

‘Douglas the Dragon’

by

William Forde

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Illustrations by Dave Bradbury

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An Anger-Management play written by the founder of Anger-Management courses in Great Britain in 1971, and based upon William Forde's '*Douglas the Dragon*' stories and adapted from those books.

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Cover and inner illustrations by Dave Bradbury of Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.

A video 2- hour performance of the musical play by the children of Emley First School, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire can be obtained from [tdv@netcomuk.co.uk](mailto:tdv@netcomuk.co.uk) or telephone: 01484 865282.

An MP3 file containing all five original songs and backing tracks to accompany the play will shortly be available for free download from [www.fordefables.co.uk](http://www.fordefables.co.uk)

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## **Author's Foreword**

As so often in life, learning best comes from our most traumatic experiences. Over fifty years ago as a young boy of twelve, I was run over by a large wagon and received multiple injuries. My parents were told that I'd never walk again. For three years following my accident, a spinal injury prevented me from feeling any signs of life below my waist. The predominant emotions I experienced during this period were 'Anger' and 'Fear': intense 'Anger' at what had happened to me and 'Fear' of the inevitable consequences of never walking again. In time, 'Anger and Fear' consumed me. I stopped loving myself and felt unable to 'Love' others.

During the remainder of my teenage years, and aided by prayer and the practising of numerous eastern disciplines, my ability to walk returned. While being unable to pin point the precise cause of this seemingly miraculous recovery, I had, nevertheless, stumbled across the bodily correlation between 'Fear, Anger and Love' without realising it at the time.

In later life, as a Probation Officer serving in West Yorkshire, I found that my professional training left me ill-equipped to help many recidivists change their offending behaviour. After analysing the behavioural response patterns of 600 offenders, I found that the three human emotions of 'Fear, Anger and Love', and in particular, the inability to appropriately express these emotions, constituted the core of their general unhappiness, dissatisfaction and offending behaviour.

Remembering my own childhood experiences, I rediscovered the behavioural correlation between 'Fear, Anger and Love.' I abandoned the traditional Probation Officer method of working with offenders, and, instead, constructed a group programme of work that I used thereafter. For the following 24 years, I operated hundreds of these group programmes with all ages of mixed sex in Probation Offices, Hostels, Prisons, Hospitals, Educational Establishments and Community Halls. These were the very first '*Anger Management*' programmes operated in Great Britain. I'm proud to say that many similar group programmes have mushroomed in Europe, America and across the English speaking world ever since.

The principle of all successful Anger Management work has three essential stages at the heart of its process; a process of which I am the original founder, and which I freely gave to the world in 1971:

- (1) Learn how to face and confront our 'Fears.'
- (2) Learn how to 'Love' ourselves so that we can be enabled to 'Love' others.
- (3) Learn how to manage and appropriately express our 'Anger.'

The process of work relating to all 'Anger Management' needs to be followed sequentially in the three stages identified above *'for change to occur and to be reinforced and maintained within the future behavioural response pattern.'* If this process is not strictly followed, *'any change produced will be partial at best and will not be sustained within the behavioural pattern.'* Thus the old behaviour pattern of responses will gradually return.

One first deals with all work pertaining to reducing 'Fears' to a manageable level *'before'* engaging in work to promote self-enhancement. Once the Fears have been rationalised and reduced to a manageable level, only then should a process of self-enhancement be pursued and reinforced. The person requiring 'Anger Management' then has to learn how to increase their self-regard. This involves learning *'how to love themselves'* in order that *'they may love others also.'* It is only when this second phase of the change process has been reached that the individual seeking behavioural change will possess sufficient self-belief and positivism to enable change in their 'Anger' pattern to occur and be withstood.

The most profound truth is often the easiest to understand: before one can rid one's heart of 'Anger,' one must first put some 'Love' in!

From the many books I've had published for children since 1990, the most popular story has been the *'Douglas the Dragon'* stories. These four stories deal with the underlying principles of 'Anger Management' and have since been used by many Child Psychologists in West Yorkshire to help abused and traumatised victims express their repressed Anger.

In writing my *'Douglas the Dragon Play'*, which is adapted from my four *'Douglas Dragon stories,'* I hope to bring to the wider audience of child, young person and adult, the essential ingredients of 'Anger Management' through the medium of word, song and stage, by the telling of a story about an angry dragon.

*'Douglas the Dragon'*; the books which contains all four Douglas Dragon stories from which this play has been adapted are available as E-Books from [www.smashwords.com](http://www.smashwords.com) and [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) (Kindle Department) in either individual story book form or as an omnibus edition of all four stories.

William Forde: February 2012.

**'Douglas the Dragon'**

By  
William Forde

**THE CAST**

The Narrator  
The Baby Dragon  
Douglas the Teenage Dragon  
Douglas the Dragon  
Douglas the Boy  
Douglas's Mother  
The Mayor of Marfield  
Granny McNally  
Mother McNally  
Frances McNally  
Wizard Yaffe  
Blacksmith Jones  
Bereaved Widower  
Betty Green the Grocer  
Nancy Wise the Teacher  
Jake Tiller the Farmer  
Widow Wanting  
Abdul Yesmit (An orphaned child)  
Rosie Cox (An orphaned child)  
Annie Smart (An orphaned child)  
Jim Furrow (An orphaned child)  
Mary Walsh (An orphaned child)  
Fred Larkin Junior (An orphaned child)

Sally Buttin (A village child)

Village Samaritan

Angry Female Neighbour

First Village Child Traveller

Second Village Child Traveller

Third Village Child Traveller

Fourth Village Child Traveller

Placard Holder

A Voice from the Crowd

A Chorus of Village Children

A Male Villager

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## **Guidelines to Producers**

### **Setting the Scene**

I have deliberately avoided being proscriptive when setting the scenes to 'The Douglas Dragon Play', preferring to leave to the Producer of the play, the decision of which creative means and method best achieves their desired result.

An appendix to this publication is included by Stuart Merry, former head teacher, identifying how 'Physical Theatre' can be appropriately used in the enactment of this play. Physical Theatre is an ideal medium to include participant players who, for a variety of reasons, prefer a part that doesn't involve public speech. I have also included some 'Anger Management Steps', which may be used as an elementary guide in the construction of an Anger Management Programme, independent from the play.

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## **The Narrator**

The Narrator of the play is a 200-year-old version of one of the play's central characters, Wizard Yaffe. As he informs the audience about essential elements of the unfolding plot, linking one scene to the next, he is mostly positioned in front of curtain as scene changes are taking place backstage. Occasionally, however, The Narrator (ostensibly invisible to the actors on stage), is required to deliver his speech from the side of the stage. As the longest speech parts belong to The Narrator, his word prompt can be disguised in his Book of Magic Spells that he is always holding. Some schools performing this play may elect to use an adult in this role.

## **Frances McNally, Mother McNally and Granny McNally**

The characters of Frances McNally, Mother McNally and Granny McNally are used in assembly-line fashion to reflect the link between past and present, along with the continuity of life. Therefore, as one Granny McNally dies, there is always a Mother McNally in the wings waiting to take her place, with a Frances McNally becoming a Mother McNally and a new Frances McNally being born. Mother McNally is always pregnant with another daughter, who is always called Frances.

## **‘Douglas the Dragon’**

### **Act One: Scene One**

The play commences with The Narrator (an old, bearded wizard carrying a book of spells and a wand tucked inside his belt), standing in front of curtain to address the audience.

#### **THE NARRATOR:**

“Our story begins long, long ago, when dragons roamed the world and wizards were the masters of all they surveyed. This was a time when the forces of ‘Good’ and ‘Evil’ were in constant struggle; a time when war was waged between the human emotions of ‘Fear, Anger and Love.’”

“The prize at stake was the greatest prize of all: control of the heart, mind and actions of every man, woman and child.”

“One mile beyond the edge of Marfield Village, the hero of our story (a baby dragon), was being born through a slit in its mother’s stomach. For those of you unacquainted with the intricacies of birth, such entry into the world is called a ‘*Caesarean birth*.’”

“One hour before the baby dragon’s birth, its mother had been killed by a wicked wizard.... (Pause)..... Ah yes; I’m afraid that there’s good and bad in all of us!”



