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*Dramatic Publishing*

# The Adventures of Doctor Dolittle



Musical.

Book, music and lyrics  
by Elliott B. Baker.

Adapted from the classic book  
by Hugh Lofting.

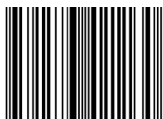
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# The Adventures of Doctor Dolittle

**Musical.** *By Elliott B. Baker. Adapted from the book by Hugh Lofting.* 16-26+ actors (gender flexible) with as many villagers, animals, pirates, and Jolliginki as desired. "Who would have believed that animals have their own side of things?" One very special doctor with a deep understanding and love of animals finds he is able to speak with them. This one moment of comprehension is a light that carries John Dolittle, M.D., from one adventure to the next. Doctor Dolittle, Polynesia the parrot, Gug-Gub the pig, Jip the dog, Dab-Dab the duck and Chee-Chee the monkey travel to Africa to save the monkeys from a terrible plague. Once there, they are captured and escape from the Jolliginki who want to serve them for dinner, elude misguided pirates who want to ransom them, and discover wild and wonderful never-before-seen animals. Even the famous African cannibal food critic, Mimi Eataton, makes an appearance. Doctor Dolittle comes to see that his love of learning coupled with his love of animals affords him a unique opportunity to speak on behalf of all animals. With the cooperation of all the animals of Africa, the doctor creates a solution that in the end protects the animals while providing new and better employment for the pirates and Jolliginki. Perseverance, patience and creativity win over ignorance every time. *Area staging with set props. Approximate Running Time: 1 hour and 40 minutes. Royalty on application, plus music rental (scores or CD). Code: A03.*

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# THE ADVENTURES OF DOCTOR DOLITTLE

A Musical in Two Acts

by

ELLIOTT B. BAKER



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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# THE ADVENTURES OF DOCTOR DOLITTLE

A Two-act Musical

For 26 men and women, extras, as desired

## HUMAN CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

DOCTOR DOLITTLE . . . . . a friend of the animals  
MR. BLOSSOM . . . . . a blustering circus owner  
MRS. MUMFORD . . . . . an elderly patient  
MRS. WHITELY\* . . . . . a woman who spits slightly  
SHIP'S CAPTAIN . . . . . a friend of the doctor  
FIRST JOLLIGINKI . . . . . a Jolliginki guard  
SECOND JOLLIGINKI . . . . . a Jolliginki guard  
KING of the JOLLIGINKI . . . . . a cannibal gourmet  
QUEEN of the JOLLIGINKI . a shrewish cannibal gourmet  
PIRATE CAPTAIN PIRATE . . . . . a frustrated pirate  
SPANKY the WONDER PIRATE. . . . . a pirate first-mate

## ANIMAL CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

POLYNESIA . . . . . a parrot  
JIP . . . . . a dog  
ALBERT . . . . . a young crocodile  
TOO-TOO . . . . . an owl  
CHEE-CHEE . . . . . a monkey  
GUB-GUB . . . . . a pig  
DAB-DAB . . . . . a duck  
PONGO . . . . . a nearsighted horse  
PUSHMI-PULLYU . . . . . a rare two-headed gazelle

**SWALLOW**

**CHU-CHU** ..... Chee-Chee's cousin

**ANNIE** ..... a young female crocodile

**LION**

**LIONESS**

**Extras:** VILLAGERS / JOLLIGINKI / PIRATES

Animals, Jolliginki and Pirates can be doubled and tripled.

\*Mrs. Whitely has been and should be played by a male in drag.

**TIME:** Early twentieth century.

**PLACE:** Puddleby-on-the-Marsh, England and Africa.

See back of script for musical numbers, scene/prop information and sketches of the scene/sets.

### **Monkeys' Handshake (page 76)**

Facing each other, palms together, strike left, right and then left, stopping in center.

Backs of left hands touching, clap with right hand.

Backs of left hands touching, clap the other's hand above and then your hand in the center and then the other's hand below.

Each grasps the other's left hand while slapping the right thigh with the right hand.

Raise the right hand into the air, snapping the fingers twice.

Bend the knees and turn sideways, bumping right thigh.

Then raise up turning and bend knees bumping the left thigh.

