

THE CALVERTON ST. GEORGE'S PLAY

REBOOTED VERSION 3.0 – MAY 2016 – REWRITTEN / REARRANGED BY SIMON
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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE JESTER, *the introducer*

MRS GENT, *an old hag*

MOP, *a young man with a mop*

KING OF ENGLAND, *the father of the land*

PRINCESS, *a fair maiden, daughter of the King*

SQUIRE, *a lowly lackey*

ST. GEORGE, *England's greatest hero*

SLASHER, *St. George's rival*

BEELZEBUB, *lord of the flies*

DRAGON, *a fiery beast*

DOCTOR, *a well-travelled quack*

Enter THE JESTER, alone.

JESTER In comes I, the King's prize clown,
A brisk and lively fellow,
I've come to hear you stamp and cheer,
To hear you roar and bellow.
Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen all!
It's for St. George we come to call.
A field! A field! An English field!
A field to see a fight,
One patron saint with cross of red,
Takes on a dragon's might.
So take up your seats, pull up your stools,
I bring with me a pack of fools.
If you don't believe a word I say,
Let's begin our tale! Hip hip!

AUDIENCE Hurray!

Enter MRS. GENT, in hysterics.

MRS. GENT In comes I, old Mrs. Gent,
A life as washerwoman spent.
I come with tears and wringing hand
To beg the King to rid the land
Of dragon fierce,
Of fiend most grim,
Me duck? We're ...

JESTER Careful!

MRS. GENT ... sick of him.
Last week I'll grant I saw him smile
As spitting fire, he set a pile
Of straw on master's farm ablaze

And to the ground the farmhouse razed.
Not just to curse us? Now to mock us!
And one more thing! He singed my ...

JESTER Careful!

MRS GENT ... petticoat.
A champion your sire must urge
To rid us of this loathsome scourge.

Enter MOP, swinging an upside-down mop at the JESTER, imitating a knight brandishing his sword.

MOP In comes I, my name is Mop,
I've come to plead the King to stop
This Devil's creature who can make
E'en the stoutest heart to quake.
A champion, we beg, to wield
A mighty sword and iron shield
In service of this Jester's sire
To save us from a dragon's fire.

JESTER My sire, you say? He is the King.

MOP Beseech him, Sir.

JESTER But here's the thing.
I tell you that indeed you'll find
The King to be of likewise mind.
And see that he now strides this way.
Receive him thus – hip hip!

AUDIENCE Hurray!

Enter THE KING OF ENGLAND.

KING In comes I, the King of England,
And so boldly do I appear;
I'm come to seek a son and heir.
My daughter is so fair, it's said.
But my heart is full of sorrow.

JESTER And when shall she be wed, good sire?

KING Tomorrow, fool, tomorrow.
Unless, I fear, this angry brute
That lays waste to this land
Is not dispatched today by he
Who'll fight at my command.
So hear ye men of noble blood!
A gallant I require
To march into the jaws of death
And quench a dragon's fire.
And by succeeding in this quest
To put it to the sword
My daughter's hand in marriage, Sir,

Shall be your just reward.

Enter the PRINCESS.

PRINCESS Behold the Princess, fair and mild.
Young and pure, but I am not a child.
With all my pride, it is my delight,
To be the bride of the bright and gallant knight.

JESTER Now see who comes to join the fray?
St. George himself, make way, make way.

Enter the SQUIRE.

SQUIRE In comes I, St George's Squire.
To quench that fearsome dragon's fire
I bring with me this wooden bucket.
And if he don't like it, well frankly, he can do one.

SQUIRE steps aside to make way for ST. GEORGE, entering with a sword over his shoulder.

ST. GEORGE I am St. George, from good Old England sprung,
My famous name throughout the world has rung,
Many bloody deeds and wonders have I shown,
And made false tyrants tremble on their throne.
I followed a fair lady to a giant's gate,
Confined in dungeon deep to meet her fate.
Then I resolved with true knight-errantry
To burst the door, and set the captive free.
Far have I roamed, often have I fought, and little do I rest;
All my delight is to defend the right, and succour the oppressed.

SLASHER *(off)* Not so fast, St. George!

ST. GEORGE Not so fast? And whom, I ask,
Is this who takes St. George to task?

PRINCESS Behold! A rival for my hand
In marriage has now made his stand.

ST. GEORGE Enter, Sir, and do your worst.
I'll fight the beast when you're slain first.

Enter SLASHER.

SLASHER I am a valiant Soldier, Slasher is my name.
With sword and shield by my side I hope to win the game.
Slasher is my name and that I will make good.
Before I leave this battle ground I shall spill your noble blood.