“The wicked wizard believed that if he drank the warm blood of a dragon he’d killed with his own hands, he’d live forever. So he pursued a female dragon, slit open her stomach, drank her warm blood and then went off after other dragon prey; not knowing that inside his victim’s stomach was a baby dragon waiting to be born.”

“Our hero was born into this world as an orphan, and even though the baby dragon couldn’t see for the first few hours of its existence, it could smell the stench of death close by and the aroma of life in the near distance.”

“So choosing the smell of life over that of death, it followed its nose towards the nearby Village of Marfield as it crawled through the long grass.”

*The curtain is raised, revealing a scene of a Village Square filled with children at play, adults, Mayor, shopkeepers and the local blacksmith. However, all characters on stage are totally silent and motionless; as though part way through some action they’d been frozen in time, like statues. The Mayor and blacksmith are stood side-by-side.*

**THE NARRATOR:** *(Looking directly at the audience from the side of the stage)*

“Meanwhile, back in the Village Square, life continued as it had always done.”

*As The Narrator turns towards the cast on stage, he sees that there is no sign of movement or sound, so he takes his magic wand from his belt and repeats his last words as he waves it over the actors.*

**THE NARRATOR:**

“Meanwhile, back in the Village Square, life continued as it had always done.”

*All the actors on stage instantly break out into speech and movement once more and complete what they had been previously doing, thereby signifying the power of the wizard’s magic to the audience.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** *(The Mayor is eating an apple pie as he speaks to Blacksmith Jones: in fact, he is always eating something throughout the day or night whenever anyone sees him!)*

“Good mor...morning, blacksmith. It looks like fine weather again.”

**BLACKSMITH JONES:**

“Aye, Mr Mayor, a fine day it is! Granny McNally says it will stay rain-free for the next seven days and she’s never been known to be wrong in her forecasts. I don’t know how she does it. It’s uncanny if you ask me!”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“That settles it th...then, blacksmith. If Granny McNally says it will be fine, then fine it will be! Oh what I wouldn’t give for just a fragment of her 90-years’ wisdom. Do you know, blacksmith, church records show that Marfield Village hasn’t been without a Granny McNally for nigh on 300 years?”

*(The Mayor gives a loud belch of satisfaction)*

**BLACKSMITH JONES:**

“Nor a Mother McNally, or a Frances McNally! No sooner than the coffin of one Granny McNally has been buried beneath the sod, the cradle of a newborn Frances McNally is being rocked.....and there’s always another female McNally in line ready to move up a generation. Folk ‘round here call it the ‘*McNally Assembly Line!*’”

*Both Mayor and blacksmith laugh, and as they do so, a 90-year-old woman dressed in shawl and moving slowly with the aid of a walking stick approaches.*

**GRANNY McNALLY:** *(Assertive voice)*

“Good morning, Mayor - blacksmith. Have either of you seen our Frances? She’s never to be found when you want her and is forever under your feet when you don’t!”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“I haven’t, Granny McNally. Sorry.”

**BLACKSMITH JONES:**

“I saw her fighting with Fred Larkin’s lad half an hour ago, Granny McNally. They were knocking lumps out of each other. I had to pull them apart before she broke young Larkin’s nose again. She was...” (Pause)

**GRANNY McNALLY:**

“She was what, blacksmith? You were saying. Come on, man, spit it out!”

**BLACKSMITH JONES:**

“She was on fire with rage, is what I was about to say, Granny McNally. So full of anger, bringing her down. Most.....unladylike, if you pardon me saying so.”

**GRANNY McNALLY:**

“Tut! That girl! She’ll put her family to shame and me and her poor mother in an early grave if she doesn’t grow out of it soon.”

“I pity her poor mother. Mind you ... and don’t say I told you so....., but her mother was no better at her age, come to think of it. What goes around comes around. That’s what I say!”

“Too much anger inside her. That’s her problem. Too much anger! It’s as though she’s frightened to let the world see the love she has to give, so she hides it behind her anger.”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“What’s to be done with her, Granny McNally? What’s to be done?”

**GRANNY McNALLY:**

“Talking! That’s the only recipe I know. Lots of talking and much soul searching. One way or another, she must be persuaded to open her heart and let the love in. Only then will she be able to let the anger out! ”

*Granny McNally then burst’s into song and sings ‘Follow Your Heart’. Alternately, another song may be sung if the Producer prefers.*

**GRANNY McNALLY:**

“Anyway; I can’t stop swapping stories with you two all day. I’ve too much to do and too little time left to do it in. See you.”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“See you, Granny McNally.”

**BLACKSMITH JONES:**

“I’ll send your Frances home if I lay eyes on her again, Granny McNally. Bye now.”

*The Mayor and blacksmith continue with their conversation, while nearby, in the far corner of the*

*Village Square, an 11-year-old boy and his widowed mother are talking.*

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:** *(Stern voice)*

“Okay, Douglas. Okay! You can go to the long grass at the edge of the village, but no farther! And don’t be late for tea! And don’t dare bring back any more strays! We’ve got two cats, four dogs, a three-legged pony, a poorly goose and a white rat! Our house is like a farmyard. And before you come home, call to the bakers and get a loaf of bread. We’re out!”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:**

“Thanks Mum. I’ll not be late and I won’t forget the bread.”

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:**

“And don’t forget; no more strays! I know you love animals, Son, but enough is enough! We’ve got two cats, four.....”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Running off)*

“Bye, Mum. See you later. Bye!”

*As both boy and mother leave the stage in opposite directions, the curtain comes down to end the scene and prepare for the next.*

## **Act One: Scene Two**

*The Narrator appears in front of curtain to address the audience while the next scene is being prepared.*

**THE NARRATOR:** *(Gentle voice)*

“Every mother knows that when her infant is born, there is a brief period before it opens its eyes for first sight of the world. The very first smell it has is of its mother, and the first face it sets eyes on, is its mother. And from this first attachment, no newborn lets their mother out of their sight!”

“Thus this bond between mother and newborn is established by smell, touch and sight. That is how it is. That is how it’s always been!”

*The curtain is raised, revealing the baby dragon blindly crawling through the long grass on the road to the Village of Marfield, with closed eyes and following its sense of smell. As the baby dragon crawls towards Marfield, Douglas the Boy is approaching in the*

*opposite direction. The boy is stroking an injured frog with a damaged foot he found as he comes across the baby dragon at his feet.*

**THE BABY DRAGON:** (Sensing the presence of another)

“Snort, snort, snort.”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** (*Bends down and pats the dragon on its head lovingly*)

“Well... well! What have we here? Hello, fella. Aren’t you a strange- looking creature? I’ve seen all sorts in my time, but never anything like you. What are you doing out here on your own, and where’s your mum?”

*As the boy affectionately pats the baby dragon on its head, the dragon lifts up its head, opens its eyes for the first time, sees Douglas and snorts lovingly; ‘believing the boy to be its mother.’*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:**

“You’re gorgeous, fella; green, spiky and simply gorgeous!”

*At this point, the frog that is being held in the boy’s other hand croaks twice, as if to ask, “Aren’t I gorgeous too?”*

“And you’re gorgeous also, frog!”

“If..... if only I could take you home with me and add you to my..... but mum would never allow me. You see, fella, I’ve already got two cats, four dogs, a three-legged pony, a poorly goose and a white rat!”

*At this point, the frog croaks twice, as if to assert, “And me!”*

“Oh, and a frog with a damaged foot! Mum says that I’ve already turned our house into a farmyard.”

(*Sorry-for-self voice*) “If.....if only dad was still alive, I bet he’d let me. Dad loved all animals. He’d never turn one away. Anyway, must go now, fella. I’m already late and..... The bread! I’ve forgotten mum’s loaf. She’ll kill me. Bye now. Bye!”

*As the boy turns to run off back home with the frog in his hand, the baby dragon follows him like a shadow he can't shake off. Sensing that he's being followed, the boy turns around and is annoyed with his stalker.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Stern voice and wagging finger of disapproval)*

"Are you hard of hearing, Cloth Ears? I've already told you, I can't take you home with me! Mum won't allow me. I would if I could, but I can't. Look, I'm already late. Now stay there, Spiky!"