Turn and face each other as each picks a bug off of the other's head and eats it.

A loud "Ah!" along with stomach rubbing completes the handshake.



**MUSIC No. 1: OVERTURE**

**ACT I**

**MUSIC No. 2: VILLAGER ENTRANCE**

**SCENE 1**

**AT RISE:** *The VILLAGERS enter taking their afternoon promenade around the town square. At the end of the (Villager Entrance) music, they stop and let out a collective sigh. DOCTOR DOLITTLE enters with POLYNESIA and JIP. He is deeply engrossed in reading a book and he startles everyone with his first words. There is a park bench C.*

**DR. DOLITTLE.** Ants! *(Pause.)* Polynesia, did you know that ants have lived on the earth for over a hundred million years. Darwin says that they may be descended from the wasp family. A hundred million years. Amazing.

**WOMAN** *(to DOLITTLE).* Hello, Doctor. *(She pauses as the DOCTOR ignores her.)* Fine day, isn't it?

**DR. DOLITTLE** *(totally oblivious of anything but his book).* Fine, fine.

**MAN #1** *(to DOLITTLE).* I say, Doctor, it's rather nice for October.

**DR. DOLITTLE.** Fine, fine.

WOMAN. Excuse me, Doctor, but I believe your hair is on fire.

DR. DOLITTLE. Fine, just fine.

*(DOLITTLE rudely turns away from the WOMAN and sits on the park bench with POLYNESIA. JIP sits at their feet.)*

MAN #2 *(to MAN #1)*. Harumph! I say, it's unnatural. The man prefers the company of dumb beasts to proper society. *(They "hupapapapa" each other followed by all the townspeople "hupapapapaing" one another.)*

*(JIP comes up behind the timid FRIEND and nudges her to be petted.)*

FRIEND. Ooh! Ooh! Get away from me. *(JIP has already lost interest and is investigating something else.)* I've been attacked. *(FRIEND is supported by one of the MEN.)*

MAN #1 *(to DOLITTLE who is oblivious of the goings on)*. Now see here, Doctor. Is it absolutely necessary to bring all these animals to town with you?

*(Music begins.)*

DR. DOLITTLE. Fine, just fine thank you.

### MUSIC No. 3: "BETTER COMPANY"

WOMAN *(sings, to her FRIEND)*.

**IT'S NO WONDER, THERE'S NO MYST'RY WHY  
NO PATIENTS WAIT IN LINE.**

**TO BE TREATED BY A DOCTOR WHO'S SO  
CLEARLY IN DECLINE.**

WOMAN.    **WHAT'S A PEOPLE DOCTOR DOING WITH A  
                 HUNDRED PIGEONS COOING,**  
FRIEND.    **AND A PIANO FILLED WITH MICE AND CRAWLY  
                 THINGS THAT AREN'T SO NICE?**  
WOMAN.    **AND EV'RYONE I KNOW'S COMPLAINING  
                 THAT WITH CATS AND DOGS IT'S RAINING,**  
FRIEND.    **RAINING ANIMALS EACH TIME HE TAKES A  
                 WALK OR COMES TO TOWN.**

*(The two OLD MEN sing.)*

MAN #1.  
**THERE'S ONE FACT THAT NEEDS PURSUING:  
JUST WHAT DOES HE THINK HE'S DOING  
TREATING ANIMALS LIKE PEOPLE?**

MAN #2.    **MUST BE BATS UP IN HIS STEEPLE!**  
MAN #1.    **IT'S A SHAME HE'S LOST HIS PRACTICE.**  
MAN #2.    **UNDENIABLY THE FACT IS  
                 THAT WE THINK YOU OVERREACH, SIR.**  
MAN #1.    **WE WON'T SIT BESIDE SOME CREATURE.**

COMPANY.  
**FOR WE ENGLISH TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN  
                 HAVING A NOBLE DESTINY.**  
*(Spoken, by MAN #1.) Oh I say!*  
**AND WE BEGRUDGE A DOCTOR WHO FINDS  
                 ANIMALS BETTER COMPANY.**

**FOR A MAN IS ALL HE IS AND ANIMALS ALL THAT  
                 THEY CAN BE. *(Spoken, by MAN #1.)* Jolly good!**

AND WE HAVE NEVER ONCE CONSIDERED  
PLACING THEM HIGHER ON THE TREE.

