

# **THE KING JAMES HAT**

A Short Musical

by

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THE KING JAMES HAT

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## CAST

### **Characters in order of appearance:**

*(Number of speeches in brackets)*

**Catesby (7)**

**Percy (3)**

**Fawkes (2)**

**Wright (2)**

**Winter (3)**

**Mrs Brown (6)**

**Mrs Smith (5)**

**Mrs Jones (5)**

**Policeman 1 (17)**

**Policeman 2 (14)**

**Anna (11)**

**Rachel (15)**

**Jacob (65)**

**Steven (11)**

**Gary (3)**

**Alice (15)**

**Katie (7)**

**Louisa (7)**

**Leah (5)**

**Jeremy (2)**

**Carly (4)**

**Mr Henshaw (7)**

**Dinner Lady 1 (10)**

**Dinner Lady 2 (7)**

**Mum (23)**

**Granny (30)**

**Lauren (17)**

Extra **children** if available

**Chorus of townspeople.**

**Chorus of fireworks** if required.

*A dance could be choreographed for them before the interval,  
possibly using the music of Song 8.*

## PRODUCTION NOTES

It is bonfire night and the school is staging a performance of a play about the Gunpowder Plot. The children are searching through the costume cupboard when Jacob finds a hat which he decides to wear for his part as King James. However, the hat has unexpected properties and when Jacob's Granny borrows it, all sorts of strange things happen and disaster is narrowly averted.

The play includes flashbacks to the conspirators plotting to blow up the king and his parliament. A chorus of fireworks could be included if required to involve more pupils. Extra children and townspeople could be included in some scenes and most of the songs.

Few costumes are needed since the only period characters are the conspirators in the flashbacks. A simple living room set is all that is needed for Act II with an entrance hall area which can easily be placed adjacent to the acting area. The same set could be used for Act I with the addition of a few school props such as a blackboard or desks and posters on the walls. The park bench and policemen scenes could take place in front of curtain or on the same set with perhaps the addition of a simple prop such as a tree. Lighting changes would be enough for the flashback scenes and would be helpful when the children change into "conspirator" mode.

There are seven songs. All include a chorus although there are verses for Granny, the dinner ladies and the policemen to sing as solos or duets if possible. There is one dance which gives an opportunity for a recorder ensemble to play and other instruments could of course be added in this and any of the other songs as the tunes are all very simple.

The play runs for approximately one hour and if performed with an interval it allows time for a scene change. The end of Act I also makes an appropriate place for a fireworks dance.

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by Liz Stockley

## ACT I

*(A chorus of TOWNSPEOPLE is standing to the sides in front of the stage ready for SONG 1. The stage is in semi darkness. There is a table in the centre which can be turned into a park bench for the next scene. ROBERT CATESBY enters carrying a lantern which he places on the table. There is a muffled knock on the door).*

**Catesby:** Who's there?

**Percy:** *(off)* 'Tis I, Thomas Percy.

*(CATESBY goes to the door and lets him in).*

**Percy:** And here's Guy Fawkes and John Wright.

*(They all come to the centre and stand in the lantern light).*

**Catesby:** It needs only my cousin, Thomas Winter now and we shall all be gathered.

*(There is another knock).*

**Catesby:** Who's there?

**Winter:** *(off)* I, Thomas Winter. Let me in.

*(CATESBY goes to the door and brings him in).*

**Catesby:** Welcome, cousin. You are sure no one saw you come here?

**Winter:** No one. The night is black and there's no one abroad in the streets.

**Catesby:** Then we are all assembled and can lay our final plans.

**Fawkes:** Not before time. There is a great mass of good people who want the King dead. England must be saved from this Protestant wickedness.

**Wright:** Aye, my friend. It's true. King James must die!

**MUSIC 1: THE KING MUST DIE**

*(CONSPIRATORS and TOWNSPEOPLE)*

**ALL:**            *The King must die!  
And thousands of Londoners will tell you why,  
The King must go!  
And loyal Catholics will tell you so.  
Now the time is right  
Our plans are laid tonight,  
Call it treachery or treason,  
Now the time is right  
Our plans are laid tonight,  
But it's not without good reason  
That the King must die!*

*The King must die!  
And thousands of Londoners will tell you why,  
The King must go!  
And loyal Catholics will tell you so.  
We have left no clue  
About what we mean to do,  
Call it treachery or treason,  
We have left no clue  
About what we mean to do,  
But it's not without good reason  
That the King must die!*

*(All exit).*

*(Lights up. Table becomes park bench. MRS BROWN is sitting on it, arms folded, obviously bored, waiting for the CHILDREN to come out of school. There might be a sign indicating that she's outside school. She taps her foot and looks at her watch impatiently).*

*(MRS SMITH enters; she is pulling on a white coat and carrying her "lollipop").*

**Mrs Smith:** Oh thank goodness for that! They're not out yet. I thought I was going to be late.

**Mrs Brown:** You are late. Only they're later. I don't know what they do in school

these days but they're never out on time.

**Mrs Smith:** It's that play. We never hear the last of it in our house. I said to my husband ....

*(MRS JONES enters and sits beside MRS BROWN).*

**Mrs Jones:** Hello! Did I hear you talking about that play? My Joey's quite obsessed with it. He said they were going to look for costumes today. He's so excited!