*Having made the dragon backtrack (with the sweeping and shooing gesture of his hands), the boy hurries off home again. Unknown to the boy, the dragon follows him all the way back to the village edge. The boy's mother is there, having come to seek her son.*

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:** *(Stern, cross voice)*

"Douglas! There you are you..... you naughty boy. Your tea's stone cold! What time do you call this? And where's the loaf of bread I asked you to fetch?"

*Before her son has time to answer, his mother sees the frog in his hand and the weird-looking spiky creature behind him.*

*(Angry voice) "And what's that you've brought home with you?" (Pointing to the frog in her son's hands)*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:**

"It's..... it's an injured frog, Mum, with a damaged foot. I..... I couldn't leave it out there. It would die."

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:**

"Well, it can hop it! It's not setting foot in our house. We've already got two cats, four dogs, a three-legged pony, a poorly goose and a white rat. And there's no way I'm letting a fat frog in!"

"And that? *(Pointing to the dragon behind him)*. What's that you've brought home?"

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Puzzled look and voice)*

"Wh.....what?"

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:**

"That! *(Pointing to the dragon)*. That spiky thing you've brought home on your coat tail! I told you; no more animals. Are you hard of hearing, Cloth Ears? Have you taken leave of your senses? Are you trying to overrun us?"

*Douglas looks behind him and is surprised to see the newborn creature that's followed him home there.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Apologetic voice)*

"But, Mum.....I didn't. Honest ... I didn't!"

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:**

"Oh yes, you did! Oh yes, you did, my boy! Your very lies are staring me in the face, so don't try to deny it!"

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Pointing to the frog in his hand)*

"I put my hands up to bringing the frog home, Mum, but not him. *(Pointing to the dragon)*. Not him, Mum. Honest I didn't! I told him not to follow me. He must have followed me home, Mum. Honest!"

*At this point the baby dragon begins to shed a tear and he adopts one of those 'nobody-loves-me' faces.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Pleading tone of voice)*

"Mum, just look at the little mite. It's sensitive, Mum, and your harsh words have made it cry. It hasn't been alive long. It's lonely, Mum, and has nobody to care for it. You try living alone, feeling unloved and unwanted. At least we've got each other, while he's got nobody!" *(Brief pause)*

“Mum.....can.....can it live with us. Please Mum!”

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:** (*Determined voice*)

“I’ve already told you, Son. There are no more animals coming into this house! ‘No more’ means ‘no more!’ And you can get rid of that fat frog also. Smelly creature!”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** (*Appealing voice*)

“Well, if you won’t let it live here, then please, please let it stay a week until it’s big enough to fend for itself. Can it, Mum. Pl....ease?”

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:** (*Stern voice*)

“No!”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** (*Pleading voice*)

“Three days?”

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:** (*Stern voice*)

“No!”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** (*Pleading voice*)

“Two days?”

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:** (*Stern voice*)

“Are you hard of hearing, Cloth Ears? Which part of ‘no’ is it that you don’t understand? ‘No’ means ‘no!’”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** (*Final plea*)

“Please, Mum. It’s only a short stay. It’s not that much to ask. It’s a newborn. It’s homeless. It’s helpless. It’s all alone; not even a mother to look out for it. If we leave it out to the elements on the very first night of its life, it’ll be dead by morning and we’ll have good as killed it off! Please let the motherless creature stay overnight. Just one night. Please, Mum?”

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:** (*Relenting face*)

“Okay! One night! It can stop one night only. But if it hasn’t gone by tomorrow, then I will have, and you can have a taste of being motherless. And it doesn’t set foot inside our house, or else! It can sleep in the barn.”

*At this point, the frog croaks twice, as if to ask, “And me?”*



**DOUGLAS THE BOY:**

“And.....and the frog? Can the frog stay too, Mum?”

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:**

“Yes, yes, I suppose so. But that also sleeps in the barn or it can hop it elsewhere! Smelly creature.”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Celebratory whoop)*

“Ye.....yes! Thanks, Mum. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! You’re the best mum in the whole wide world. Thank you!”

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:**

“I know. I know! Now, my boy, put those two creatures in the barn and get ready for bed before I change my mind. It’s school tomorrow.”

*The curtain comes down to end the scene and prepare for the next. The Narrator appears before curtain to address the audience.*

## **Act One: Scene Three**

**THE NARRATOR:** *(Before curtain)*

“Ah, that first night. It was a night sent to remember, a night that would test the patience of the boy Douglas who was faced with the insecurity of the baby dragon and the attention-seeking croaks of the frog.”

“Nearby, at the edge of Marfield Village where two hills stood side-by-side, ‘*The Angry Hill*’ started to rumble its discontent. ‘*The Angry Hill*’ had begun its process of waking up in a bad mood, having had a volcanic sleep for over a hundred years. This was a process which would still take a number of years to complete; a process that would eventually rock the very foundation of village life and community stability when it erupted into full wakefulness.”

*The curtain is raised, revealing the inside of a barn. The frog has been bedded down towards the rear of the barn and the baby dragon is being covered up with a blanket by the boy. The frog is in fact a ‘glove puppet’ that can be secretly operated by the hidden hand of an unseen child behind a bale of straw or some form of cage in semi darkness.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Sympathetic voice)*

“There you are, fella. You’ll feel much better after a good night’s sleep. I’ll pop in and see you again in the morning before I go to school. Night, night, Spiky.”

*The frog, feeling left out, pops its head up from its bed and croaks to remind the boy of its presence also.*

“And night, night to you too, frog! Night, night!”

*As the boy moves to leave the barn, the sound of rumbling thunder can be heard in the distance as ‘The Angry Hill’ announces its displeasure. Upon hearing the loud noise, the baby dragon takes fright, quickly removes its blanket and scrambles after the boy; grabbing hold of the boy’s legs in panic and refusing to let go.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Caring voice)*

“Now then, fella. What’s all this about? It’s only a crack of thunder. It’ll not harm you. Now, let’s have you back under your blanket. *(The boy covers the dragon up again).* Night, night.”

*The frog pops its head up from its bed and croaks again to remind the boy of its presence.*

“And night, night to you again, frog! Night, night!”

*As the boy moves to leave the barn again, a loud rumbling noise is repeated in the distance and the frightened dragon scrambles out of bed, and clings on tight to the boy’s legs once more, refusing to let go.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Exasperated voice)*

“Not again! Now go back to bed you... you naughty creature. Cover yourself up and stay put! You can’t come in the house. Mum would go mad. Now, get back under the blanket. Night, night!”

*The frog pops its head up from the straw and croaks again to remind the boy of its presence.*

*(Bellowing voice)* “And night, night to you again, frog! Night, night!”

*As the boy moves to leave the barn for the third time; another rumbling noise is heard in the distance and the baby dragon scrambles out of bed, runs towards the boy and clings tightly to his legs, refusing to let go.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Voice of reluctant resignation)*

“You’re determined not to let me out of your sight, aren’t you? It looks like the only way either of us is going to get to sleep tonight, is if we sleep together. And since you can’t come into the house, it looks like I’ll have to bed down here with you. Now, budge up and give me half that blanket! Budge up!”

*Both boy and dragon cuddle up beneath the blanket.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:**

“Night, night, fella. Night, night. Now go to sleep, please. I’m tired!”

*The frog pops its head up from its bed and croaks again from its corner of the barn to remind the boy of its presence.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Angry voice)*

“And night, night to you again, frog! For the last time, night, night!”

*The stage darkens to represent the onset of night. After a brief pause of snoring, snorting and croaking in their sleep, the stage lightens with the dawn of a new day, and in the background a cockerel crows. The sound of human footsteps is heard approaching the barn, accompanied by the emerging voice of the boy’s mother.*

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:**

“Douglas. Where are you, boy? You’ll be late for school.”

*Douglas's mother enters the barn and sees her son asleep beneath the blanket with the baby dragon.*

“Well, I never! Will you just look at that! Isn't that a sight for sore eyes? That boy and his strays. Don't you realise, lad, that all the strays in the world won't fill your loss? Even Noah's ark and all its inhabitants couldn't fill the gap left by the death of your father. Too much love to give, my boy; that's your problem. Too much love to give and not enough strays to give it to!”

