



## *There May Be a Castle*

### Visual Story



A visual resource for children and adults with Autism, Asperger's, Sensory Processing Disorder and associated conditions.

This resource is intended to help prepare any visitors for a new experience and to help them to become familiar with the show, surroundings and situation.

## The Show

The show lasts for 1 hour 40 minutes but has a 15 minute interval as part of this time.

There are 5 performers in the show. Most of the characters are played by people but the sheep and the imaginary characters are puppets.

The show has live songs, recorded music and sound effects. The story skips between real life and Mouse's imagination.

*There May be a Castle* is for everyone over 7. Although exciting and uplifting, and very much about the power of love, the production involves the central character dying. This happens near the end of the show and is treated in a very sensitive way, with Mouse re-joining his fantasy family. When the family car crashes, Mouse is transported into a fantasy world as he walks through the snow to find help, while his big sister, trapped in the car, remains in the 'real world' imagining she is a pirate to help her survive the cold. Younger children could find this confusing.

On a frozen Christmas Eve, Mouse Mallory and family are on their way across the snow-white valley to their Grandpa's house. But they never arrive. Instead, Mouse makes friends with a dinosaur that can change size, a glamorous but sarcastic horse and a tone-deaf minstrel who never stops singing! Together, they embark upon an extraordinary quest in search of a castle – but will they find it before the dangerous pink knight catches up with them?

This remarkable story about love, loss and the power of the imagination, from award-winning writer Piers Torday, is adapted into a musical puppetry production by the creators of Little Angel Theatre's *The Singing Mermaid*, *The Smartest Giant in Town* and *The Pixie and the Pudding*.

With thanks to Child Bereavement UK for their invaluable guidance.

*Child Bereavement UK helps children and young people (up to the age of 25), parents, and families, to rebuild their lives when a child grieves or when a child dies. The charity also provides training to professionals, equipping them to provide the best possible care to bereaved families.*

*For support, information and guidance call Child Bereavement UK's Helpline on 0800 02 888 40, 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday.*





## Characters



Mouse



Violet

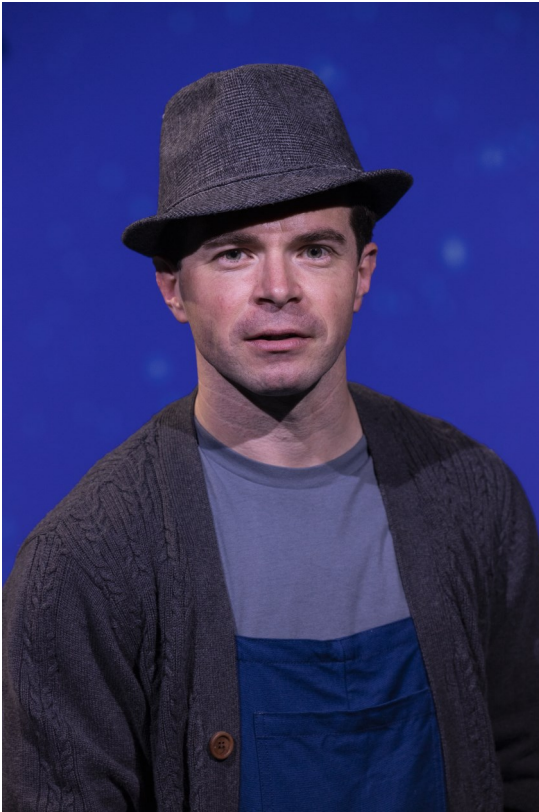


Esme



Mum

## Characters



Grandpa



Sir Dragnet



Nonky



Baa



## Characters



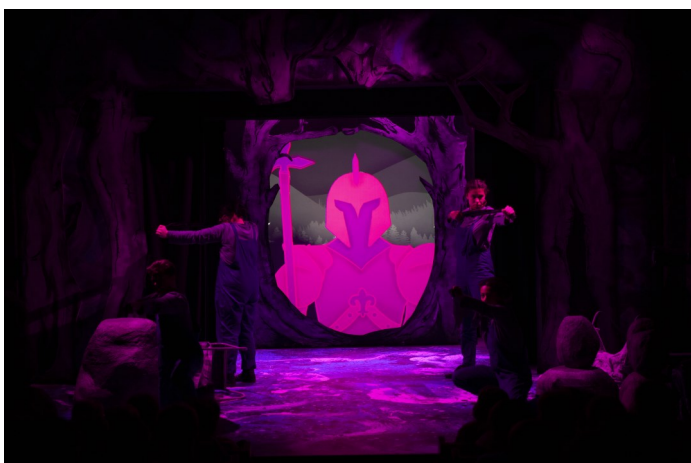
Trex



Owl



Wizard (back of Owl head)



The Pink Knight

## The Show

In this section special alerts are written in blue ink.