**Mrs Brown:** Well, I'd have thought they'd got better things to do in school. Like lessons.

**Mrs Jones:** Oh I don't know. I think it's nice. I'm looking forward to seeing it.

**Mrs Smith:** And me! And it's very historical you know. They're learning about King James and the Gunpowder Plot.

**Mrs Brown:** Well, here they come. Look out!

*(The THREE LADIES exit. There is the noise of CHILDREN shouting off stage. Two POLICEMEN enter).*

**Police 1:** Just look at them!

**Police 2:** And listen to them!

**Police 1:** Not like it used to be.

**Police 2:** We never behaved like that.

**Police 1:** Little hooligans.

**Police 2:** Heading for trouble, that's what.

*(Pause)*

**Police 1:** You on duty tonight?

**Police 2:** I think everyone's on duty tonight. You never know what might happen on bonfire night.

**Police 1:** That's the trouble.

**Police 2:** Not like it used to be.

**Police 1:** We never behaved like that.

**Police 2:** Never had no money for all these fireworks.

**Police 1:** And barbecues and discos and the like.

**Police 2:** Those were the days, eh?

**Police 1:** They were. You're right. Mind you ....

**Police 2:** What?

**Police 1:** They do some good things. You going to see this play up at the school?

**Police 2:** What's that about then?

**Police 1:** About Guy Fawkes. My Louisa's in it. Sounds good.

**Police 2:** Daresay I'll be there then. My lot'll be in it. They're always in on any drama that's happening.

**Police 1:** Oh well, something to look forward to then. I don't know. Kids today!

*MUSIC 2:           KIDS TODAY*

*(2 POLICEMEN, 3 LADIES and CHILDREN. The POLICEMEN sing verses, CHILDREN all join in the chorus).*

**Police:**           *It wasn't like this in our day,  
People knew what was what,  
The kids were all good in our day,  
Now it's all gone to pot.*

**All:**               *Kids today have it all their way,  
Kids today! What a drag!  
Kids today, well what can you say?  
No hope for kids today!*

**Police:**           *The world was all right in our day,  
No one spared the whip,  
The kids towed the line in our day,  
Never gave you no lip.*

*(All Exit).*

*Scene changes to the school costume cupboard.*

*[If curtains aren't available, then this can easily be done by making the park bench into a costume chest which the CHILDREN open, while other CHILDREN could bring in some costume rails with various clothes, wigs and a mirror].*

*(JACOB, RACHEL, ANNA, STEVEN, GARY, ALICE, KATIE, LOUISA and LEAH are looking at the clothes).*

**Anna:** Wow, Jacob! Look at this hat! It's exactly right!

**Rachel:** But wouldn't he wear a crown? Kings usually do.

**Anna:** Only for special occasions, like Christmas. Mostly he'd just wear a hat. It's a very kingly hat look, it's got a feather. Come here, Jacob.

*(She pulls the hat on to JACOB'S head. Immediately all the CHILDREN change, going from modern children mode into subservient seventeenth century mode. This could be indicated by a bow or a curtsey and a sound effect, such as a bell or chime bar, which happens every time they change "mode").*

**Jacob:** Well, how does it look?

**Rachel:** *(bowing)* Perfection itself, My Liege.

**Anna:** *(curtseying)* Eminently suitable, Sir.

**Jacob:** What?

**Steven:** *(adjusting the hat slightly)* If your Majesty would allow me .... There, that's splendid.

**All:** Oh yes, perfect, the very thing, wonderful, etc ....

**Jacob:** All right then, I'll wear that.

*(He takes the hat off, [Bell/Chime], and the CHILDREN change back into normal mode).*

**Anna:** *(Holding up dress)* Look, everyone. I'm going to wear this.

**Alice:** You could put tinsel round the bottom to make it look more like a queen's dress.

**Louisa:** What are we going to wear?

**Leah:** You lot always take the best parts.

**Anna:** Oh, stop moaning, you two. Why don't you find yourselves something?

**Steven:** You could wear this tiara, Anna. *(putting it on her head).*

**Alice:** And this shawl to finish it off. *(Draping it around her shoulders).*

**Katie:** That looks brilliant!

**Anna:** There! We'll make the perfect royal couple. Come here, Jacob!

*(She takes his arm and they parade up and down. LOUISA and LEAH stand a little apart, sulking).*

**Rachel:** Don't forget your hat.

*(JACOB puts the hat on, [Bell/Chime], the CHILDREN change mode again).*

**Jacob:** There! That's sorted us out. What are you going to wear, Rachel?

**Rachel:** Oh, Your Majesty need have no concern on my account.

**Jacob:** Stop being stupid now. What about this cloak? *(He holds it up).*

**Rachel:** Your Majesty is too kind.

**Jacob:** Oh pack it in, will you! It's just getting a bit annoying.

*(JACOB, still wearing the hat continues searching through the costumes, ANNA preens herself in front of the mirror. ALICE seizes RACHEL'S arm, the lights change into something more sinister to indicate a change of mood and ALICE and RACHEL go into a huddle with STEVEN, GARY and KATIE, still in the seventeenth century mode. The other CHILDREN could all go into a "freeze").*

**Alice:** Have a care now, my Lord Fawkes! If you annoy the King he may become suspicious and we could be putting the whole plot at risk.