*As she looks lovingly on her son and his new companion, the boy yawns himself awake and rubs his eyes. Seeing his mother looking down on him, the boy Douglas gives her a big smile. The baby dragon also awakes.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Yawning voice)*

“Good morning, Mum. Nice day again isn't it? Love you, Mum.”

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:** *(Gentle voice)*

“I know you do, Douglas. I know you do; and I love you too, Son. Now, let's get some breakfast down you and get you off to school before you're late.”

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Turning to address his bed companion)*

“Good morning, fella. Did you sleep well? Say ‘Good morning’ to my mum nicely and she might let you have some breakfast also.”

**THE BABY DRAGON:** *(Big smile)*

“Snort, snort, snort.”

*The frog pops up its head from its bed and croaks from its corner of the barn to remind them of its presence and as if to ask, “And what about me?”*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:**

“Good morning, frog. I'm sure we can find you something to eat also.”

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:** *(Lump-in-throat voice)*

“It's been a long time, Son, since I've seen you so happy. It.....it fair takes me back to happier days when.....when your father was.....alive.”

*Douglas's mother has a little weep. Douglas gives his mother a hug of comfort and he begins to cry also. As the boy and mother cuddle each other in tears, the baby dragon nestles up to the boy and gives him a cuddle around his legs. In the background, the sorry croak of a frog can be heard in sympathy.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Sad voice)*

"I know, Mum. I know. I miss dad too, more than words can ever say. It's.....it's strange without two parents, but however hard it is for us, Mum, we have each other; whereas this newborn, spiky creature here (looks at the dragon), has nobody! I love you, Mum. Love you."

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:** *(Smiley face)*

"I love you too, Son. I love you too! You always could get round me with your winning ways, couldn't you?" *(Pause)*

"Okay! If it means so much to you, the newborn stray can stay."

*(Determined voice)* "But, be warned, it lives in the barn. It doesn't dare show its face in my house! And bear in mind, Douglas, it's your creature, your pet and your responsibility. You'll be the one to look after it and do the mucking out!"

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Ecstatic response)*

"Oh, Mum, thank you! Thank you and thank you! You're the best mum in the whole wide world; the very best! Thank you!"

*(Looking towards the dragon the boy gives the dragon a 'high five')* "Mum says you can stay, fella. You can stay! Yippee!"

*The frog decides to croak and remind them of its presence and as if to ask, "Can I stay too?"*

*(Looking towards his mother with a pleading face)* "And the frog, Mum? Can the frog stay too?"

**DOUGLAS'S MOTHER:**

"I suppose so. What's one fat frog when we're already housing two cats, four dogs, a three-legged pony, a poorly goose, a white rat and that spiky newborn there?"

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:**

*(Grateful response)* “Oh thank you, Mum. Thank you, thank you, and thank you. You’re the best mum in the whole wide world. The very best!”

**DOUGLAS’S MOTHER:** *(Hurried reply)*

“I know, I know! Now get some food inside you and get off to school. You’re already running late.”

*Douglas’s mother leaves the barn while her son is still overjoyed by the knowledge that the spiky creature and the frog can stay.*

**DOUGLAS THE BOY:** *(Looking towards the dragon and frog)*

“Isn’t that just the best news ever? Cheer up, you can stay. Mum says you can both stay.”

*Douglas dances around the barn with glee as he sings ‘Spiky Cheer Up’. Alternately, the Producer may elect to use a different song. When the song is finished, the boy runs from the barn to grab some cereal and his school satchel from the house before dashing off, still eating a slice of toast. As Douglas the Boy leaves the stage, the baby dragon runs after him on all fours, like a shadow he can’t shake off. The curtain comes down to prepare for the next scene.*

## **Act Two: Scene One**

*The Narrator appears before curtain to address the audience and to fill in the circumstances and events, which link the last scene with the next.*

**THE NARRATOR:**

“Having decided to adopt the baby dragon, the following couple of years in the life of the boy Douglas were the happiest he’d known since the death of his father. It was as though ‘purpose’ had returned to his life.”

“However, it soon became clear that the adopted dragon viewed the boy Douglas as its mother and wouldn’t let the boy out of its sight. It followed him everywhere.”

“It followed him to school. It sat at the next desk in class. The dragon even learnt to add up, write, spell and speak the human language. It followed the boy out to play. It even followed him to the bathroom and the loo! Everywhere the boy went, the dragon followed. The dragon became a friend to every boy and girl in Marfield and was dearly loved by all.”

“When the time came to name the dragon, there was only one name to call it; the only name it ever answered to: ‘*Douglas*.’ So now we have a boy called Douglas and a dragon called Douglas, and the dragon follows the boy everywhere and thinks that the boy is its mother.”

“All went well for the next couple of years and both boy and dragon became inseparable. The two even shared the same bed; a development which the boy’s mother was never really happy with, but reluctantly agreed to. The boy became a mother figure to the growing dragon, and the dragon’s presence helped to fill an emotional void in the boy’s life which had existed since the loss of his father. Life seemed to be as good as it gets.”

*(A solemn change of voice)* “It was when their happiness was at its highest that tragedy struck the Village of Marfield a savage blow.”

*(Brief pause)* “‘*The Angry Hill*’ at the edge of the village had been storing up its rage for many years and was unable to contain an explosion of its wrath. Its anger was so heavy at its volcanic heart that it erupted from its mouth; spitting a fiery larva down the hillside towards the Village of Marfield.”

*(Louder, faster and more dramatic voice)* “As the larva hit the village, it burnt everything it touched - crops in the fields, fences, houses, people - everything in its path.”

*(A lower and more solemn voice)* “When the larva had cooled down one day later, the villagers emerged to survey the extent of the damage the volcano had caused. *(Brief pause)* They found all their crops ruined, their houses and school destroyed, and half their people dead! *(Longer pause before, concluding in a quieter and graver voice)* “Among the people killed in the volcanic eruption were the boy Douglas and his mother.” *(Long pause followed by The Narrator’s bowed head of respect).*

*The curtain rises to reveal a Village Square laid to waste by the destructive volcano. Villagers are in deep shock and a state of mourning as the dishevelled survivors linger amongst their destroyed shops and houses. To the side of the stage, a man who lost his wife in the tragedy, aimlessly searches through the rubble and remains of the family home and finds a framed photo of her which he clutches to his breast. He cleans the image and sings a sad song as he stares at the framed photograph of his only love.*

**BEREAVED WIDOWER:** Sings the song, ‘*You on my Mind*.’

*Alternately, the Producer may want to use a different song.*

*The Mayor of Marfield then gathers the villagers in the Village Square to address them.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** *(Solemn voice)*

“Gather round, good people, one and all. Gather round! Today is the saddest of days, and for some who have suffered more than others in the extent of their loss, the situation is simply unbearable!”

“All our crops have gone, our houses destroyed, and everyone in the village has lost friend, neighbour or family member in the volcanic eruption. I know that some villagers have even witnessed the death of their entire family.”

“Not content with killing our loved ones, the volcano’s anger boiled their bodies and bones; leaving us only with a scraping of their ashes for remains.”

*(Holding high an urn for all assembled to see)* “So, in memory of our dead, I am arranging for their ashes to be placed inside a Memorial Urn for safe keeping; to be put in a place where every villager will have access. An urn many times larger than this, fashioned thus. The Memorial Urn shall be placed at the heart of our Village Square, where it will become a focal point for our prayers, quiet reflections, our tears and memories of our dead.

*(Louder and more determined voice)* They shall not be forgotten!”

*(The Mayor ushers Granny McNally from the crowd)* “Now listen very carefully everyone while our most senior citizen, Granny McNally, says a few words. Pray, give silence to Granny McNally.”

*Granny McNally slowly makes her way to the front of the assembled crowd to address the villagers. She is dressed in mourning black.*

**GRANNY McNALLY:** *(Slow, solemn and assertive delivery)*

“Our hearts are heavy with grief for our dead; our feelings of loss veil our pain. Even our mental images of their tragic deaths mangle our minds and press our thoughts of confusion into feelings of uncertainty for the future.”

“Our skies seem filled with the harbinger of doom and gloom, but believe me when I tell you that *(determined voice)* the sun will shine through again!”

“I’ve walked this earth for 90 years. I’ve seen all of you born and have witnessed more deaths than I care to remember. At the risk of sounding arrogant, I’ve forgotten more than most of you have yet learned.”