When you enter the auditorium you will see the set on the stage and 4 chairs to represent a car. A screen is showing a film of snow falling. Christmas songs are playing quietly in the background.

**The lights get darker.** The film on the screen changes to the windscreen of a car. The family come onto the stage and sit in the car seats. They are heading off to Grandpa's house to visit him at Christmas.

The children chat and argue and moan. Mouse and Violet still have their pyjama's on. Esme has a cold and keeps snuffling and sniffing. Mouse has a toy horse called Nonky.

It is very cold and the snow is coming down hard. **There is a weather warning on the radio about how dangerous it is to drive.**

**Mum tunes the radio in to play music to take their minds off the cold and snow. They sing along to *Good King Wenceslas* and *Ding Dong Merrily on High* loudly.**

**Mum's phone rings.** It is Grandpa's voice. He tells them to be careful.





The children complain about how far away Grandpa lives. They remember all the things they usually see when they are on their way to Grandpa's house.

Mum gives Mouse the tablet to play on. Esme wants to play on it too. Mouse complains that Esme will ruin the jousting game she likes to play. Esme wants to pick a pink Knight to play with. They argue.



Violet is reading a book, but she starts to feel car sick.

**In the chaos mum gets distracted and the car skids on the ice. The breaks screech and the children shout at mum.**

They are upset but everyone is ok. Mum starts the car again and they continue their journey.



The children start to argue over the toys again and Violet starts to feel sick. Mouse drops Trex, the toy dinosaur, and takes off their seatbelt, mum turns around to see what is going on and **suddenly everything goes into slow motion as the car skids and crashes. Everything stops. Everyone is ok. Mum notices that the car is on the edge of a slope. She tells the children not to move but it is too late. Everything goes into slow motion again as the car falls and the family are thrown about as it crashes.**

**Mouse is thrown away from the car and the rest of the family.**



Mouse is all alone. It is dark and torch lights gradually come on to represent stars. **Mouse sings a song about all the stars.**

Mouse is confused and the real world starts to merge into the world of their imagination after the shock of the crash.

A sheep wanders in. Mouse talks to the sheep but the sheep doesn't talk back. It is a real sheep who can only say Baa! Mouse names the sheep Baa!

Mouse remembers some things about the crash but is still very confused.

A giant purple horse appears. It is Nonky the toy horse. It has grown and come to life and can talk. It has a voice and attitude that sounds a lot like Violet!

Mouse's clothes transform from pyjama's to a Knights outfit. Nonky explains that Mouse has a quest to complete.

**Mouse sings wondering what kind of story they are in?**

**There are strange clanking noises.**

Nonky warns Mouse not to look back and not to fall asleep. To keep going forward otherwise whatever is making the noise will catch up with them. Mouse asks if they are going to a castle. Nonky says there may be a castle at the end of the quest.

Mouse decides that the best thing to do would be to follow the cairns. The little piles of stones along the route to Grandpa's house.





They sing a song about a castle as they travel along. Mouse rides on Nonky's back. Mouse and Baa leave the stage and walk up the aisle.

In the real world we see the family in the car. Violet and Esme are in their seats and mum is lying on the floor. Mouse is gone. Violet thinks about what her hero, Grainne O'Malley the pirate queen would do in this situation. She cuts the seatbelts so that they aren't stuck any more.

The lights go off on the stage and light up Grandpa. Grandpa is getting worried about the family as they have not arrived. He is on the phone at the back of the theatre trying to call mums mobile. The phone rings. The call goes to mums voicemail and he leaves a message asking them to let him know that they are ok as he is worried.

The lights go off on Grandpa and back on the stage. Mouse and Nonky sing a song about travelling onwards in their quest.

Nonky reminds Mouse not to turn around and not to fall asleep. We hear a terrible singing voice. Sir Dragnet enters the stage. Sir Dragnet reminds Mouse of someone, but they can't think who. Sir Dragnet is a jester and a ballad singer by trade. They play the ukulele and have a jingly hat with lots of bells.

Mouse is worried about Dragons. Sir Dragnet sings a terrible out of tune song about Dragons. They roar like a dragon and sing loudly about cheese!

Sir Dragnet wants to be paid for the song but Mouse doesn't have anything to pay with. Sir Dragnet says that they will have to take Nonky.