**Rachel:** Oh do not trouble yourself, Sir Catesby. King James has no thought in his head beyond impressing his fancy Protestant friends.

**Katie:** He has not wit enough to guess what fate may yet befall him!

**Steven:** Him and all his Protestant parliament!

**Gary:** Not long now before we have Charles on the throne and England shall be led by Catholics as she was meant to be.

**Alice:** Is everything in readiness, Lord Fawkes?

**Rachel:** Indeed it is. Enough gunpowder to blow the heads off the King, the Queen, the Prince of Wales and every last Protestant member of the House of Commons!

**Alice:** Keep your voice down! We cannot risk discovery!

**Rachel:** It is all in place and the barrels secured by iron bars which will cause even more mischief when they blow. It needs nothing more than a taper to light the fuse and ....

*(JACOB takes the hat off in order to try on a crown he's found, [Bell/Chime. Lights change], all the CHILDREN change mode again).*

**Rachel:** .... Mr Henshaw's going to be really mad if we're late for lunch. Come on, look at all this mess!

**Alice:** Hey, you lot, we've got to tidy up or there'll be big trouble. You know what Mr. Henshaw's like.

**Louisa:** And we're going to tell him that you won't let us join in.

**Leah:** And that you've made all this mess.

**Alice:** Oh shut up. He won't listen to you two anyway. He knows what you're like.

*(They all start to put the clothes away. JACOB is still trying to decide between the*

*hat and the crown although he hasn't put the hat on again yet. MR HENSHAW'S voice is heard before he enters).*

**Mr Henshaw:** .... and you people in the costume cupboard. I said you could have a quick look. It certainly doesn't take this long to find something suitable. I want it all tidied up and ....

*(He enters and just as he does so, JACOB puts the hat back on, [Bell/Chime] and everyone changes mode ).*

**Mr Henshaw:** Your Majesty *(he bows)*.

**Jacob:** Will this be all right then?

**Mr Henshaw:** Whatever Your Majesty says, er .... Your Majesty.

**Jacob:** So I can wear it? Better than the crown, you think?

**Mr Henshaw:** Oh, Your Majesty, words fail me .... I ....

*(JACOB, looking a bit baffled, takes the hat off, [Bell/Chime]. Change of mode).*

**Mr Henshaw:** Jacob! Put that hat away!

**Jacob:** I was just doing it, Sir.

**Mr Henshaw:** And hurry up about it. You've been messing about out here for far too long. And that reminds me .... I've seen very little sign of the homework you were supposed to ....

**Louisa:** He hasn't done it, Sir.

*(JACOB puts the hat on, [Bell/Chime]. Change of mode).*

**Mr Henshaw:** .... Your Majesty! Allow me to suggest that ....

*(JACOB takes the hat off, [Bell/Chime]. Change of mode).*

**Mr Henshaw:** .... Hand in yesterday. Now the lunch bell's going to go in about half a minute and I want this place spotless before it does. Understand?

*(JACOB puts the hat on, [Bell/Chime]. Change of mode. He is beginning to understand what's happening).*

**Mr Henshaw:** .... the servants be sent to fetch meat for Your Majesty's table. No expense has been spared and many delicacies have been er .... prepared to tempt Your Majesty's palate, er .... Your Majesty.

*(JACOB takes the hat off, [Bell/Chime]. Change of mode. The school bell rings).*

**Mr Henshaw:** Jacob! Did you hear what I said? You'll be having no lunch today if you don't hurry up!

**Jacob:** Yes, Sir!

**Katie:** Oh no, he's in a bad mood now.

*(The CHILDREN tidy the clothes away, fetch chairs and tables and sit down).*

*(DINNER LADIES enter with their trolley.)*

**MUSIC 3: THE DINNER LADIES' SONG**

*(Sung by the DINNER LADIES with the CHILDREN singing "Yuk" etc. They could continue this as an ostinato for the rest of each verse perhaps).*

*[The chorus of TOWNSPEOPLE from MUSIC 1 could by now have changed into CHILDREN and come in for this song if required].*

**Dinner Ladies:** *Line up, line up and get your dinner,  
We've got a menu which will make you squeak,  
Carefully chosen for its healthy ingredients,  
Stop your hunger for at least a week.*

*We've got .....*

**Children:** *Turnip turnovers with pilchard pastry,  
(Yuk, Yuk, Yuk!)*  
**Dinner Ladies:** *Fishy faggots which are very tasty,*  
**Children:** *(Yuk, double Yuk, Yuk!)*  
**Dinner Ladies:** *Lamb's liver gateau with a sausage souffle,  
Roasted stickleback and curried cake,  
Broccoli crackers on a toadstool salad,  
Purple custard on a jellied snake.*

**Dinner Ladies:** *Line up, line up and get your dinner,  
We've got a menu which will make you squeak,  
Carefully chosen for its healthy ingredients,  
Stop your hunger for at least a week.*