ST. GEORGE Stand back, you dog,
Or by my sword I'm sure to break your head.

SLASHER How can you break my head?
My head is made of iron,

My body made of steel,
My hands and feet are knuckle bone.
No man can make me feel, pal.

ST. GEORGE If your head is made of iron,
Your body made of steel,
Your hands and feet are knuckle bone,
I think I can make you feel.

ST. GEORGE and SLASHER fight. SLASHER is slain.

And now I'll slay the Dragon bold, my wonders to begin;
A fell and fiery Dragon he, but I will clip his wing.
I'll clip his wings, he shall not fly,
I'll rid the land of him, or else I'll die.

KING St. George, you shall be my son.
Victory for England is surely won!

Enter BEELZEBUB.

BEELZEBUB In comes I, Beelzebub.
Over my shoulder I carry my club.
In my hand a dripping pan.
Don't you think I'm a jolly old man? If you don't, I do.
A battle, George!
The likes of which has ne'er been seen before,
As English steel combats a beast
Of fang and tooth and claw.
A beast of guile, a beast of wit,
A beast of searing breath,
This is a fight to end all fights,
A fight until the death.
The game's afoot, the game's at hand,
So choose your tactics well.
My champion comes to send you, George,
Down screaming into Hell.

BEELZEBUB moves aside. Enter the DRAGON, roaring.

DRAGON Who is it seeks the Dragon's blood,
And calls so angry and so loud?
That English dog who looks so proud
If I could catch him in my claw
With my long teeth and horrid jaw,
Of such I'd break up half a score,
To stay my appetite for more.
Marrow from his bones I'd squeeze,
And suck his blood up by degrees.

ST. GEORGE and the DRAGON fight. The DRAGON is slain.

ST. GEORGE I am St. George, that worthy champion bold,
And with my sword and spear I won three crowns of gold.
I fought the fiery Dragon and brought him to the slaughter,

By which I won the favour of the King of England's daughter.

BEELZEBUB dives in and, with his club, knocks GEORGE to the ground.

PRINCESS Oh, Beelzy, Beelzy, what have you done?
You have killed my beloved!

KING And slain my only son!

JESTER Five pounds for a doctor!

KING Ten pounds for a good doctor!

Enter the DOCTOR.

DOCTOR In comes I the doctor.

KING You the doctor?

DOCTOR Yes, I the doctor.

KING How came you to be the doctor?

DOCTOR I have travelled for it.

KING Where have you travelled?

DOCTOR England, Ireland, France and Spain,
Fireside to bedside,
Bedside to fireside,
And back to doctor old England again.
I've eaten many a pound of pork pie in my time,
Which makes me so stout and my face to shine.

KING Ah. But what diseases can you cure?

DOCTOR I can cure the hipsy, the pipsy,
The palsy and the gout.
The pains within
And the pains without.
I can draw a leg,
I can set a tooth.
Why, I can even bring the dead back to life again
In sunshine and in rain.

PRINCESS Oh, Doctor. Do try your skill.

DOCTOR Yes, my Lady, and so I will.
But first I must have a feel ... of the young man's pulse.

DOCTOR grabs hold of ST. GEORGE'S leg.

DOCTOR My but it does tick exceeding fast,
It's nineteen times to the tick of my watch once.
He's in a very low way.

He'll not get a deal lower unless there's a hole dug for him.
I shall give him a drop of my whiff-whaff.

DOCTOR *administers the whiff-whaff.*

And then a blow on the head with my tiff-taff.

DOCTOR *hits ST. GEORGE on the head with a mallet.*

It's no good.
I shall have to give him one of my pills.
He is to take one in the morning,
One in the evening,
And swallow the whole box at supper time.
These will do his soul the power of good.
These will heal his wounds
And purify his blood.
But wait!

ALL Wait?

DOCTOR This young man is not dead!

ALL Not dead?

DOCTOR No! He is merely in a trance.

ALL Merely in a trance?

DOCTOR And if he can dance, then we can sing,
So raise him up and let's begin.

ALL *sing* Good master and good mistress
As you sit by your fire,
Remember us poor Plough Boys
Who plough through mud and mire.
The mire it is so deep,
The water is so clear,
We thank you for your gifts today,
And a pint of your best beer.

Take collection and any other business.

ALL *sing* Good master and good mistress
As you sit by your fire,
Remember us poor Plough Boys
Who plough through mud and mire.
We thank you for civility
And what you've given us here.
We wish you all very good day,
And joy for all the year.