

## The Poor Old Kindly Lovely Toy Maker

*On stage are 10 – 12 toys, bent over. The old toy maker is winding them up when the lights go up. He steps back and the toys perform the*

### TOY DANCE

*The toys end the dance seated at the edge of the stage, ready to be sold. One of the toys, Bingley, remains standing.*

*The toy maker takes his place behind his counter, blowing into his hands to keep warm.*

Toy Maker: Christmas Eve, and just these last few toys to sell.

Bingley: *(To the audience.)* Oh dear. Brace yourselves.

Toy Maker: What's the matter Bingley?

Bingley: This is going to be one of those boring whatjercallits - morality tales.

Toy Maker: How do you mean?

Bingley: Well - you'll do something unbelievably good, then something terrible will happen, and then it'll all be all right in the end. Cuh! Tedious!

Toy Maker: You'll just have to watch and see.

Bingley *(To the audience)* Don't say I didn't warn you.

*Mrs Toy Maker enters. Bingley slumps to lifelessness.*

Mrs Toy Maker: Haven't you sold those last toys yet?  
*(Melodramatically)* If we don't get some money to buy some coal the baby shall surely perish!

Toy Maker: I've lots of toys – don't fret woman. We'll get the money for a bag of coal. We shan't freeze on Christmas day. *(Sound of baby crying offstage.)* You'd better go to our beloved child.

*Mrs Toy Maker hurries off, sniffing into her hankie. Bingley springs back to life.*

Bingley: Is she always that melodramatic?

Toy Maker: She enjoys playing up to an audience. (*Doorbell sounds.*) Oh good, a customer.

*Bingley slumps to lifelessness. Enter poor looking family – Mum, Dad and two children.*

Child 1: (*Pointing to one of the toys.*) I want that one.

Child 2 (*Pointing to another toy.*) And I want that one.

Child 1: Can we have them Dad? Can we?

Child 2: Can we? Can we have them Dad?

Child 1: Can we?

Child 2: Can we?

Child 1: Can we have them Dad?

Child 2: Can we Dad?

Dad: You'd better ask your mother.

Mum: (*Peering closely at Bingley*) What's wrong with this one?

Child 2: We don't want that one.

Child 1: Yeah. It's right scabby.

Bingley: (*Looks at audience*) Cheek!

Mum: OK, I suppose you can have the ones you want.

*Dad approaches the counter.*

Dad: We'd like those two please.

Toy Maker: Certainly sir. Shall I wrap them for you?

Dad: No, they're OK as they are. There's just one thing though.

Toy Maker: Oh yes. What's that?

Dad: I can't afford to pay you until after Christmas. I spent all my Christmas bonus on a horse.

Toy Maker: That's nice. For the children is it sir?

Dad: Not exactly...the stupid thing was a dead cert and it came in last.

Toy Maker: Dear oh dear. Well not to worry – just pay me when you can.

Dad: That's great! (*Woodenly*) I'm so blinded by your dazzling kindness I will never gamble again. Come on kids.

*Family exit.*

Toy Maker: Well, that was nice.

Bingley: What a loser!

Toy Maker: Bingley! He's a reformed character – didn't you hear what he said?

Bingley: Here we go. It's moral time!

*Mrs Toy Maker enters, Bingley slumps.*

Mrs Toy Maker: Have you got the money for the coal yet? The baby's turning blue wi' cold.

Toy Maker: We'll have it soon my sweet.

Mrs Toy Maker: The poor, poor baby. This winter shall surely be the end of us all!

*Baby offstage starts to squawk. Mrs Toy Maker exits.*

Bingley:           Doesn't she go on?

*Doorbell sounds. Enter cub scouts and leader.*

Toy Maker:       Hello there.

Leader:           Dib, dib, dib!

Toy Maker:       Erm, can I help you?

Leader:           Yes, but we'll have to be quick.

Toy Maker:       Why?

Leader:           Because I've got the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Bogtown Scouts waiting outside. All 190 of them.

Toy Maker:       Would they like to come in?

Leader:           They can't.

Toy Maker:       Why not?

Leader:           We haven't got that many extras.

Bingley:          Can we get on? The audience is getting fidgety.