*We've got ....*

**Dinner Ladies:** *Orange octopus with garlic garnish,*  
**Children:** *(Yuk, Yuk, Yuk!)*  
**Dinner Ladies:** *Rabbit rissoles and a stew of swordfish,*  
**Children:** *(Yuk, double Yuk, Yuk!)*  
**Dinner Ladies:** *Fried kipper burgers and a cabbage dumpling,*  
*Peppered pancake with a slice of spam,*  
*Mushed up chicken with a gherkin pudding,*  
*Walnuts pickled in banana jam.*

**Dinner Lady 1:** All right then! Line up!

**Dinner Lady 2:** There's ham rolls, cheese rolls, sausage rolls, tuna and sweetcorn sandwiches, salad rolls and bananas

**Dinner Lady 1:** Chocolate flapjacks, Texas cookies and Blackberry muffins.

**Dinner Lady 2:** Orange juice, lemonade, Ribena or milk.

**Dinner Lady 1:** Hurry up! Who's first?

**Anna:** Tuna sandwich and a banana, please.

**Alice:** Cheese roll and milk, please.

**Steven:** A cheese roll and a muffin, please. And Ribena.

**Katie:** A cheese roll and lemonade, please.

**Jacob:** A sausage roll and a chocolate flapjack, please.

**Dinner Lady 1:** No chocolate flapjacks. Sorry.

**Jacob:** But you just said there were. And anyway I can see them.

**Dinner Lady 1:** They're for the teachers.

**Jacob:** But there's far more flapjacks than there are teachers in the school.

**Dinner Lady 2:** You heard, boy. No chocolate flapjacks. Now go away before I tell Mr Henshaw you're causing trouble. Next please!

*(JACOB sits down with the others).*

**Jacob:** That's not fair. There's loads of flapjacks.

**Rachel:** Oh you know what those dinner ladies are like. They probably want to save them to eat themselves.

**Jacob:** I've got an idea.

*(He fetches the hat and goes back to the trolley holding it).*

**Jacob:** Please can I have a chocolate flapjack?

**Dinner Lady 1:** What! You again! I've told you, no! You can't.

*(JACOB puts the hat on, [Bell/Chime] and everyone changes into seventeenth century mode again).*

**Dinner Lady 1:** Your humble servant! *(She hands JACOB three flapjacks).*

**Dinner Lady 2:** God save Your Majesty! *(She hands JACOB another three).*

*(He takes hat off, [Bell/Chime] and goes back to sit with the others).*

**Jacob:** Did you see that?

**Anna:** What?

**Alice:** How did you get all those?

**Leah:** That's so unfair!

**Jacob:** Didn't you see? The hat?

**Steven:** What are you on about?

**Jacob:** This!

*(JACOB puts the hat on, [Bell/Chime]. They all go into seventeenth century mode. ANNA becomes QUEEN and summons a DINNER LADY over to refill their cups. The lights change as ALICE beckons the other "conspirators" and they all huddle again in conspiratorial fashion. Once again, everyone else could freeze).*

**Steven:** My Lord Catesby, what recourse have we should the plot fail?

**Gary:** It will not fail, my friend.

**Alice:** But were such a thing to happen, we have means to rid ourselves of this King; a careless shot from a pistol, a swift sword blow, a misplaced foot ....

**Gary:** .... and a body floating in the river next morning. Do not be anxious - the King's fate is sealed.

**Leah:** For a small sum me and my partner 'ere would consider doin' the job fer you, me lords.

**Louisa:** You wouldn't wan' ter dirty those nice white 'ands, now, would you?

**Jacob:** You see! You're all doing it. Stop it!

*(They ALL look at him in astonishment).*

**Alice:** My Liege?

**Rachel:** Sire?

**Jacob:** Oh come on! It's not funny after a while.

**Steven:** Who jests, Your Majesty?

*(JACOB takes the hat off, [Bell/Chime] and they ALL change mode).*

**Jacob:** Look, this is silly. I wish everyone would stop playing this silly game.

**Rachel:** What's the matter? You got your flapjacks, didn't you?

**Louisa:** Yes, all the flapjacks.

**Jacob:** But the hat? Didn't you see? Didn't you notice what the dinner ladies were doing?

**Rachel:** All I noticed is that you look a real prat in that hat! Here, give us a bit of flapjack!

*(They ALL laugh and start eating bits of flapjack).*

**Jacob:** You really don't know, do you? You don't remember once I've taken the hat off.

**Anna:** What? What's wrong with you today?

**Katie:** You're acting really funny.

**Rachel:** Oh it's being chosen to play King James. It must have gone to his head.

**Alice:** Like the hat!

**Steven:** He's really lost the plot!

*(They ALL laugh. JACOB seizes the hat and puts it on, [Bell/Chime]. Immediately they ALL stand up and make sweeping bows as he passes through them and exits. The "CONSPIRATORS" look at each other and laugh nastily. LOUISA and LEAH pick up their knives and start polishing them thoughtfully. As JACOB exits, he turns, sees them all, and runs).*

*(Lights go down and the 5 CONSPIRATORS enter with their lantern and gather round the table).*

