFT)

(LIGHTS DOWN – SPOTLIGHT on Tom)

TOM: Mary is heading back to the village, with what she has collected. Will she find the owners, or more than she expected?

(SPOTLIGHT off Tom)

Scene 7 - Nearly Ready.

(Under the village clock everyone is gathered dressed for the nativity scene – Little Miss Muffet ENTERS STAGE RIGHT carrying tinsel halos)

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Are you all ready yet?

SUKEY: We're nearly there. Oh good you've got the halos. Here, I'll take them.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Here you go then. *(Hands halos to Sukey who hands them out to the angels)* Spider was wearing them on his legs. He thought he looked really cool. Personally, I don't think even a bag on his head, could make him look cool. *(She starts to giggle and Sukey joins in)*

(Little Boy Blue ENTERS STAGE LEFT running)

SUKEY: You're late, Blue.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: Tell me something I don't know.

SUKEY: You're feet stink.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: Ha, ha, very funny; your nose is really runny.

(Sukey gets out a tissue and wipes her nose and Little Boy Blue sniggers)

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: That's enough you two. There isn't time for messing around.

LITTLE BOY BLUE: Oh yeah, I forgot to say, *(He screams)* Quick! She's coming down the hill!

SUKEY: Do you have to be so dramatic?

LITTLE BOY BLUE: This is a play!

(Everybody starts rushing around to find somewhere to hide and all end up grouping under the village clock. – Lambikins is at downstage-centre – Mary ENTERS STAGE LEFT, spots Lambikins and rushes up to him and hugs him)

MARY: Lambikins, O Lambikins I've found you at last. Where have you been? What have you been up to?

ALL: Surprise!

(Mary jumps in surprise and looks around.)

MARY: What are you all doing here?

SUKEY: We're waiting for you.

MARY: Why?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: We want you to be the star of our show, and besides you have some things in your bag that we need.

MARY: (*Looks in bag*) Do you mean all these things I've collected today? But they all belong to someone with the initials FC.

(*FC ENTERS STAGE RIGHT*)

FC: Indeed they do my dear. However, they are needed for the show; if you pass them to me, I'll hand them out to the right people.

MARY: FC... Father Christmas... Of Course... Oh it's so lovely to meet you...Of course you may have them, after all they are yours. Here you go (*She passes her bag over to FC*)

(*FC proceeds to hand everything out gold, frankincense and myrrh to the kings, crowns to the kings, bag of straw to the shepherds, they then strew it on the ground, to cover the floor of the stable, and so on. The crate/manger is also brought into view in centre stage.*)

MARY: (*To FC*) But, what's this show about?

FC: Take a look around. Tell me what you see?

MARY: (*Looks around*) Well, I see 3 kings; some shepherds; angels; a star; a manger; and of course my Lambikins..... Oh now I get it. It's like the nativity scene: but, where's the baby Jesus? and Mary and Joseph?

FC: (*Takes doll out of bag*) Well, here's the baby Jesus; your Mary; all we need now is Joseph. (*To Sukey*) Where is Joseph by the way?

SUKEY: I'm not sure (*to the others*) Have any of you seen Tom? (*All shake heads*)

PIG: I haven't seen him since this morning, Sukey.

SUKEY: Never Mind...Let's just look for him. Maybe he's still hiding, you know, after all that trouble this morning, when he hid Lavinia.

ALL: (*Start looking around everywhere and calling*) Tom...Tom...Tom, where are you?

(*SPOTLIGHT on Tom who's fallen asleep*)

ALL: Tom! TOM!

(*Tom wakes with a jolt, looks around dazed, and then spots the others looking for him*)

TOM: Oh Crikey! I'm late. Have we got to that part of the tale already. (*To the audience*) Well you're on your own now. (*To those on stage*) I'm coming. I'm coming (*He scrambles up on to the stage and rushes to join the others*)

SUKEY: There you are. Where have you been, Tom?

