

## CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

**Dotty Dumplin** (Dame) is the royal cook. She is a larger-than-life "lady" of changing moods. One minute she is fun-loving and gushing, the next, she is blunt and sarcastic. But whatever her mood, you can't help liking the old girl. She is always on friendly and confidential terms with the audience and never misses an opportunity of involving them. Singing and dancing ability is an advantage with this role, but good characterization and camaraderie with the audience is essential. Needless to say, all her costumes, hair-dos and make-up are ludicrous and funny. Apart from her cook's costumes, she gets to wear an outrageous outfit with a very short skirt and platform shoes. Regal robes and a crown for the Finale.

**Prince Peski** (Baddie) is Old King Cole's younger brother. He is dominated by his scheming wife, and lives in fear of his awesome mother-in-law. Under these circumstances, you might be tempted to feel sorry for him. Well, don't waste your sympathy! He is a thoroughly unpleasant individual. A snivelling, cowardly weasel of a man who deserves every boo and hiss he gets! Singing and dancing ability is not essential for this role, but strong characterization is. His costume is elegant although its cut and colour should give him a sinister appearance. A regal robe for when he has made himself the King.

**Princess Pariah** (Baddie) is Peski's wife. She is the mastermind behind the evil plot to dispose of Old King Cole and make her husband the King. She will resort to any lengths to achieve this, even to the extent of devising exploding birthday cakes and calling on the powers of darkness! Both she and Peski never miss an opportunity of stirring the audience into a frenzy of boos and hisses. Singing and dancing ability is not essential for this role, but a strong, dominant personality certainly is. Her costume is elegant, but should give her a sinister and menacing appearance. As does her head-dress, hair-style and make-up. A regal robe and crown for when she makes herself the Queen.

**The Herald** (Small character part) is very much a law unto himself and he doesn't care who knows it! His duty, apart from making the occasional announcement, is to blow fanfares from his trusty trumpet. (These he mimes to sound effects played over the sound system.) No

singing or dancing required. The part can be played equally well as a truculent teenager or a petulant pensioner. He wears (without too much elegance!) a tabard bearing the royal insignia, baggy tights and hat with a wilting plume.

**Florian** (Principal boy) is the King's aide. He is a handsome, dashing young man with great charm and gracious manners. He takes his job at the palace very seriously, and is totally loyal to Old King Cole. However, his allegiance is certainly put to the test when the King decides to marry the girl he has just fallen in love with. But duty is duty, and it seems that the lovers must part. Some strong acting is required to portray this conflict between love and duty. A good singing voice and dancing ability is needed for this role. His costumes are resplendent and show off his gorgeous pair of legs. Special Finale costume.

**Old King Cole** (Comedy character part) is indeed a merry old soul and much loved by all his subjects. He is also a rather naïve and foolish old soul. He is totally unaware that his evil brother and sister-in-law are plotting to get rid of him and take over the throne. He also decides that he wants to be married, and chooses the same girl who has just fallen in love with his young aide. If this wasn't bad enough, he lets the scheming Pariah persuade him to take a dip in the magic pool to regain his long lost youth. This ends in disaster when she transforms him into a ten-year-old boy! However, by the end he realizes the folly of his ways and puts things right. He even ends up marrying Dotty! This is a character part that should be made likable and endearing. For all his years he is still spry and active, if at times a little befuddled. Singing and dancing is not essential. Regal regalia and crown. White hair and beard. For his dip in the magic pool he wears long red combinations. Splendid regal robes and crown for the Finale.

**The Three Fiddlers** are the palace entertainers. They are very short on conversation, and when they do speak it is at the same time and mostly in words of one syllable. Their main purpose is to provide song and dance, but they are also involved in comic business with Dotty and audience participation. They can be an all male/all female trio, or a mixture of both. They use prop fiddles for their initial entrance and these can be discarded later, if so desired. They wear matching troubadour type outfits with tabards, tights and feathered caps. "Page boy" style wigs of the same colour would be a nice touch.

**Debbie** (Principal girl) is Dotty's daughter. This comes as a surprise because she is a pretty and petite young woman with a quiet, unassuming

manner. Not a bit like her boisterous mum. She is soon beguiled by Florian, and falls hopelessly in love with him. When chosen to be Old King Cole's wife she is naturally devastated. And Florian's obsession with his royal duty doesn't help matters. Some strong emotional acting is required when this conflict comes into being. A good singing voice and dancing ability is needed for this role. Her costumes are all homespun, but they are neat and attractive. Special Finale costume.

**Little King Cole** (Child's part) is Old King Cole transformed into a ten-year-old boy! This is the result of his entering the magic pool and Pariah's evil trickery. Although greatly reduced in size and years, he is still very much the King. The trouble is, no one will believe him. Eventually, he convinces Dotty and together they set out to thwart the baddies by returning him to his true age. The role should be played by a competent youngster (preferably male) who has the ability to make the plight of this character believable. No singing or dancing is required. He only has one costume: a duplicate of the long red combinations as worn by Old King Cole.

**Lady Dragonia** (Comedy character part) is Pariah's mother and Peski's much feared mother-in-law. He has good reason to be scared because she is a very formidable old lady. But as she delights in deriding him at every opportunity we can't help liking her. Being both a battleaxe and a dabbler in the Black Arts, she is a cross between Lady Bracknell and one of the three witches! A strong, dominant personality, with mystical tendencies, is needed for this role. No singing or dancing is required. Her costume borders on the bizarre, with many baubles, bangles and beads. Her hair is a strange hue and is surmounted by a hat of peculiar design. (She only appears in Act II)

The **Chorus, Dancers and Children** appear as Courtiers, Pages, Townsfolk and Creatures of the Forbidden Forest. All participate in the action and musical numbers. There are several small speaking parts. The costumes for the Courtiers should look rich and elegant. The Pages wear tights, short tunics and small round hats. The Townsfolk should be in picturesque homespun. The Creatures of the Forbidden Forest are grotesque beings of varying shapes and sizes. Some are huge and hairy, others are small and reptilian. In other words, something to suit all age groups.