**Catesby:** The time has come.

**Fawkes:** At last!

**Winter:** Our plans are laid.

**Percy:** Everything is in place.

**Wright:** The king will die!

**Catesby:** Come, friends. To the cellars!

**MUSIC 4: THE CELLARS OF LONDON TOWN**

*(CONSPIRATORS and TOWNSPEOPLE chorus).*

*(The rest of the cast could be brought in as extra singers if required).*

**CONSPIRATORS and TOWNSPEOPLE:**

*Deep in the cellars of London,  
Under the streets of the town,  
Deep in the dark and the silence,  
Danger is threatening the crown,  
Deep in the hearts of the people  
Doubt and unease have been spread,  
Deep in the cellars of London  
Rebels who want the king dead.  
Under the sweep of the river,  
Hid beneath Westminster's vaults,  
Men who can no longer live with  
King James and his followers' faults,  
Down with this Protestant nonsense,  
Catholics fight for the good,  
Down with the king and his cronies,  
England be ruled as she should.*

**CURTAIN**

## ACT II

*The living room of JACOB's house. DSL, probably in front of the stage, is an entrance hall area with a hat stand and a mirror which is angled in towards the stage. On stage there is a chair for GRANNY and entrances USR and DSL into the entrance hall.*

*(MUM enters, with GRANNY. She helps her to chair and then starts dusting).*

**Mum:** There you are, mother. You sit here a minute while I finish the cleaning and then we can have some tea.

**Granny:** Shall I pop round to the shops and buy some cake, dear?

**Mum:** I don't know where you put it all, mother! Cake, sweets, biscuits, chocolate! And there's nothing of you! Oh, here's Jacob!

*(JACOB enters).*

**Jacob:** Hi, Mum! Hi, Granny! Oh, Granny, I've got something for you.

*(He takes a chocolate flapjack out of his schoolbag and gives it to GRANNY).*

**Granny:** Ooh, thank you, dear! That looks lovely! *(She starts to eat it).*

**Jacob:** Is my football kit ready, Mum? There's practice tonight.

**Mum:** Well, there may be, but there's no way you're going anywhere until you've tidied your bedroom. It's disgusting!

**Jacob:** Oh Mum, I'll do it when I get back.

**Mum:** You'll do it now, Jacob. This minute!

**Jacob:** Please, Mum!

**Mum:** It'll only take you a moment. And another thing .... What's your maths homework doing on your table? That was supposed to be in yesterday wasn't it? I know because Rachel's mother told me that ....

*(An idea suddenly occurs to JACOB and while MUM is talking, he takes the hat out of his bag and puts it on, [Bell/Chime] . There is a change of mode and MUM curtsies before starting to speak).*

**Mum:** .... your bedchamber will be prepared for your return, Your Majesty. Does Your Majesty require anything further?

**Jacob:** No, no .... That's fine, thank you. Bye!

*(He takes the hat off, [Bell/Chime], and stuffs it into his bag which he leaves on stage, and exits hastily. As soon as he takes the hat off, MUM starts again).*

**Mum:** Jacob! What did I say? You can't go out till you've done your room! Come back here! However did he manage to sneak out like that? Kids! Just you wait till he gets back!

**Granny:** Don't be hard on him, dear. After all, he did bring me a lovely chocolate flapjack.

*(GRANNY, unseen by MUM who is still dusting, crosses to exit and seeing the bag, takes the hat out of it, looks at it and exits with it .... MUM carries on dusting for a bit longer and suddenly JACOB runs back in. He picks the bag up and looks for the hat).*

**Jacob:** Mum! Where's my hat?

**Mum:** Where you left it, I expect.

**Jacob:** It's not. It was in my bag and it's gone. I'm supposed to be wearing it in the play. Mr Henshaw will kill me if I lose it.

**Mum:** Well, it can't have walked off by itself.

**Jacob:** Granny!

**Mum:** Oh yes, she might have borrowed it. She does love hats.

**Jacob:** Granny! Oh no!

**Mum:** Don't worry. She's only popped along to the shop. She'll bring it back.

**Jacob:** If she doesn't get blown up first!

**Mum:** What?

**Jacob:** I've got to get it off her!

*(JACOB rushes out).*

**Mum:** Jacob! Come back. What about your room, Jacob?

*(MUM exits in pursuit).*

**Jacob:** *(off)* Granny!

**MUSIC 5: WHERE IS GRANNY?**

(JACOB and CHILDREN).

(JACOB runs back in and starts singing "**Granny!**" The other CHILDREN join him and some of them sing with him, making an ostinato for the first two lines of each verse, while others sing the main tune).

**CHILDREN:**    *Where is Granny? Wherever can she be?  
She went to the market to buy cake for tea,  
We've searched all over to find out where she's at,  
'Cos she's gone off wearing the King James hat.*

*Where is Granny? Have you seen her here?  
Where is Granny? She can't have disappeared.  
You'll know her by her appetite,  
She's always eating, day and night,  
She's rather old but very bright  
Where is Granny?*

*Where is Granny? Wherever can she be?  
She went to the sweet shop at half past three,  
She can't have gone far but we are worried that  
She's gone off wearing the King James hat.*

*Where is Granny? Was she in your street?  
On the look out for something to eat.  
She limps a little when she walks,  
She has her mouth full when she talks,  
Her bag is full of knives and forks,  
Where is Granny?*

(CHILDREN exit. MUM enters and carries on cleaning, singing to herself. After a while the noise of a distant crowd is heard. MUM stops and listens. The noise increases and she goes to the door USR and looks out; JACOB runs in as the crowd noise increases and words can be made out; "God save the King", "Long live Your Majesty," etc).