TOM: Sorry I'm late everyone. Places to go; people to see; you know how it is. Hey FC! How've you been?

FC: I'm fine Tom. It's good to see you too, but never mind all that, let's get on with the show. It is, after all, what these good folks have come to see.

SUKEY: Quite right. Now, places everyone.

(*LIGHTS DOWN*)

Scene 8 – It's Show Time.

(*SPOTLIGHT on FC standing downstage centre*)

FC: The Land of Nursery Rhymes, is proud to present to you, for one night only, 'The Surprise'. The story starts long ago in a stable. The animals as usual were having fun, completely unaware of the strange events they would witness that night.

(The scene is set – FC IS SEATED ON THE CORNER OF THE STAGE RIGHT – The innkeeper's door is DOWNSTAGE LEFT near the wings in darkness – LIGHTS UP upstage on the animals in the stable)

ANIMALS:

Dance Of The Animals
(Quite a lively dance number)

(LIGHTS DOWN – SPOTLIGHT on FC)

(NB – The following lines up to Mary's lullaby, are either spoken, or sung to the tune of 'Tempus Adest Floridum' aka 'Good King Wenceslas')

SONG: Nativity Song.

(SPOTLIGHT on Mary and Joseph as they ENTER STAGE RIGHT, approach the door, and knock. The innkeeper and his wife answer the door – this is done as FC says/sings his lines)

FC:

On a night so dark and cold, while sleeping is the city,
Seeking beds some strangers come: Innkeepers show pity.

TOM / JOSEPH:

Let us have thy smallest room – we can go no further.
Hark! See how the storm clouds loom and the wind grows stronger.

BUTCHER / INNKEEPER:

Though the wind is blowing in, and the air grows colder,
Now, with all the guests within, there are no rooms left over.
Caesar said, 'where you were born, is where you should return to',
As he will a census take. I wish that I could help you.

TOM / JOSEPH:

Sir, so tired is my wife that we can ask no more.
A simple shelter from the night. A simple stable floor.
That's all we ask, our last request. How can you refuse us?
Surely you will let us rest; be kind and not abuse us?

FC:

The Innkeeper ungraciously, showed them his straw filled manger.

(Innkeeper steps back, and indicates in to the stable; (LIGHTS UP on stable) there is a manger on the floor (crate filled with straw) – the stable is arranged in a slight semi-circle upstage)

BUTCHER / INNKEEPER:

Stay here then, among the beasts! At least here, there's no danger.

(Mary and Joseph walk through the door and settle down in the stable)

MOTHER HUBBARD / INNKEEPER'S WIFE:

Here you're safe from storm and stress, and the wind's wild tumble.
There's no cause for more distress. This shelter's warm though humble.

FC:

While out in the bitter night, the storm resumes its battle.
The travellers came inside to rest, there with all the cattle.
Upon the straw a babe was born, while the wind was sighing.
And the storm it ceased to roar, to a mother's lullabying.

(Mary takes baby from the manger and rocks it)

(Star shares SPOTLIGHT with FC DOWNSTAGE RIGHT.)

JACK / STAR:

Following my star above, to where my light shone down;
After travelling here from far, some Kings came into town.

(SPOTLIGHT on Innkeeper's door as Kings ENTER STAGE RIGHT and cross to knock at the door. The Innkeeper's wife answers the door)

FIG, OKC, HD / KINGS:

A star it is that's led us here, to knock upon your door.
We're looking for a baby born, upon a stable floor.

(Innkeeper's wife shows them to the stable – Kings walk through door into stable.)

FC:

The Kings were shown to the babe laid in a manger bed.
They stood there standing each in awe, and bowing down their head.

(Kings move and kneel by the manger)

FIG, OKC, HD / KINGS:

We bring to thee the finest myrrh; frankincense; and gold;
These gifts are for the newborn King; whose birth we had been told of.