Mouse is left alone with Baa. They walk up the aisle of the theatre trying to remember not to turn around.





Back in the real world in the car accident Esme is getting sleepy. Violet finds mum's phone. She hopes this could be the way to get help.

**A phone rings. Lights go up on Grandpa at the back of the theatre** He answers the phone and it is the police. He is asking for help to find the family. He tries mum's phone again, but it is still going to voicemail.

**In Mouse's imagination we hear more dragon noises and Mouse holds the sword close for protection, and swings it at the noise.** Mouse sings 'Good King Wenceslas' for comfort and decides to name the sword Wenceslas.

**We hear terrible earth-shattering noises. A massive T-rex appears.** Mouse realises that it isn't a dragon but T-rex, her toy dinosaur. **Mouse sings a song about her friend the dinosaur. T-rex reminds Mouse of someone but they can't think who?**

**Nonky and Sir Dragnet appear singing and jingling bells.** Nonky can not bear to listen to any more songs! Mouse offers to pay for the Dragon song with an actual Dragon. T-rex, roars a greeting! Sir Dragnet is eventually happy with this and makes friends with T-rex.

**The friends hear the sound of hissing, clanking and slobbering.** They know they must get to castle as quickly as possible. They set off but then Mouse decides they must look at who it is that is following them.

**The Pink Knight appears on the screen. The friends all run up the aisle in fear.**

There is a song about the Pink Knight as his image gets bigger on the screen. **Black scarves and chairs turn into barking dogs. One of the dog scarves exits up the aisle.**





Back in the real world in the car accident violet is pressing the car horn to try and get attention. She decides that she needs to go and try and find Mouse.

The lights go out.

*This is the interval. There will be a 15 minute break. During the interval the stage set is changed slightly to make a graveyard. A bell will ring to let you know that the interval is ending.*

Music plays and the lights go darker as the second half begins. Grandpa is at the back of the auditorium on the phone to the police again. He can hear the sounds of people calling out and searching for the family.

In Mouses' imagination the friends arrive at the churchyard. They sing a song about all the people buried in the graves, and realise that a churchyard is not so scary when you think about it that way.

The friends see the castle. Mouse can't believe how beautiful it is and really wants to go inside. Sir Dagnet discovers that the only way to get into the castle is to fill in a lot of forms! They fill in one and then discover they have to do more. **Mouse is starting to forget information about the real world and sings a song about life not being fair.**

Trex is so hungry he eats some of the forms, which means they can't get in at all!

Nonky knows that the only other way to get into the castle is to defeat the King's champion in a joust. Mouse is scared and starts to feel funny. Mouse feels like the time they had flu. Mouse wants to go home and walks unsteadily up the aisle trying to get away from the situation.

In the real world Violet is still looking for Mouse. She hears the sound of a search party and runs off.





Mouse's imagination takes them to a cave. In the cave there is an old owl. **They sing a song about transforming, and a constantly changing film plays on the screen behind them.**

**The Owl spins his head and transforms into a wise old wizard.** The Owl/Wizard reminds Mouse of someone, but they can't think who.....

The Wizard helps Mouse to understand about the importance of imagination and that there are three reasons for everything. Mouse remembers three reasons, mum, Esme and Violet, but then Sir Dragnet, Trex and Nonky appear. It is time for the joust, and Mouse's opponent is going to be the Pink Knight!

Mouse begins to fight and the imaginary and real worlds blur together as Violet appears. She sees mouse waving her toy light sabre around. **Violet imagines that she is the Pirate Queen and sings a song about how she is rescuing Mouse.**

They both realise how close they are to Grandpa's house. They hug and they realise they can make it.

**In the real world *Mouse is on a hospital bed with a heart monitor beeping.***

Mouse wakes up. Mouse is a hero. They got to Grandpa's house and were able to tell the police where the car was with mum and Esme inside. Everyone is safe. Mouse is happy to hear that everyone is safe. **Mouse closes their eyes and the heart monitor goes flat, the beeping stops and makes one single noise to show that Mouse has died.**

**Mum screams and everything goes into slow motion.** The family leave the stage.





Mouse wakes up in the world of their imagination. Mouse hears the voices of all the imaginary friends who appear.

They are all very happy to see each other.

**They sing a song about anything being possible.**

This is the end of the show.

**The performers come back on and sing 'There May be a Castle' you can clap along with them if you like.**



The performers bow.

You can applaud at the end if you want to.

We hope that you enjoyed the show.

