

Excerpt Terms & Conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity of scripts.

Family Plays

DOWN IN THE DUMPS

Book, music and lyrics
by

DAN ROBERTS



DOWN IN THE DUMPS

Down in the Dumps, a youth musical, helped fulfill our desire to present a collection of short, easy-to-perform plays for the young and very young with material interesting to them and good music suited to their voices.

Musical. Book, music and lyrics by Dan Roberts. Cast: large, flexible. Pink's Junk Yard, owned by crotchety old Walter M. Pinkle, is the perfect playground for a group of neighborhood children. Unfortunately, Tudbury County Court is threatening to take away the children's good times and Mr. Pinkle's livelihood because he has not complied with the Tudbury Beautification Ordinance. To save the junk yard, the kids sneak in and clean up the place while Pinkle is off talking to the judge. At first, Pinkle is upset by the fact that the children have rearranged things without his permission, but he eventually comes around. He and the children become good friends, and Pink's Junk Yard is saved. The size of the stage is the only limitation to the number of young performers, and the only set is the front porch of a house with a chair and a messy assortment of junk in the yard. A highly flexible cast and charming music make this play easy and fun to produce with groups of any size or age level. *One ext. set. Approximate running time: 30 to 40 minutes. Piano-vocal score available. Vocal score available. Demo/accompaniment CD available. Code: DE5.*

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308
Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170
Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

ISBN-13 978-0-88680-469-5
ISBN-10 0-88680-469-8



9 780886 804695 >
Down in the Dumps

DOWN IN THE DUMPS

Book, music and lyrics
by

DAN ROBERTS

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308

Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170 • Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

©Family Plays

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by FAMILY PLAYS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website www.FamilyPlays.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: FAMILY PLAYS, 311 Washington St., Woodstock IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
FAMILY PLAYS of Woodstock, Illinois”

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© 2000 by DAN ROBERTS

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved

(DOWN IN THE DUMPS)

ISBN: 978-0-88680-469-5

About the Play

Pink's Junk Yard, owned by crotchety old Walter M. Pinkle, is the perfect playground for a group of neighborhood children, but Tudbury County Court is threatening to take away the children's good times and Pinkle's livelihood because the junk yard is not in compliance with the Tudbury Beautification Ordinance. In order to stop the city from shutting down their playground the kids sneak into the junk yard and clean up the place while Pinkle is off talking to the judge. Though first upset by the fact that the children have rearranged things without his permission, Pinkle eventually comes around. He and the children become good friends and Pink's Junk Yard is saved.

Playing time is approximately 30-40 minutes. A highly flexible cast and charming music make this play easy and fun to produce with groups of any size or age level.

Cast of Characters

MR. PINK, the owner of “Pink’s Salvage”

PATCH, a natural leader, preferably a boy, approximately 11 years old

THE CHILDREN, who hang out at the junk yard

THE JUDGE, a disembodied voice

LATE GIRL, a soloist who sings and dances

Scenario and Musical Numbers

Overture.....	Instrumental
Scene One: A junk yard. Late evening.	
1. Children’s Entrance	Instrumental
2. I Shoulda Been Home by Six	Late Girl & Cast
3. Kids is a Bother	Mr. Pink
Scene Two: The junk yard. Later the next morning.	
4a. Incidental Music	Instrumental
4b. You’ve Got A-Hold O’ My Junk!	Children
Scene Three: The Tudbury County Court.	
5. What’s the Matter With Junk!	Mr. Pink
Scene Four: The junk yard. Later that day.	
6. Down in the Dumps	Children
Scene Five: A neighborhood street. A short time later.	
7. Keep a Lid on It	Children
8. Don’t Let the Grass Grow ’Round Your Feet	Patch & Cast
Scene Six: The junk yard. Next Morning.	
9. Reprise: Kids is a Bother	Mr. Pink
10. Can’t Keep From Crying	Patch
Scene Seven: The junk yard. Later that evening.	
11. Reprise: Don’t Let the Grass Grow	Patch & Cast

PRODUCTION NOTES

Properties

Five envelopes (one contains letter from court)—Mr. Pink

Watch—Patch; Child 4

Trash cans with wheels—Girls

Paint can—Child 3

Ladder—Child 4

Lights

Suggestions and cues for lighting are given in the stage directions. No special area lighting is required except in the court room scene, and then a single spotlight will suffice.