FOR AN ENGLISHMAN IS BUT ONE STEP  
BELOW ALL THE ANGELS WINGED ON HIGH.  
AND ALL THE REST BY RIGHTS SHOULD BE  
GLAD JUST TO KNOW WHAT WE GRACIOUSLY  
IMPLY.

ALL. WHY!?

WOMAN. WOULD A PEOPLE DOCTOR CHOOSE TO TEND  
A RODENT  
AND REFUSE TO SEE THE GOOD WIFE SARAH  
WHITELY

FRIEND. WHEN SHE ONLY SPITS SO SLIGHTLY.  
IT'S BEYOND OUR COMPREHENSION.  
HE MUST LIVE ON SOME DIMENSION

WOMAN. WHERE ONE'S LIVING IS CONVENIENT

FRIEND. OR THE PUBLIC IS MORE LENIENT.

COMPANY.

FOR WE ENGLISH TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN  
HAVING A NOBLE DESTINY.

*(Spoken, by MAN #1.)* Oh I say!

AND WE BEGRUDGE A DOCTOR WHO FINDS  
ANIMALS BETTER COMPANY.

FOR A MAN IS ALL HE IS, AND ANIMALS ALL THAT  
THEY CAN BE; *(Spoken, by MAN #1.)* Jolly good!  
AND WE HAVE NEVER EVER ONCE CONSIDERED  
THEM

BETTER COMPANY.

BETTER COMPANY.

BETTER COMPANY.

WOMAN (*to FRIEND*). Do you think parrot tastes like chicken?

POLYNESIA (*in a singsong voice*). Awk! Been at the cakes a bit too long! Too long.

WOMAN. Well, I never...

POLYNESIA. Awk, if you never you wouldn't be so fa...  
(*The DOCTOR puts his hand over POLYNESIA's beak.*)

WOMAN. What scandalous language you've taught that bird!

DR. DOLITTLE. Madam, I wouldn't presume to teach Polynesia anything. She speaks three languages with no help from me I assure you.

WOMAN. Are you trying to tell me that this dumb bird can speak three languages?

DR. DOLITTLE. D'oh, at least three.

WOMAN (*turns to her FRIEND laughing*). Well! That's the most preposterous thing I've heard all day. (*They both laugh/snort in an unusual braying "animalistic" way.*) All right, bird, let's hear it. (*POLYNESIA is silent.*) I don't seem to hear anything. Do you, Doctor?

DR. DOLITTLE. She must not have anything to say.

(*POLYNESIA is pantomiming the WOMAN's dimensions.*)

WOMAN. Neither do I but that doesn't stop me from talking.

DR. DOLITTLE. Clearly. I have found that Polynesia speaks when she chooses to.

WOMAN. Oh balderdash! (*Music begins.*) Animals are just  
(*Pauses to think.*) animals! They can't think.

**MUSIC No. 4: "WHEN THE ANIMAL CHOIR SINGS"**

DR. DOLITTLE (*sings*).

I THINK THEY THINK MORE THAN WE THINK,  
MORE THAN WE UNDERSTAND;  
PERHAPS IT'S JUST A MISSING LINK,  
AND WOULDN'T THAT BE GRAND!

IF THEY COULD SPEAK,  
WITHIN A WEEK  
THE WORLD WOULD CHANGE  
AND HOW WE'D VIEW IT.  
WOULD MONKEYS SCRATCH AND

(*Speaks and scratches.*) (OOH, OOH, OOH)

"HOO-HOO" IT.  
IF COWS COULD TALK WOULD THEY "MOO"  
IT? (Moooooooo)

AT FIRST THERE'D BE  
CALAMITY;  
CONFUSION WOULD BE  
ALL A CLAMOR.  
BUT TIME WOULD PASS  
THROUGH ALL THE YAMMER,  
TILL THEY CORRECTED  
THEIR GRAMMAR.

HEAR THE HONKS,  
HEAR THE SQUAWKS, HEAR THE ROARS;  
QUITE A CONCERT,  
WHEN THE ANIMAL CHOIR SINGS.