“And yet, despite the extent of my age and worldly wisdom, I know so little about what lies beneath this green sod that makes the ground shake so violently when ‘*The Angry Hill*’ explodes in rage.”

“But this I know with every breath of my being and tell you most truly *(more determined voice)*. I know that sadness suffered in silence grows ever more bitter and sours the soul of humanity. I know that grief denied is grief extended and that bereavement borne alone is a cross far too heavy to bear.”

“I urge you, one and all, do not hide away your grief from family and friends. Share your fears and sadness with them, for a burden shared is a weight lessened! Let it out. Let them see it. Let others help you to carry your loss!”



“Do not conceal your pain behind false pride, good people. There is no shame in crying, no comfort to be found in silent rage, and no point in trying to cope alone when others will help you willingly; and be glad to have done so.”

“This is a time for you to share with friends and family; a time for all to rally round and to offer what we give best. This is not a time to isolate oneself from the lives of others, but a time to take part in all around you: the wisest time of all to express your feelings to those you love and trust!”

“Do all of this, my dear friends, and I promise you that the light will shine through your darkest day. Follow the substance of your future. Do not dwell upon the shadow of your past. Put your past behind you and I tell you, that a brighter ‘morrow shall follow.”

“However sad you feel today, I promise, that in time, your feelings shall change for the better. Remember, the birds shall still sing, the sun shall still shine, the grass will still grow, the flowers shall still bloom and the wind will still blow.”

“Consider this, good people. Even mighty oaks have to bend to the force of nature. And then, even when they are battered and blown by the Earth’s storms; even then, experience encourages the trunk to grow ever stronger and its roots to spread ever wider. Are we no less?”

“So give heed to the ramblings of an old woman. Do as I advise, and peace and reconciliation shall enter your lives once more. This I promise you. This I know!”

*As the Mayor moves forward to address the assembled crowd again, Granny McNally steps back a few paces.*

#### **THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Thank you, Granny McNally, for those wise words. As Granny McNally said, today we grieve for our dead. But, tomorrow we look towards the living when we begin to rebuild our village and our lives with the help of each other.”

“Let us first see to our young. Step forward any child under 16 years who has been orphaned by the volcanic eruption.”

*Six children (three boys and three girls, all with sad faces), move to stand alongside the Mayor where they form a row facing the villagers.*

#### **THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“We need Foster Parents for these six orphaned children. Who is prepared to adopt one? Identify yourself.”

**BLACKSMITH JONES:** *(Raises his hand in the air from the crowd).*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Yes, Blacksmith Jones. You wish to speak?”

**BLACKSMITH JONES:**

“I’ll take Abdul Yesmit, Mr Mayor. He’s good with horses and anyone who loves being around horses is okay by me.”

*Blacksmith Jones moves forward and escorts Abdul Yesmit back into the crowd.*

**BETTY GREEN THE GROCER:** *(Raises her hand in the air to attract the Mayor’s attention).*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Yes, Betty Green. Is our village greengrocer prepared to take on a child?”

**BETTY GREEN THE GROCER:**

“Aye, Mr Mayor. I’ll take Rosie Cox. I’ve got a husband as daft as a brush and not half as useful; two sons, but alas no daughter. And to tell the truth, I’ve always wanted a female pippin of my own.”

*Rosie Cox is taken from the line-up by Betty Green the Grocer.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Is anyone else prepared to foster? Come on, please.”

**NANCY WISE THE TEACHER:**

“I will, Mr Mayor.”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“And which child is Miss Nancy Wise our village teacher prepared to adopt?”

**NANCY WISE THE TEACHER:**

“I’ll take Annie Smart, Mr Mayor; if she’s happy to share my home as well as my classroom. She’s as clever as they come and will undoubtedly go far in life.”

*Annie Smart is taken from the line-up by Nancy Wise the Teacher.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“So far, so good. That’s three down and three to go. Who else will foster a child?”

**JAKE TILLER THE FARMER:**

“If young Jim Furrow there, Mr Mayor, will come live with me and my missus at Longley Farm, we’ll gladly offer a home to the boy. A strong lad like Jim won’t shy away from hard work and will easily earn his keep as an apprentice ploughman when he leaves school.”

*Jim Furrow is taken from the line-up by Jake Tiller the Farmer. Widow Wanting is the next person to raise her hand.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Yes, Widow Wanting. Did you want to say something?”

**WIDOW WANTING:**

“I’ve lived alone since my husband Bill died six years ago and would welcome a bit of company; someone to talk to on long summer evenings, and someone to share my table at meal times. If 15-year-old Mary Walsh is willing to spend the next few years with me before she marries or sets up home elsewhere, I’d be only too happy to share my home with her.”

*Mary Walsh smiles, nods her head in agreement and is taken from the line-up by Widow Wanting. A lengthy pause follows as nobody in the village seems prepared to take the last orphaned child; a boy who is always getting himself into fights and scrapes.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Come on, friends, we’re almost there. Only one child left to place. Who will offer Fred Larkin Junior a home? This poor boy lost both parents and his sister in the volcanic eruption; his entire family was wiped out in one day!”

*The assembled villagers remain totally silent and turn aside as a forlorn boy who is scruffily dressed and is wearing a sticking plaster on his nose stands there looking ‘unwanted.’*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** (After a long pause when it appears that nobody present will offer)

“Come, come, good people! Surely there is someone compassionate enough to take on the boy, isn’t there?”

**A VOICE FROM THE CROWD:**

“We’ve all got compassion, Mr Mayor, but most of us have sense as well! Who wants to be saddled with the likes of Fred Larkin Junior when we can opt for an easier life without the hassle? The lad’s a heap of trouble. He’s always fighting. He’s just like a bull in a china shop, eager to wreak damage. I’d sooner share my home with a bear with a sore head!”

*Low level laughter is heard from the crowd.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Come now, good people. This is no laughing matter. The poor lad’s just lost his entire family! Won’t anyone take him on?”

**MOTHER McNALLY:** (*Looking heavily pregnant and in a compassionate voice steps forward*)

“We’ll take the boy, Mr Mayor. He can live with the McNally family. I’ve got 13 girls and one more mouth to feed won’t matter that much.”

**JAKE TILLER THE FARMER:** (*To the villager at his side*)

“The woman’s a saint, if you ask me. The largest brood o’ bairns in Marfield and she’s still willing to take in Fred Larkin Junior. I don’t know where she finds the time to look after them all.”

**A MALE VILLAGER:** (*Replies to Jake Tiller*)

“Heaven only knows where she finds the fingers to count then all! She’d given birth to thirteen at the last count and she’s never to be seen without two in close proximity; one at the breast and the other in her belly.”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Are you sure, Mother McNally? Are you sure; and you eight months pregnant to boot?”

**MOTHER McNALLY:**

“Aye, Mr Mayor; we’ll have him. Besides, Fred Larkin Junior and our Frances are as good as brother and sister anyway. They’re always at each other’s throats.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** (*Loud voice of protest*)

“No way, Mum! There’s no way he’s setting foot in my house. No way! I’ll.....I’ll bust his nose again before I left him poke it across our threshold! Besides, he’s a boy, Mum.....a stupid boy!”

*Frances picks a bogey from her nose and flicks it at Fred Larkin Junior.*

**FRED LARKIN JUNIOR:** *(Loud, angry voice)*

“You’ll not bust my nose again when I’m not looking, McNally Burger! Come near me again and I’ll.....I’ll tie your rubbish hair in knots and swing on your pigtails!”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Spluttering voice)*

“Rubbish...ha...”

**MOTHER McNALLY:**

“That’s enough, Frances McNally! Quite enough! Look to your manners, my girl. Fred Larkin Junior’s just lost both of his parents and sister. The volcano has wiped out his entire family. Where’s your charity, my girl? Now shut it!”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Are you sure about this, Mother McNally? Fred Larkin Junior and your Frances don’t impress me as being prepared to share the same room space. Are you sure you really want to do this; and you pregnant these past eight months?”

**MOTHER McNALLY:**

“Yes I am, Mr Mayor. I’m sure that the boy will turn out alright. We’ll have him!”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Loud voice of protest accompanied by foot stamping)*

“Oh no, we won’t! No! No! No!”