**Jacob:** Mum! Don't look at Granny! Look the other way. If you don't look at her, it'll be all right!

**Mum:** Jacob! What is going on? I might have known you'd be at the bottom of this!

**Jacob:** Mum! Trust me! Don't look at her!

*(In a moment she is pushed out of the way by DINNER LADY 1).*

**Dinner Lady 1:** Make way! Make way for His Majesty, King James!

*(GRANNY walks in wearing the hat and surrounded by CHILDREN, DINNER LADIES, MR HENSHAW etc., all in seventeenth century mode. Someone gives her a chair and she sits down. [It would be ideal if this could be raised as on a dais to look like a throne]. There is a faint crowd noise outside which could continue intermittently throughout this scene).*

**Mum:** *(To Jacob)* You must think I'm mad! Now just you come here and explain to me what exactly is going on .... *(She turns round, sees Granny and curtsies).* Oh your Majesty, I cannot tell you how honoured I am that my humble home should be favoured with your presence!

**Jacob:** Oh no! *(He is at the front of the stage, DSL, trying to keep his eyes covered and not look at what is behind him).*

**Granny:** Serving wench!

**Dinner Lady 2:** Yes, Your Majesty!

**Granny:** Order me another ten pounds of sherbet lemons to be here immediately! Now!

**Dinner Lady 2:** Your wish is my command, Sire!

**Granny:** On second thoughts, make that a ton of sherbet lemons. Now, let's have some entertainment, shall we? Where's my jester?

**Jeremy:** Here, Your Majesty.

**Granny:** Juggle!

*(JEREMY makes a valiant but poor attempt to juggle with his P.E. Kit. The others applaud).*

**Granny:** Is that the best you can do?

**Jeremy:** Yes, Your Majesty.

**Granny:** Not good enough. Off with his head!

**Jacob:** Oh Granny!

**Granny:** Are those sherbet lemons here yet? I fancy another plateful of chocolate eclairs. Serving wench!

**Dinner Lady 1:** Certainly, Your Majesty. *(Both DINNER LADIES rush out).*

**Jacob:** Granny! Take the hat off!

*(DINNER LADY 1 returns with a bucketful of sherbet lemons which GRANNY starts eating).*

**Granny:** And fetch my cloak! I fancy a little fresh air and a look around the town.  
Tell the groom to saddle my horse.

*(MR HENSHAW exits).*

**Jacob:** You can't, Granny! Take the hat off. You're causing havoc!

**Granny:** I know! Isn't it fun? Just a bit longer.

*(DINNER LADY 2 returns with chocolate eclairs and GRANNY starts eating those too. MR. HENSHAW returns with GRANNY'S coat. There is the sound of horses' hooves and neighing outside).*

**Jacob:** Oh no! Wherever have they got that from?

**Granny:** Music!

**Mr. Henshaw:** Wherever are His Majesty's musicians?

**Carly:** My Liege, what tunes may we delight you with?

**Granny:** Oh, whatever you fancy.

**MUSIC 6: DANCE**

*(CARLY takes out a recorder. She gestures to any other musicians and they start playing. [The tune could incorporate percussion, violins etc. as available]. Some of the others dance a minuet. While this is going on, RACHEL, STEVEN, GARY, KATIE and ALICE (the "CONSPIRATORS") arrive, looking furtive and carrying a large sack. LEAH and LOUISA are lurking behind them. They sneak in and position themselves somewhere behind GRANNY'S chair).*

*(When the dance is finished, everyone bows).*

**Granny:** Is that it? Is that the best you can do?

**Carly:** Allow us to re-tune and start again, Your Majesty.

**Granny:** What is that thing you're playing?

**Carly:** It's a .... a .... crumhorn, Your Majesty!

**Granny:** That explains it. Sounds as if someone's dropped their cake into it.  
Haven't you got a lute?

**Carly:** A lute? A lute! A gold sovereign to anyone who has a lute!

**All:** No, no lute, we haven't, etc.

**Granny:** Useless! Send them to the tower!

**Jacob:** Granny! Stop it! Take the hat off!

*(LAUREN enters DSR door. As she hangs her coat up, she is looking into the mirror and stops amazed).*

**Lauren:** *(off)* Jacob! Mum! What's going on?

**Jacob:** Lauren! Listen, this is really important. Don't come in to the room!

**Lauren:** Don't worry, I'm not! I can see it all in the hall mirror anyway. Whatever is Granny doing in that funny hat?

**Jacob:** You can see her?

**Lauren:** Yes, in the mirror. Jacob, why is there a mountain of sweets on the front lawn? The lorry's left awful tyre marks.

**Jacob:** In the mirror! Of course. It only happens if you actually look at the person who's wearing the hat. Looking in the mirror's safe.