M'KAWS AND M'KEES AND A FEW  
COCK-A-DOODLES

**FROM THE ANIMAL CHOIR'S WINGS.  
EV'RY HISS, EV'RY SQUEAK, EV'RY OINK WILL  
BE LIFTED IN A VOICE THAT IS LOUD AND  
STRONG.**

*(Frightened, the FRIEND steps behind the WOMAN. As the DOCTOR continues, the FRIEND continues to try and keep the WOMAN between herself and the DOCTOR.)*

**DR. DOLITTLE (cont).**

**ONCE THEY'VE BEGUN THEY WILL SING  
FOR A WEEK OR TWO  
THE ANIMAL CHOIR SONG.**

**WHAT WOULD THEY SING TO YOU?  
THEY'D SING, "HOW DO YOU DO."  
IF YOU BELIEVE IT'S TRUE,  
THEN YOU WILL SEE:**

**ELEPHANTS, TRUNK TO TAIL,  
DOLPHINS, A RACING SNAIL,  
LED BY A NIGHTINGALE;  
LISTEN AND YOU'LL HEAR  
THEM SINGING.**

**HEAR THE HONKS,  
HEAR THE SQUAWKS, HEAR THE ROARS;  
QUITE A CONCERT,  
WHEN THE ANIMAL CHOIR SINGS.  
M'KAWS AND M'KEES AND A FEW  
COCK-A-DOODLES  
FROM THE ANIMAL CHOIR'S WINGS.**

**IT'S JUST THE GRANDEST SHOW;  
WATCH OUT THAT WHALE COULD BLOW!  
CROWS CROWING TOE TO TOE,  
SINGING TO YOU.**

*(The DOCTOR has finally gotten hold of the FRIEND's arm and sings to her.)*

**DOCTOR DOLITTLE** *(cont).*

**SONGS NEVER HEARD BEFORE,  
MUSIC YOU CAN'T IGNORE.  
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?  
REACH IN AND LOOSEN YOUR HEART STRINGS.**

**HEAR THE HONKS,  
HEAR THE SQUAWKS, HEAR THE ROARS;  
QUITE A CONCERT,  
EV'RY NOTE TAKES US HIGHER,  
SO MUCH TO ADMIRE  
WHEN THE ANIMAL CHOIR—**

*(With an "Eek," the FRIEND faints into the arms of the TOWNSPEOPLE.)*

**DR. DOLITTLE** *(cont).*

**SINGS.**

*(Sound effect: carnival music. MR. BLOSSOM and the ANIMALS from the Blossom Circus come into the square. The various ANIMALS are all using canes or crutches and/or have their limbs bandaged or in slings. [Have two ANIMALS share a set of crutches.] ALBERT,*



*a very sick young crocodile, is being pushed in by BLOSSOM who is threatening to whip him.)*

BLOSSOM (*snapping his whip*). Make way for Blossom's magnificent circus. Move along there! Lazy good-for-nothin' animals. Move along! Wild animals, death-de-fyin' acts. (*To the ANIMALS.*) Get outta me way. (*BLOSSOM pushes ALBERT who lands prone in front of the bench.*)

DR. DOLITTLE (*kneels beside the crocodile*). See here, my good man. Stop that at once. This animal is doing the best he can.

BLOSSOM (*yells offstage to quiet the music and then brandishes the whip*). Shut up! (*Stop carnival music. To the DOCTOR.*) You just be mindin' your own business, gov'nor—you don't want ta see the business end of this whip.

DR. DOLITTLE (*continues checking ALBERT*). This crocodile is ill and if you don't take better care of him, he'll die.

BLOSSOM. So what. I'll just get me another.

DR. DOLITTLE. You can't treat an animal like that.

BLOSSOM. As long as I own this 'gator I'll treat 'im however I want. (*Lifts ALBERT's head which limply falls back down when he releases it.*) However, this bein' a very rare animal I could be persuaded to sell him. Say for twenty pounds.

DR. DOLITTLE. If he dies, you'll have nothing.

BLOSSOM. Over-generous man that I am...I'll give the beast to ya for a measly ten pounds (*Looks at ALBERT.*) but you got to take possession right away.

