

THE WIND *In The* WILLOWS

SAMPLE SCRIPT

SCENE FOUR

The scene changes to the Wild Wood. It is particularly gloomy and unwelcoming. A tawny owl sits on a branch. After a few moments, a second flies in to join it.

Owl 1 So, what was that awful noise?

Owl 2 It was one of those things on wheels. It crashed into a ditch.

Owl 1 A ditch?

Owl 2 It's a trench by the side of the road.

Owl 1 I know what a ditch is! Was anyone hurt?

Owl 2 I don't think so. There was a toad talking to himself ...

Owl 1 Mr Toad. That's normal.

Owl 2 Nobody else from what I could see. And you know I see well.

Owl 1 Well if you see so well, where's our dinner? There'll be hundreds of mice and voles in the fields at the moment.

Owl 2 I know, but I was distracted wasn't I!

Owl 1 Come on then, we'll both go now it's darker.

Owl 2 It's cold as well: it wouldn't surprise me if there's snow on the way.

They fly off, leaving the stage empty.

After a few moments, Mole enters, muttering to himself.

Mole It's not so bad. Quite nice in fact. A little gloomy over there, sure, but a far friendlier wood than the name would suggest.

The face of a weasel appears momentarily, then disappears. Mole peers towards it, his eyesight once again letting him down.

Mole Hello? Is someone there?

Another face appears elsewhere, then another, and another. Mole doesn't notice, but turns around once the faces have gone, aware that something isn't right. A patter begins, irregular and delicate at first then becoming stronger and more regular.

NB – You may wish to use some drums/percussion, on or off stage as desired.

More faces appear. Mole is clearly shaken.

Mole Who's there? Who are you?

Rabbit 1 rushes across the stage, stopping momentarily to give Mole an alarmed warning.

Rabbit 1 Get out of here, you fool, get out.

Rabbit exits. The noise reaches a crescendo with faces popping out everywhere, all sharp and threatening. Mole goes this way, then that way, but doesn't know which way to turn, so panicked is he.

The faces emerge as weasels, stoats and foxes, slowly encircling Mole.

SONG - THE WILD, WILD WOOD (#4/16)

As the song comes to an end, the weasels, foxes and stoats have Mole encircled.

Weasel 1 Oh, Mole. Poor little Mole. You've got yourself into a right pickle. All alone in the big wild wood.

Mole I ... well actually ... I'm here to see Badger. And he'll be furious when he hears you've done this to me. He's a very close friend of mine.

Stoat 1 Oh really? Well we know where Badger lives, and it isn't here!

Fox 1 And we're very hungry, Mole. Very hungry indeed.

Weasel 2 I could eat a horse ... and certainly a mole.

Stoat 2 Oh, a mole would be easy. I could polish off a mole in seconds.

Fox 2 You'll barely touch the sides. But I'll enjoy every mouthful, especially in this cold.

Weasel 3 So will I. I've not had a juicy little mole in a loooooooooong time.

Stoat 3 Well I've never had one. This will be my first.

Fox 3 Oooh, you're in for a right treat. Try to get the paws, they're lovely and chewy.

Mole Stop it! Stop it right now. I'm telling you ... Badger will be looking for me as we speak. He was expecting me over an hour ago.

Weasel 4 So what? There's loads of us and only one of him. We can finally get rid of him.

Stoat 4 We'll show him who really rules the wood.

Fox 4 Yeh, we're not scared of Badger. Let him come.

Badger enters, holding a large and threatening club.

Badger You were saying?

Badger holds his club aloft, ready to strike. The weasels, stoats and foxes are caught completely by surprise and immediately panic. At the same time, a gunshot rips through the wood.

SFX – Gunshot.

Ratty enters, carrying a pistol. The weasels, stoats and foxes run in all directions, leaving the stage as quickly as they can whilst Badger and Ratty run amongst them, hurrying them on their way.

Badger And don't come back!

With the weasels, stoats and foxes gone, Ratty and Badger move to Mole.

Ratty Are you alright, Mole?

Mole Yes, thank you, Ratty. A little shaken. How did you find me?

Ratty Toad told me about the accident: rotten luck that another car ran you off the road.

Mole Er ...

Ratty He said you disappeared into the Wild Wood, so I followed your tracks and bumped into Badger.

Badger Hello, Mole.

Mole Hello, Badger. Thank you so much for coming to my aid. Were you nearby?

Badger When you've lived here for as long as I have, you can smell trouble a mile off. Especially when the weasels are involved.

Ratty Do you think we've seen the last of them?

Badger Oh no, Ratty. Not for a second. They'll find somewhere else to hole up and formulate their plans for wood domination. But for the moment, the wood is ours. Come on, join me for a bite to eat. And Mole?

Mole Yes?

Badger I assure you, it's only earthworms on the menu.

Mole smiles and they all exit together.

Incidental Music: The Riverbank (#17)