*(JACOB steps down into the entrance hall to join LAUREN and they both kneel down looking in the mirror).*

**Lauren:** And there's a horse eating Dad's roses; he'll be really cross.

**Jacob:** Lauren, whatever you do don't look directly at Granny. Only look at her in the mirror.

**Lauren:** Why, Jacob?

**Jacob:** Never mind why! Just do it!

*(The MUSICIANS strike up a reprise of the dance and GRANNY goes on eating while the "CONSPIRATORS" start taking fireworks out of the sack passing them furtively to each other and putting them under GRANNY'S chair).*

**Granny:** Tea! I want some tea now.

**Dinner Lady 2:** More eclairs, er .... Your Majesty?

**Granny:** Stupid woman! Of course I want more eclairs! And more flapjacks! And order me a ton of jelly babies while you're at it!

**Lauren:** Granny!

**Jacob:** Take the hat off, Granny! It's dangerous.

**Granny:** Don't be such a spoilsport, Jacob. I haven't had so much fun since nineteen twenty-two! Where's my tea?

**MUSIC 7: GRANNY'S SONG**

**GRANNY:**        *There is still something after eighty-five,  
Still a twinkle in the eye,  
I'm a bit older but I'm still alive,  
Still quite sprightly when I try.  
I have a giggle when I get the chance,  
Like my little bit of fun,  
I'm always happy with a cup of tea  
Biscuit and a currant bun.*

*I'm a swinging geriatric with a youthful way,  
An appetite fantastic and I'd like to say  
If you try to get this hat,  
I might knock you over flat,  
'Cos I'm wearing this hat all day!*

**CAST:**        *She's a swinging geriatric with a youthful way,  
An appetite fantastic and she'd like to say,  
If you try to get that hat,  
She might knock you over flat,  
'Cos she's wearing that hat all day!*

**Lauren:** Jacob, what are they doing? *(She points to RACHEL, STEVEN, ALICE, GARY and KATIE who are piling fireworks underneath GRANNY'S chair).*

**Jacob:** Oh no!

**Lauren:** They've got fireworks. They shouldn't have those in the house.

**Jacob:** No, they certainly shouldn't. Look, somehow, we've got to get that hat off Granny. She's in real danger.

**Granny:** Is my horse ready?

*(There are more horse noises outside. LAUREN looks out of the window).*

**Lauren:** Jacob, the horse has been frightened by the lorry. They've tipped jelly babies all over him. And Mrs. Brown from next door is out there looking awfully mad and ....

**Jacob:** Granny, please take the hat off! Now!

*(There is the sound of a police car outside too).*

**Lauren:** And now there's a policeman too. And ....

*(MRS BROWN, MRS SMITH and MRS JONES enter DSL. They are talking to JACOB at first and don't look through into the room where GRANNY is).*

**Mrs Brown:** Jacob! Whatever's going on?

**Mrs Smith:** Half my hedge has been knocked down!

**Mrs Jones:** And you're not allowed to keep livestock on this estate. It's in the contracts.

**Mrs Brown:** I'm going straight in to have a word with your mother.

**Jacob:** No, I really don't think you should!

*(As they start to turn and go in, LOUISA and LEAH appear).*

**Louisa:** I 'ope you're not causin' no trouble.

**Leah:** Because if you are, you're in fer a nasty surprise.

*(They hold their knives up nastily).*

**Mrs Brown:** Oh, heavens protect us!

**Mrs Smith:** It's the King himself!

**Mrs Jones:** I feel a swoon coming upon me!

*(She starts to faint and the others hold her up).*

**Louisa:** I think we'll 'ave you ladies in 'ere where we can see as you don't make no trouble fer our friends.

*(They drag the neighbours into the room).*

**Lauren:** Oh, Jacob. Whatever are we going to do?

*(Two POLICEMEN enter).*

**Policeman 1:** Now, who is in charge in here? We need proper notification if you're going to hold an event of this size. The traffic is blocked for half a mile. *(He sees GRANNY).* Oh, Sire, I had not realised, forgive me.

**Mr Henshaw:** How dare you? Encroaching on His Majesty's private affairs like this. You deserve to be sent to the tower!

**Dinner Lady 1:** Hear! Hear!

**Dinner Lady 2:** Treason, treason! He's probably one of those nasty Catholics looking for the downfall of our beloved king.

**All:** Yes, that's true! Take him away to the tower! etc.

**Jacob:** Granny! Please take the hat off!

*(They all start arguing and fighting. The "CONSPIRATORS" come to the front of the stage. Lighting changes. Everyone else freezes).*

**Rachel:** All is ready.

**Katie:** The king's days are numbered.

**Alice:** And all his followers with him!

**Steven:** A light, my Lord Catesby. The time has come. They are all too busy with their petty squabbles to notice that the king is about to be blown sky high!