Music

A demonstration/accompaniment tape and piano/vocal score are available from the publisher. For ease of rehearsal with a large cast, each children's song can be assigned to a different group, with all joining together on the finale. The music is unison and easy to learn, but it has a sophisticated jazz flavor.

Costumes

Basic costumes are everyday play clothes for the children. Patch must have a patch on the seat of his pants. Mr. Pink wears overalls with a long-sleeved pink shirt. He carries a cane and wears a hat. A tie and/or sports jacket is needed for the court scene. In Scene 6, Mr. Pink wears pink pajamas and a robe.

Set

DOWN IN THE DUMPS is essentially a one-set play taking place in Mr. Pink's junk yard. Suggestions for the set are given in the stage directions.

Down in the Dumps

By DAN ROBERTS

Overture

Scene 1

[The scene opens in silence. Late evening in the junkyard. MR. PINK is seen coming out of his house, an old run-down shack Upstage Right, to make his usual evening rounds. A tall fence provides the back drop to a very cluttered yard, and a sign is attached which reads: "PINK'S SALVAGE, Walter M. Pinkle, Proprietor." The only light on the stage is that which shines from his window, the glow of a yard lamp next to his house, and a lantern which he carries. He crosses Stage Left to lock the main gate, crosses back to the house, takes a final look around, and steps up onto the porch. Before entering the house, he lovingly touches an old rocking chair left of the door. After he goes inside and turns out the lights, groups of CHILDREN are seen sneaking through loose boards in the fence Upstage.]

Music #1: "Children's Entrance"

GROUP 1. *[Entering]* Sh-h!

GROUP 2. *[Entering]* Sh-h!

GROUP 3. *[Entering]* Sh-h!

CHILD 1. Is he asleep?

CHILD 2. *[Peeking in the window]* I think so...he's asleep.

ALL. Let's go.

[All of the CHILDREN scurry about the yard, playing with every piece of junk they can find.]

LATE GIRL. What time is it?

CHILD 3. *[Too loud]* Anybody got a watch?

ALL. Sh-h!

CHILD 4. It's eight o'clock.

LATE GIRL. Oh, no!

CHILD 3. What's the matter?

Music #2: "I Shoulda Been Home by Six"

LATE GIRL. I shoulda been home by six,
 Now I've gotten into a fix.
 It's gettin' dark out, I gotta start out
 Before I get a million licks!

It got so terribly late somehow,
 Guess I'm really in trouble now.
 Gotta be goin' ...shoulda been home by six!

ALL. We shoulda been home by six,
 Now we've gotten into a fix.
 It's gettin' dark out, we gotta start out
 Before we get a million licks!

It got so terribly late somehow,
 Guess we're really in trouble now.
 Gotta be goin' ...Shoulda been home by six!

[Dance]

LATE GIRL. How did it get so late?
 Shoulda been asleep in bed by eight.

ALL. Gotta leave on the double
 Before we get in trouble
 For going outside the gate!

LATE GIRL. I don't know when that old sun went down,
 But I gotta get back to town.

ALL. Gotta be goin' ...Gotta be goin' ...Gotta be goin' ...
 Should-a been home...by...

*[A LIGHT comes on in Mr. Pink's window, and they all freeze in fear.
 One CHILD drops a hubcap.]*

SIX!

[They exit in panic. MR. PINK, hearing the noise, enters and sees that the children have been there. As he straightens up the yard, he sings.]

Music #3: “Kids is a Bother”

MR. PINK. Kids is a bother, always around.
I’m always tossin’ ’em out.
Why are they always hangin’ around,
When I don’t want ’em around?

They’re always underfoot and makin’ noise.
Why can’t little girls get along with little boys?
With their “finders keepers, losers weepers,”
They’re drivin’ me crazy!

Kids is a bother, always around.
I don’t know what I’m to do.
They say they like me: how can that be?
I’m just an old worn-out shoe.

They sneak in through the gate and stay all day.
Can’t they find another place where they can play?
With their calling names and silly games,
They’re drivin’ me crazy!

I don’t want to sound like Mister Scrooge on Christmas Day,
But when they’re around, it’s like a ten-horse open sleigh!
Why can’t kids be quiet and polite, and never seen, and never heard?
I’d be a happy man if they’d just stay away!

[INTERLUDE: He straightens up the yard.]