**MOTHER McNALLY:**

“Yes! Yes! Yes, Mr Mayor! Fred Larkin Junior can live with the McNallys. He and our Frances will get on like a house on fire; believe me. They’re like two peas from the same pod. You mark my words, Mr Mayor, after the settling in period, they’ll become the best of buddies. Mark my words!”

**A VOICE FROM THE CROWD:** *(Shouting voice)*

“No wonder you’re always with child, Mother McNally, if you can be so easily taken in by a wanting face.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Temper tantrum protest)*

“Mum, you’ve just ruined my life! I’m being no sister to any stupid boy. He stinks! You let him in our house and.... and..... I’ll move out. You wait and see if I don’t!”

**FRED LARKIN JUNIOR:**

“More room for me then, Spotty! More room for me!”

*Mother McNally grabs hold of her daughter Frances with one hand and takes Fred Larkin Junior from the line with the other. As the trio return to the crowd, both Frances McNally and Fred Larkin Junior start squabbling, pushing and pulling faces at each other. Frances McNally also starts flicking bogies at Fred Larkin Junior.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Thank you, everyone. Thank you. That seems to take care of immediate business.”

**SALLY BUTTIN:** *(A village child)*

“Not quite, Mr Mayor. You’ve forgotten about Douglas the Dragon. Who’s to look after the dragon now that the boy Douglas and his mother were also killed by the volcano?”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Ah.....yes... the dragon! Douglas the Dragon. He’s become so much part of the furniture that I’d completely overlooked his loss.”

*Almost instantly, every child assembled offers to adopt the dragon and says as much.*

**A CHORUS OF VILLAGE CHILDREN:**

“I’ll have him! He can live at our house. I’ll look after Douglas. Let the dragon live with me, Mr Mayor!”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** *(Using calming down gestures of the hand)*

“Now, hold your horses, children. Let’s just slow down a minute. Douglas can’t possibly live with any of you. He’s a dragon; and a growing dragon at that! He’s just too big to live in anyone’s house any more. In short, he can’t live with any one of you and there’s no way he can possibly live with all of you!”

*At this juncture, Granny McNally steps forward and whispers in the Mayor’s ear. The Mayor smiles, nods his head in approval at Granny McNally’s suggestion and then addresses the crowd once more.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Listen, friends. Give heed to the timely suggestion of Granny McNally who has saved the day again by being able to see what has been clearly before our eyes all along. Granny McNally reminds me that as the dragon is loved by all; he should be adopted by all and become the ‘*village dragon*.’”

**A VOICE FROM THE CROWD:**

“But, where shall he live, Mr Mayor, if our buildings be too small to house his huge body?”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Being the village dragon, it is only fitting that Douglas be accommodated at the heart of village life. He will be housed in the Village Square, where he is accessible to all and us to him!”

**A CHORUS OF VILLAGE CHILDREN:**

“Hurrah! Three cheers for the Mayor and Granny McNally. Hip hip hurrah! Hip hip hurrah! Hip hip hurrah! Now let’s go find Douglas and give him the good news.”

*As all the children run off stage in one direction to find the dragon, the rest of the crowd disperse and the curtain drops to prepare for the next scene.*

## **Act Two: Scene Two**

*The Narrator appears before curtain to address the audience and to fill in the circumstances and events, which link the last scene with the next.*

**THE NARRATOR:**

“So Douglas the Dragon was adopted by the entire village and he lived in the Village Square at the centre of Marfield’s affections.”

“In the centre was where all the fun was. In the centre was where all the trouble was. In the centre was where it all happened.”

“Douglas the Dragon grew to be a big part of village life and he felt much loved by all who surrounded him.”

“All went well for the next ten years and life in Marfield turned as it had always done. As one Granny McNally died, there was always a Mother McNally in the wings ready to take

her place in the family hierarchy, and a Frances McNally ready to move up from the status of child to that of 'Mother.' All children born to Mother McNally were always girls, and all girls in the McNally assembly line were naturally named 'Frances.'"

*(More sombre voice)* "Then, something happened to Douglas the Dragon; something that will one day happen to every growing boy and girl here. Douglas grew into a teenage dragon."

*(Lighter and knowledgeable voice)* "Now, let me enlighten you about the world and its teenagers; a greatly misunderstood and unappreciated group in all adult society since time immemorial."

"Not to put too fine a point on it, teenagers spell 'Trouble' with a capital 'T'. Big Trouble! They're big, their stomachs are big, their noises are big and their smells are big! Everything about them makes them too big for their own boots! In time, adults come to view them as '*a big inconvenience*' that's better out of sight and out of mind as much as possible!"

"Don't get me wrong, good people; we still love them. We always will. We still love them, but don't always like them and we rarely understand their ways! Their infernal music drives us to distraction! Their disgusting habits sicken us! Their general untidiness and incessant grunts of disapproval irritate us! Their overall lack of basic hygiene frightens us, and their voracious appetites eat us out of house and home!"

"And yet, we continue to live in hope that one day, the teenager will grow out of their obnoxious ways and become 'like us.' Until they do, however, our desire for peace and quiet leads us to love them better '*from a distance*'. That is why it's always better for parents when their teenagers fly the family nest and set up home in their own pad: not too distant, but not too close!"

"As Douglas the Dragon grew into a teenager, he grew so large that he began to fill up the Village Square by his mere presence. The children no longer had room to play their games. Nobody could get around the dragon or into the shops. When Douglas sneezed, he broke dozens of windows, and when he sat down, his big bottom cracked the cobbles and risked squashing someone to death!"

"Eventually, the Mayor started to receive so many complaints from the villagers that he gave Douglas his marching orders. He told Douglas he was too big to live in the Village Square any longer, and for the safety and convenience of all, he would have to move house to the edge of the village. Douglas reluctantly agreed, but I won't pretend for one moment that he was happy about his move."

*The curtain is raised for the next scene, revealing Douglas the Teenage Dragon whose size and height places the dragon's head level with the thatched roof of his only neighbour's cottage at the edge of Marfield Village.*

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Talking to himself in an angry mood)*



“It’s not fair! It’s just not fair! Who do they think they are, turning me out of the Village Square just because I’m growing bigger? I don’t like it here. It’s boring! It’s a drag! Apart from my only neighbour, who I only see at the start and end of each day, I don’t see anyone anymore! It’s just not the same. It’s dead around here!”

“And besides, since everyone’s stopped feeding me, I’m always starving now. I can still smell the baker’s freshly baked bread every morning but I’m now too far from the Village Square to have his burnt loaves thrown to me. And the only time I see anyone to speak to is when someone travels in or out of the village. It’s just not fair on the edge!”

**PLACARD HOLDER:**

*(Holds up a card to show the audience marked ‘1 Week Later’ to indicate the passing of time)*

*A village child walks towards Douglas and smiles at the dragon as they get closer. Douglas starts to get excited at the prospect of company to break his boredom.*

**FIRST VILLAGE CHILD TRAVELLER:** *(Cheerful voice)*

“Hi there, Douglas. Hope you are well? It’s so nice to see you again.”

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Excited voice)*

“Hi there. Hi! Good to see you. Come over here and talk a while. I want to hear all the village news and gossip. I feel so out of touch living here on the edge of it all. Apart from my neighbour going off to work this morning, you’re the only person I’ve seen all day.”

**FIRST VILLAGE CHILD TRAVELLER:**

“Sorry, Douglas, but I’m in a hurry. I’d love to stop and chat but I can’t. I’ve an errand to run before tea. Next time, perhaps. See you. Bye!”

*The child traveller hurries on by, leaving Douglas mumbling in complaint.*

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Dejected voice).*

“B...bye. It’s just not fair! I’m so bored and lonely out here. Nobody loves me anymore. Nobody wants me. Nobody cares! Life’s a drag! One big, boring, drag! I’ve only been out of the Village Square for a week and it seems forever. It’s just not fair!”

**PLACARD HOLDER:**

*(Holds up a card to show the audience marked ‘2 Weeks Later’ to indicate the passing of time).*

**SECOND VILLAGE CHILD TRAVELLER:** *(Approaches Douglas with a smile).*

“Hi there, Douglas. Nice to see you. Can’t stop. Must dash. Things to do. Things to do!”

