

The Spirit of Panto

There's a saying that theatre's founded upon.
No matter what happens, "The show must go on!"
But that was a time before Covid had struck,
And for us in the panto, we ran out of luck.

Now, who would've thought that we'd be in this state?
That poor Cinderella would just have to wait
Till next year to find love with her Prince at the ball?
But pandemics are like that, they scunner us all.

The Empire is empty, it's no' lookin' good.
But see, it's repurposed delivering food
To the people who, sadly, have no Christmas fare.
The Spirit of Panto is somewhere out there.

We're now on a mission, we just have to find her
And bring her back here so that we can remind her
To sprinkle her magic on all of our lives,
Until next December, when panto arrives.

Oh wait... what's that in the distance I see?
That light there, that's glimmering, what can it be?
The Spirit of Panto that brightens our shows?
I think we should follow it, see where it goes.

I've enlisted the help of some pals for the task,
Some old panto fav'rites I thought we could ask
To become a detective, if just for today,
And find that wee sprit who's wafted away.

Oh look, here's a dancer. She once played the fairy.
She knows that the Spirit of Panto is airy
and hard to track down. But with elegant grace,
She'll search every inch of this big empty space.

Here's Booby to help us, he's got the idea.
Although he's a dafty, he never shows fear.
He keeks 'round the corner and runs up the stair.
I'm no' sure the Spirit of Panto's up there.

Oh Booby, be careful, this spirit is fly.
She's bound to surprise you. Look out! Custard Pie!
Oh Booby, trust you to create all this fuss
by getting a big custard pie in the puss.

We've no Fairy Godmother casting a spell,
So here, wipe yer face, I'll go look for mysel'.
Sleeping Beauty was frightened, I ken how she feels.
I wish I was better at running in heels.

She's no' in the dressing rooms, no' in the bar.
She's no in the foyer, she's no' in a car.
She's no' on the Christmas tree. Where can she be?
She's there right behind you! No, Booby, that's me!

If Aladdin was here, he would rub on his lamp.
Dick Whittington's cat would be setting up camp.
Peter Pan's Tinkerbell knows what to do
But she's lost with the Lost Boys. We haven't a clue.

With Jack up his beanstalk, he's missing for hours.
Though the Beast found his future we canny find ours.
There's no help from Snow White asleep ben the hoose.
And what use are the eggs of Priscilla the goose?

Now, haud on! I'm channelling Sarah the Cook.
She's telt me the one place we still have to look!
The place where a pantomime sparkles with fizz.
The place where the people shout, "Oh yes, it is!!"

Now come to the theatre, and trust what you're seeing.
Our mission to find this ethereal being
is nearing its end. We're about to achieve
What the Spirit of Panto can make us believe.

There, that's a ghost light. This theatre tradition's
A welcoming sign for benign apparitions.
Our Spirit of Panto is just such a spectre.
This light is a signal. We're here to protect her.

So just when you thought she had no place to bide,
You were missing the fact that she lives on inside
Every person who's been to a panto and smiled.
Forever alive in the mind of a child.