They’re always under foot and makin’ noise.
Why can’t little girls get along with little boys?
With their “finders keepers, losers weepers,”
They’re drivin’ me crazy! Drivin’ me crazy!

[Enters house, slamming door on final chord]

[BLACKOUT]

Scene 2

[The junkyard. Later the next morning. MR. PINK comes from his house carrying a walking cane. He crosses to the main gate Stage Left and exits. A BOY pokes his head through the fence, and calls back to his friends.]

BOY. He's gone!

[A group of CHILDREN enter noisily through the fence and begin to play.]

Music #4a. "Incidental Music"

[As they play, a BOY is seen grabbing a piece of junk from a GIRL.]

GIRL. Hey! Give that back!

BOY. I saw it first!

GIRL. Oh, no you didn't! It's mine!

BOY. Mine!

GIRL. Mine!

BOY 2. I'll settle this. *[Takes the junk]* It's mine!

[General chaos follows, with each BOY grabbing something from a GIRL. MUSIC segues]

Music #4b. "You've Got A-Hold O' My Junk!"

GIRLS. You've got a-hold o' my junk!

That's my very own hunk o' junk!

So take your hands off it! Give it to me, and stop it!

Finders keepers, losers weepers!

I'm gonna tell on you if you don't do what I say!

[They grab the junk from the BOYS.]

BOYS. You've got a hold o' my thing!

Hand it over, you ding-a-ling!

It's mine, 'cause I found it! You weren't even around it!

Hand it over!

I'm gonna clobber you if you don't do what I say!

[DANCE: During which they fight over their "treasures."]

[Both groups repeat first verses simultaneously, then:]

GIRLS. That's my thing-a-ma-jig!

BOYS. Try and get it if you're so big!

GIRLS. I'll call my brother!

BOYS. Why don'tcha tell your mother?

GIRLS. Give it to me!

BOYS. Find another!

GIRLS. I'm gonna tell on you!

BOYS. Please don't scare me!

GIRLS. I'm gonna tell on you!

BOYS. *[Bronx cheer]*

[An all-out ruckus begins, but comes to a dead halt as MR. PINK enters Stage Left with a bag of groceries. The CHILDREN stand frozen in their tracks.]

GIRLS. He...had a hold o' my junk.

BOYS. That's...my...very own hunk o' junk.

[THEY forget MR. PINK and go back into action.]

GIRLS. It's mine, 'cause I found it!

BOYS. You weren't even around it!

ALL. Finders keepers, losers weepers!

[They sing simultaneously, growing louder and louder.]

BOYS. I'm gonna clobber you if you don't do... *[Sing 3 times]*

GIRLS. I'm gonna tell on you if you don't do... *[Sing 3 times]*

MR. PINK. *[Spoken]* Out!!

[The CHILDREN exit screaming. A BOY, exiting through the gate Stage Left, turns around bravely]

BOY. *[Spoken]* Who wants your old junk anyhow?!

[MR. PINK raises his cane threateningly, and the BOY runs off with a yell. MUSIC ends. MR. PINK picks up his mail at the gate and crosses

to his porch, where he sits to look through it. As he reads each envelope, he tosses it into a trash can next to the porch.]

MR. PINK. Bill...bill...bill... Hmm, old Aunt Bessie. *[Tosses that one away, too]* No junk mail. I never get any junk mail, I'm a junk *man*. I never get any junk *mail*. What's this? From the County Court? Now what would the County Court want from *me*?

[He opens the letter and reads, mumbling unintelligibly to himself. When he has finished, he lays the letter in his lap and stares momentarily off into space, looking very confused. He stands slowly and enters the house. Several CHILDREN, who have been watching through the fence, enter quietly. One of them, PATCH, retrieves the letter from the porch floor and takes it to the group Downstage Left. He reads it aloud.]

PATCH. *[Reading]* "To Mr. Walter M. Pinkle from the Tudbury County Court. Dear Mr. Pinkle. It has been brought to the attention of this court that you have not yet satisfied the required standards of Code Thirty-Six, Section B, of the Tudbury Beautification Ordinance as requested in three previous communications from the Tudbury Town Council. It will be necessary for you to appear before this court on Friday, August 21st, in order to present your case. Please be in the courtroom no later than 9:00 A.M. Sincerely, Winfield R. Brown, Judge Advocate, Tudbury County Court."

[They look at one another in disbelief as the CURTAIN closes and the LIGHTS fade to BLACKOUT.]