*The traveller hurries by, even before Douglas has had the opportunity to answer.*

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(More dejected voice)*

“Hi...Nice to see you too. Good job I didn’t blink.”

**PLACARD HOLDER:**

*(Holds up a card to show the audience marked ‘3 Weeks Later’ to indicate the passing of time).*

**THIRD VILLAGE CHILD TRAVELLER:** *(Runs past Douglas as the words race from the child’s mouth)*

“Hi, Douglas. Can’t stop! Must hurry! Bye!”

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Angry voice as Douglas starts to explode)*

“That’s it! That’s all I will take from this lot! They don’t care about me; not one of them! They don’t love me. The only creature they love is themselves! Just who does that shower think they are? Turning me out of the Village Square and dumping me on the edge of nowhere without so much as a second thought. Just who do they think they are?”

*(Angry and determined)* “Well, if they think I’ll swallow without biting back, they can jolly well think again! If they can’t be bothered stopping to talk..... if they won’t give me the time of day then..... then.....I’ll stop talking to them! See if I care. Hell will freeze over before I talk to that lot again! I’ll show them!”

**PLACARD HOLDER:**

*(Holds up a card to show the audience marked ‘4 Weeks Later’ to indicate the passing of time)*

**FOURTH VILLAGE CHILD TRAVELLER:** *(Approaches Douglas, having decided to visit Douglas with the specific aim of having a long talk with the dragon).*

“Hi there, Douglas. It’s been ages since we last talked. It’s so good to see you again, old friend. How are you keeping, dear friend?”

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Scowling face and loud, angry snort).*

“Huh! Huh! Huh!”

**FOURTH VILLAGE CHILD TRAVELLER:**

“Douglas; why are you behaving like that? Talk to me! Talk properly. What’s all this ‘huh, huh’ about?”

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Scowling face and loud, angry snort).*

“Huh! Huh! Huh!”

**FOURTH VILLAGE CHILD TRAVELLER:** *(Exasperated voice)*

“Be like that if you want to, you nasty dragon. I’ve better ways to spend my time than being a part of your nonsense! See if I care. It’s you who’ll pay the ultimate price if you stop talking properly and start grunting and groaning like an angry teenager.”

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Scowling face and loud, angry snort).*

“Huh! Huh! Huh!”

**FOURTH VILLAGE CHILD TRAVELLER:**

“Granny McNally is always telling us that once we stop trying to talk properly, we soon forget how to talk at all; and she should know. She knows everything. So you grunt if you want to you...you nasty dragon. You grunt. I’m going back to play in the Village Square with someone who’ll appreciate my presence!”

*As the child traveller sets off back to the village, Douglas begins to have second thoughts and decides to call back the child visitor and apologise for his uncivil response. But no sooner than the dragon opens his mouth to speak, the words refuse to come out, leaving Douglas mouthing air like a goldfish out of water. His inability to talk turns his face red, ready to explode. Next the dragon gives a huge sneeze and the curtain comes down to prepare for the next scene.*

## **Act Two: Scene Three**

*The Narrator appears before curtain to address the audience and to provide linking information between the last scene and the next.*

**THE NARRATOR:**

“Once the dragon lost the ability to speak the human language, his Level of frustration and anger increased more and more. Every time he tried to talk, he finished up looking like a bloated goldfish, eating air.”

“One morning after his neighbour had gone to work, Douglas the Dragon started to feel lonely and isolated once more. Then, he started to protest in anger. *‘It’s just not fair!’* were the words he wanted to utter, but couldn’t say.”

“As the dragon’s anger increased, his nostrils began to spit out fire. One of the angry flames flew towards the thatched roof of his neighbour’s cottage and set it alight. Douglas tried to blow out the fire, but his angry breath simply fanned the flames higher! Half an hour later, his neighbour’s cottage had been burnt to the ground.”

“Naturally, the dragon tried to call for help to put out the fire once the dwelling went up in flames, but his inability to sound the words attracted no attention. Unable to either attract attention or put out the fire himself, all that the dragon could do was to watch the cottage burn down.”

“Douglas knew that his house-proud neighbour loved her cottage and he feared what she’d say when she saw its burnt remains. When his neighbour returned home at the end of her working day, all he could do was to look sorry and guilty.”

“He hadn’t meant to burn down her cottage. It had been an accident; nothing more than an unavoidable accident. *‘Surely she will understand this’* Douglas thought.”

“But as the dragon was soon to discover that the fire of anger and the embers of understanding never did make easy bed companions. When anger comes in the window of an English person’s home, all understanding beats a hasty retreat out the back door!”



*The curtain is raised for the next scene, showing Douglas the Dragon at the edge of the village looking very guilty and standing next to the burnt-out cottage of his 60-year-old neighbour who is returning from work. The appearance of fire can be produced by a red glow on the backcloth scenery or strips of varied lengths of red ribbons being blown upwards by a fan to simulate flames.*

**ANGRY FEMALE NEIGHBOUR:** *(Look of utter astonishment).*

“My cottage! My lovely cottage! Where’s my happy home? It was there this morning when I left for work and ... oh no! It’s ... it’s been burnt to the ground in my absence! Oh no! My happy home destroyed.”

*(Tears start to well up)* “That ... that was once my parent’s house. I was born in that cottage 60 years ago and I’ve never lived anywhere else. Now it’s gone. It’s been destroyed, burnt to the ground and turned to ashes. Where shall I live now? Whatever is to become of me? ”

*(The angry neighbour turns towards Douglas with an angry voice).*

“Douglas, where’s my lovely cottage? What’s happened to my happy home? Do you know? Have ... have you had anything to do with its destruction? Are you responsible? Are you?”

*Douglas tries to tell his neighbour that it was 'a little accident' but the words won't leave his mouth and the guilt won't leave his face.*

"You are responsible; aren't you? I can see it in your face. Tell me! Tell me what you did! What happened to my happy home? Go on, tell me instantly!"

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:**

*(The dragon tries to speak and moves his mouth open and shut like a goldfish drawing air, but no sound comes out. His inability to speak makes his face go red with frustration).*

**ANGRY FEMALE NEIGHBOUR:**

"Come on, Douglas, tell me! Don't stand there blowing bubbles. Spit it out, you stupid dragon. Tell me!"

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Red faced and puffing his gills as he tries to speak but cannot).*

**ANGRY FEMALE NEIGHBOUR:** *(In voice of exasperation).*

"That's it, Buster! You've had your chance to explain and blown it! I'm going to see the Mayor. He'll soon sort you out. You'll not pull faces at him. He'll find out what you've done to my happy home, you ..... you arsonist!"

*(The neighbour angrily stamps off the stage and returns with the Mayor who's been interrupted mid-meal and is still halfway through finishing an apple pie).*

"Now, Mr Mayor. There's the culprit; the home wrecker! Now do the job we elected you to do and sort him out. He won't speak to me!"

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** *(Still holding a half-eaten apple pie with one hand while chewing the remains).*

"Douglas, what's ha... happened here? What have you done to your neighbour's cottage? Tell me!"

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(Makes a goldfish mouth with no sound)*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** *(Angry voice)*

“Douglas! Answer me! I’m not talking to myself. Tell me! What have you done? And stop making those foolish fish faces at me. Tell me now!”

**DOUGLAS THE TEENAGE DRAGON:** *(His cheeks bulge up and his inability to speak makes his face redden up like a beetroot ready to explode. Douglas lets out an almighty sneeze of anger, and a fireball shoots out of his nostril and sets fire to the Mayor’s trousers, igniting the seat of his pants.)*

*(The Mayor can pull a red rag from his side and wave it about as he jumps up and down to signify having been set on fire).*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** *(Jumps in the air, drops his apple pie to the ground and puts both hands on his bottom in pain)*

“Oooch! My trousers! You’ve……. you’ve set me on fire you…… you stupid dragon. You’ve set me on fire!”

*(The Mayor runs off stage, jumping and holding the seat of his inflamed pants, to jump in the nearby river. A big splash is heard off stage for effect and the Mayor returns soaking wet having extinguished the fire to the seat of his trousers)*

“That’s your lot, Buster! You’ve had your chance to explain and you’ve blown it! Not only do you burn down your neighbour’s cottage, but you even set fire to me! Making me jump about in a most ‘undignified’ manner. I’m the Mayor! Just what do you think you’re doing? We don’t want your kind round here, you teenage hooligan; you arsonist! Now go! Pack your bags and leave Marfield instantly. You’re exiled! Go!”