**Lauren:** Jacob! They've got matches!

**Jacob:** We've got to stop them!

**Lauren:** Granny! Take the hat off! You're going to be blown up!

**Granny:** *(GRANNY is not listening to JACOB. She is holding her tummy and looking unhappy).* Oh dear.

**Mum:** Another flapjack, Your Majesty?

**Granny:** Stupid woman! I don't want another .... Oh dear! *(She is beginning to look very uncomfortable).*

**Rachel:** If you ask me, His Majesty is suffering from a surfeit of sweetmeats.

**Alice:** Greed will bring about his downfall! Light the fuse!

**Jacob:** No!

**Granny:** Oh dear, I think I'm going to be .... *(She stands up and moves downstage, holding her stomach).*

**All:** Oh, Your Majesty! Oh dear, His Majesty is unwell. Send for an apothecary!

**Granny:** I feel really ....

*(She rushes off stage DSL, obviously about to be sick. The hat falls off her head, [Bell/Chime] as she passes JACOB and LAUREN. JACOB grabs the hat, everyone goes back into normal mode and looks around rather sheepishly. There is a moment's silence).*

**Mum:** Whatever's going on? What's all this mess? *(She looks out of the window).* Oh! What's that on the front lawn?

**Lauren:** Mum, be careful! It's a horse, but I think it's a bit cross.

**Mrs Jones:** You're definitely not allowed to keep horses on this estate.

**Mum:** It's not my horse!

**Mrs Brown:** Well it's full of your roses.

*(Horse noises off and shouting)*

**Policeman 1:** Well now, I shall have to ask you all to disperse, please.

**Policeman 2:** *(addressing the audience)* And you people outside. Move along now, you're blocking the pavements.

*(Most of the others exit. ANNA and several CHILDREN remain. GRANNY enters, looking a bit better).*

**Granny:** Would you like a chocolate éclair, officer?

**Policeman 1:** Well, I don't mind if I do, Madam. Thank you. Quite a party you're having here. Is it for Bonfire Night?

**Jacob:** Yes, it is. Look, we've got lots of fireworks.

*(JACOB and LAUREN come up into centre of stage).*

**Policeman 1:** Well, if you don't mind me telling you, they'd be a lot safer out of doors.

**Policeman 2:** We don't want any nasty accidents, do we?

**Anna:** Come on, you lot, let's take everything into the garden ready. It'll soon be getting dark.

**Policeman 2:** And give those matches to a grown up.

**Granny:** Flapjack, officer?

**Policeman 1:** No, thank you, madam. I'd better be getting along now. Just make sure these kids don't get into any trouble with all those fireworks.

**Granny:** Oh they're very good children, officer. No trouble. Just lots of imagination. They're doing a play about the Gunpowder Plot at school and my grandson's being the king! Aren't you, Jacob?

**Jacob:** Yes, Granny.

**Anna:** And I'm the Queen.

**Policeman 1:** Well, fancy that. Thank you for the cakes. I'll just go and check that everything's cleared up outside.

**Policeman 2:** I expect we'll see you at the play. Hope it goes well.

*(POLICEMEN exit. CHILDREN exit to garden with fireworks, leaving JACOB and LAUREN. MUM enters).*

**Mum:** You should see the front lawn! I can't think what's been going on. It seems like a lorry shed its load of sweets and then a horse turned up and ate them all.

**Lauren:** It didn't eat them all, did it?

**Granny:** Sherbet lemons and jelly babies, I think you'll find. Let's go and see; there must be some left.

*(GRANNY and LAUREN exit).*

**Mum:** I don't know what your father's going to say about his roses.

**Jacob:** Oh, they'll grow again. They needed pruning a bit.

**Mum:** Oh, did you find your hat, Jacob?

**Jacob:** Yes .... er, yes I did actually .... Granny had borrowed it.

**Mum:** She's terrible. Food and hats aren't safe anywhere near her. Oh well, at least you'll have it for the play then.

**Jacob:** Yes.

*(ANNA, RACHEL, ALICE, KATIE, STEVEN and GARY enter).*

**Alice:** Have you got anything else we can put on the bonfire, Jacob?

**Steven:** We're going to light it in a minute.

**Katie:** We've found lots of rubbish all those people dropped.

**Mum:** There are some newspapers in the shed.

*(GRANNY and LAUREN re-enter).*

**Granny:** There's a broken chair in the shed too. That'd burn really well. I'll show you.

*(They all exit except JACOB and LAUREN. Jacob is still holding the hat. He looks at it thoughtfully).*

**Lauren:** You can't ....

**Jacob:** Don't you think so?

**Lauren:** But what about the play?

**Jacob:** We can find another one.

**Lauren:** But we could get anything we wanted with that hat ....

**Jacob:** And quite a few things we didn't want. Like being blown up. No, it's too risky. Come on, it'll burn beautifully. Let's go and watch it!

*(Exit. Noise of bonfire and lighting effects off).*

*MUSIC 8: FIREWORKS SONG - Finale*

**Whole cast:** *Roman candles, coloured light,  
Silver Fountains make the gardens bright,  
Golden stars above the trees,  
And people watching in the evening breeze,*

*It's the bonfire season and the flames leap high,  
In the darkness of the autumn sky,  
Fireworks bang, fireworks fizz,  
Pop and crackle and they whoosh and whizz,  
Sparklers spray, rockets roar,  
All the people shout for more and more.*

*Roman candles, coloured light,  
Silver fountains make the gardens bright,  
Guy Fawkes burnt for his nasty plot  
Such wicked treason will not be forgot,*

*It's the bonfire season and the flames leap high,  
In the darkness of the autumn sky,  
Fireworks bang, fireworks fizz,  
Pop and crackle and they whoosh and whizz,  
Sparklers spray, rockets roar,  
All the people shout for more and more.*

**CURTAIN**