(Kings present their gifts and stand behind the manger)

(SPOTLIGHT on Innkeeper's door – Shepherds ENTER STAGE RIGHT and cross to knock at the door. The Innkeeper's wife answers the door)

LBP, LBB / SHEPHERDS:

Choirs of angels sang to us of a new King born today.
They said, 'you'll find him asleep, in a manger full of hay'.

(Innkeeper's wife shows them to the stable – Shepherds walk through door into stable – FULL LIGHTS UP – Angels enter the stable from STAGE LEFT AND RIGHT and range along the back, in a semi-circle behind everyone else)

FC:

Around the newborn baby's bed, the angels also throng
And all the animals share their bed and curiously look on.

MARY:

SONG: Mary's Lullaby.
(original title 'Sleep, my Jesus, Sleep')

(sings to baby – as she sings Shepherds and Wise Men exit stage through the door and back the way they came. – Shepherds leave 1st verse, Wise Men leave 2nd verse – Choral accompaniment may be needed)

Verse 1.

Sleep, my little Jesus,
On Thy bed of hay,
While the shepherds homeward,
Journey on their way.
Mother is Thy shepherd,
And will her vigil keep:
Did the voices wake Thee?
O sleep, my darling, sleep!

Softly sleep, sweetly sleep,
My darling, sleep!

Verse 2.

Sleep, my little Jesus,
While Thou art my own!
Ox and ass Thy neighbours,
Wise Men have now gone.
Darling, How I love you.
I will do you no harm.
Do not fear my baby.
O sleep, my darling, sleep!

Softly sleep, sweetly sleep,
My darling, sleep!

Verse 3.

Sleep, my little Jesus,
Wonder-baby mine!
Well the singing angels,
Greet Thee as divine.
Softly now they leave us,
Safely on our own,
Still, they're watching o'er us.
O sleep, my darling, sleep!

Softly sleep, sweetly sleep,
My darling, sleep!

ANGELS:

Dance Of The Angels.
(Would suggest a light airy dance number)

(LIGHTS FADE OUT AND COME UP for curtain call)

FC: Introducing Tom as Joseph *(Tom takes a bow)*
Mary as Mary *(Mary takes a bow)*
The Butcher and Mother Hubbard as the Innkeeper and his wife *(they take a bow)*
Jack as the Star *(Jack takes a bow)*
Little Boy Blue and Little Bo-Peep as the shepherds *(they take a bow)*
Humpty Dumpty, Pig and Old King Cole as the 3 Wise Men *(they take a bow)*
Polly, Sukey, Little Miss Muffet, Jill and the 3 Fiddlers as Angels *(they take a bow)*
Father Christmas as the Narrator *(takes a bow)*
And
Everybody else as extras *(Everyone else takes a bow)*

(LIGHTS DOWN – SPOTLIGHT on Tom as he steps forward)

TOM: Our show is at an end, and so my story must finish too. Mary found her lamb; solved the mystery of her collection; and became part of a bigger surprise. We've had fun, and we hope you have too.

TOM'S DAD: *(A loud voice is heard offstage)* Tom! What have you done with that pig? Wait till I get my hands on you!

TOM: *(Jumps in surprise)* Oh No! It's Dad. He's found out. *(He starts to panic)* Can't stop...Gotta run...See you all next year...Bye! *(He runs off stage)*

(FULL LIGHTS UP again – everyone standing for the final song)

ALL: SONG: The End Of The Show.
(set to 'Here we go round the mulberry bush')

Verse 1.

Here in the Land of Nursery Rhyme,
Our show's at an end; we've run out of time.
We hope you've had fun; we've had a blast.
It's time for you to go home at last.

Verse 2.

We hope you have a lovely Christmas,
Have lots of fun; try not to miss us.
Don't eat too much; you'll make yourself sickish;
Have a happy New Year.

Verse 3.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas.
Merry Christmas; Merry Christmas.
We wish you all a merry Christmas;
And very, happy New Year.

(LIGHTS DOWN AND THEN UP AGAIN FOR FINAL CURTAIN CALL)