*(The DOCTOR and POLYNESIA turn from BLOSSOM.)*

POLYNESIA. Doctor, the winter's coming and besides, we don't have ten pounds.

DR. DOLITTLE. I'll trade him the piano.

POLYNESIA. Awk! Why, Queen Victoria once played that piano.

DR. DOLITTLE. I don't think Queen Victoria will mind and if it'll save this crocodile's life, I can't think of a better use for it.

BLOSSOM *(to DR. DOLITTLE's back)*. In polite society a man don't talk to 'imself. *(BLOSSOM sticks his finger in his ear and then inspects the result.)* I'm standin' right 'ere. *(Points to himself.)*

DR. DOLITTLE *(turns to BLOSSOM)*. I have a piano that's made a lot of grand music over the years. I'll trade you the piano for the crocodile.

BLOSSOM. A piano, huh. And what good's a piano to a guy like me? Wait a minute! Wait just a minute! I could put someone in a monkey suit. Bill 'im as the greatest monkey virtuoso in the whole world. Why he could play the keys for that two-headed dancin' antelope.

DR. DOLITTLE. What two-headed antelope? Oh, people in an antelope costume.

BLOSSOM. As it turns out, Doctor, them antelopes... that antelope's the real thing. *(Yells towards the TOWNS-PEOPLE.)* Come all the way from Madgaster.

DR. DOLITTLE. That's Madagascar. See here, do you mean to tell me you have a live two-headed animal that dances?

BLOSSOM *(scratches his head)*. How's yur hearin', Doc?

DR. DOLITTLE. How'd you obtain this animal?

BLOSSOM. Wouldn't you just like to know. I got me ways.

DR. DOLITTLE. Where is he...she...they?

BLOSSOM. Don't you worry; I've got 'em locked up. They ain't gettin' away. Not from old Blossom. You wanna see 'em you pays yur money and you comes to the show. But we was talkin' about this valuable 'gator here. I'm just about persuaded to sell 'im to ya. (*As an aside.*) Before he croaks. All the keys on that piano work?

DR. DOLITTLE. Yes.

BLOSSOM (*spits on his hand and extends it*). Deal.

*(The DOCTOR takes out a handkerchief, wraps his hand and then shakes BLOSSOM's hand. BLOSSOM considers the handkerchief and places it in his pocket.)*

*(Cue: Blossom—"...you could always get a small suitcase out of 'im or maybe a wallet." Stop cue: Blossom's exit.)*

BLOSSOM (*cont.*). He's your 'gator now. If he dies, I don't want to hear about it. I'll be by to get the piano. He ain't very big, but you could always get a small suitcase out of 'im (*Pause.*) or maybe a wallet. (*Sound effect: carnival music. Laughs and cracks his whip at the other ANIMALS.*) Move along, we 'aven't got all day. Move along, you lazy good for nothin' animals. Come see Blossom's magnificent circus under the big tent. Wild animals, death-defyin' feats. Only twopence ...

*(BLOSSOM, his ANIMALS and the TOWNSPEOPLE exit leaving DOLITTLE, POLYNESIA, JIP and ALBERT. Stop carnival music.)*

DR. DOLITTLE *(to POLYNESIA as he checks ALBERT over)*. Why do people treat animals so poorly?

POLYNESIA. Because we're invisible.

DR. DOLITTLE. How do you mean. You're not invisible to me.

POLYNESIA. You, Doctor, are different. When you see an animal, you see an individual special in her own way. The others see us as parts of a flock, a herd or a school. They see us by our usefulness and we have no rights other than that.

DR. DOLITTLE. But that's slavery and we've outlawed slavery.

POLYNESIA. Have you, Doctor. Have you indeed.

*(ALBERT makes a small noise.)*

DR. DOLITTLE *(to ALBERT)*. Don't you worry, little fellow, we'll have you fixed up in no time. Come on, Polynesia; let's get him home. Jip, here boy. *(POLYNESIA and JIP help ALBERT off as the DOCTOR pauses.)* I think we'll see what the authorities have to say about your treatment of these animals, Mr. Blossom.

*(DR. DOLITTLE exits. Fadeout.)*

#### MUSIC No. 5: SCENE CHANGE