*The curtain comes down to prepare for the next scene.*

## **Act Three: Scene One**

*The narrator appears before curtain to address the audience and to provide linking information between the last scene and the next.*

**THE NARRATOR:**

“As Marfield slept that night, ‘Douglas the Teenage Dragon’ left his beloved village to spend the rest of his life in exile. He felt sad, unwanted and unloved. He had no idea where he’d go. He simply didn’t care if he lived or died.”

“The dragon approached the two hills that stood side-by-side on the village edge. He passed ‘The Angry Hill’, heard it snoring and knew that it wouldn’t wake up again for many years.”

“As the dragon approached the next hill, he looked up. ‘*The Hill of Fear*’ was so high that no human had ever reached its top or had dared to climb it. The dragon decided to climb ‘*The Hill of Fear*’, spend the night there and consider what to do in the morning.”

“The dragon slept at the top of ‘*The Hill of Fear*’ that night and he awoke the next morning feeling angry and dejected. Looking down on the Village of Marfield below, he could see its people like dots on the landscape. The children were going to school, adults were going to work and trades people were opening their shops.”

“As he looked down on the villagers, the dragon realised that he was no longer a part of their lives, and this realisation made him angrier and angrier.”

“Douglas roared out in rage and decided there and then that no creature would ever push him around again.”

(*Loud roar*) “‘Never again! Ah ....h. Here I am and here I’ll stay!’ he roared. ‘Nobody will ever push me around again..... Nobody! Ah.....h!’”

“Over the following months, the dragon gathered some huge stones from a quarry in the nearby valley and he built himself the ruin of a castle on top of ‘*The Hill of Fear*’, where he lived for the next 50 years. And because he was never happy, he called it ‘Grumpy Castle’.”

“For the next 40 years Douglas grew into an adult dragon; an unloved and angry dragon who stored up his fiery rage inside. Every wakeful minute of every day would be spent by the dragon looking down on the village below, and roaring his angry outbursts at the villagers who’d exiled him from his happy home and their affections.”

“He constantly stalked all movement below, and if anyone ventured to leave the village alone or at night, Douglas ensured they were never seen again.”

“As the angry dragon stoked up his rage for 40 years, the time eventually arrived when, like the volcano before him, it progressed from belly to mouth and he was ready to explode. He could not contain his anger one moment longer.”

(*In a loud, angry voice*) ‘The angry dragon blew his lid, roared out his wrath and ran down ‘*The Hill of Fear*’ with the fire of vengeance into the Village of Marfield; burning down everything in his path.”

“He burnt down the crops in the fields! He burnt down every house and dwelling he passed! He burnt down every person in sight!”

“When the dragon had razed the village to the ground, he returned to the top of ‘*The Hill of Fear*’ and gloatingly surveyed the blazing destruction he’d caused.”

(*Loud, angry, gloating voice*) “‘Now, that’s no accidental fire like you exiled me for’ he gloated. ‘That was done on purpose! That’s what I call a real fire! A....ah.....ah.....ah!’”

“The villagers of Marfield did the only thing they could, and they got on with their lives in the best way that they knew how. They re-sowed their crops, rebuilt their houses, schools



and business premises and buried their dead. When all this had been done, they found foster homes for any children who'd been left orphaned."

"Meanwhile, the angry dragon watched and waited; and when the villagers had done all this, the dragon exploded once more in rage, ran down '*The Hill of Fear*' and burnt them down again!"

"Time after time, the vengeful pattern of the dragon's destruction was repeated monthly over the next 10 years. Douglas the Dragon became their '*Neighbour from Hell*' and was the highest of all their fears."

*(Pause)*

"Then one day, a stranger visited Marfield. He was a young wizard called '*Yaffe*'. To be precise, it was me in my youth. I remember it well; as though it was yesterday. I'd been walking for many days and arrived in Marfield both hungry and tired."

*The curtain rises for the next scene; a quiet Village Square. A younger version of The Narrator has travelled into the village wearing traditional wizard's clothes with a wand inside his belt and 'without beard' to represent a more youthful look. The wizard knocks on one of the house doors to ask for assistance. The door is opened by a Village Samaritan.*

**WIZARD YAFFE:** *(Friendly in voice)*

"Hello there, friend. Forgive me for disturbing you, but could you help me please? It's been over 15 hours since I last tasted food and drink. Is there an eating establishment nearby?"

**VILLAGE SAMARITAN:** *(Welcoming voice)*

"Welcome to our village, stranger. I was just about to eat my mid- day meal, but I'm sure it will stretch to two hungry stomachs, if you'll be my guest."

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

"How kind of you. I'd be delighted to accept your generous invitation. My name is Wizard Yaffe and I'm so pleased to make your acquaintance."

**VILLAGE SAMARITAN:**

"Nice to meet you, Wizard Yaffe. You'd better come in and be seated and help me eat this hot food before it goes cold. Please, come!"

*Both parties enter the house and the door is closed.*

**PLACARD HOLDER:**

*(Stands before the closed door with a sign that reads '1 Hour Later' to represent the passing of time).*

*The door opens and Wizard Yaffe re-emerges after his meal, escorted by his host.*

**WIZARD YAFFE:** *(Very appreciative and gently patting his full tummy)*

"Thank you, dear friend. Thank you so much. It was generosity itself to share your meal with me. So kind, and me, but a stranger to your door."

**VILLAGE SAMARITAN:**

"Think nothing of it, Wizard Yaffe. Think nothing of it. You're a visitor to our village and it was the least I could do. And besides, I enjoyed your company. Bye now."

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

"Bye, and thank you once again"

*Wizard Yaffe walks on to another house in the Village Square and knocks for assistance. The door is opened by The Mayor of Marfield who is midway through a partially-eaten apple pie.*

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

"Good day, Mr Mayor. I'm Wizard Yaffe, a stranger to your village. I've been walking without sleep for nigh on two days. If I don't get a proper sleep tonight, I'll faint! Is there a hotel or guest house you can direct me to?"

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

"As a matter of fact there is, Wizard Yaffe; two guest houses and two hotels."

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

"Would you kindly point me in the right direction, Mr Mayor?"

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

"I can do better than that, Wizard Yaffe; I can take you there or..... (Pause)..... better still, I can accommodate you overnight myself. In fact, I'll tell you what, Wizard Yaffe. Tonight you can sleep in my bed and I'll bed down in the barn!"

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“That’s far too kind of you, Mr Mayor, far too kind an offer. I couldn’t possibly acc.....”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**(cutting of the conclusion of the wizard’s sentence)

“Think nothing of it, Wizard Yaffe. Think not upon it again! You’re a visitor to Marfield, and in this village we like to treat our visitors as well as possible. Think not about kicking me out of my bed, but instead, consider it as merely a humble man’s way of converting you from stranger to friend. And we can all benefit from having more friends, can’t we?”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“What a wonderful philosophy to life, Mr Mayor, quite wonderful! Do you know, you’re the second person in this village to treat me with such kindness, and I’ve only met two villagers so far? If you’re sure that you won’t mind my presence, I’ll accept your kind offer of hospitality, Mr Mayor; if you insist?”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Oh I do, Wizard Yaffe, I do! Now please come in and I’ll show you your room for the night. I was just about to eat an early evening meal. Would you join me at the table? I was just about to cut into a freshly baked apple pie!”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“No, thank you. I’ve only recently eaten. But thank you so much. So kind. So very kind!”

*Both Mayor and wizard enter the house and close the door. The lights dim to represent the onset of darkness. A short while later, the scene brightens again to represent day break.*

**PLACARD HOLDER:**

*(Holds up a card to the audience marked ‘The Next Morning’ to indicate the passing of time)*

*The door to the Mayor’s house opens and both Wizard Yaffe and the Mayor of Marfield emerge to find most of the adult villagers milling around the Village Square. The villagers have heard about the visiting wizard dressed in strange clothes, and have come to see him in person.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“I hope that you enjoyed both sleep and breakfast, Wizard Yaffe?”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“Yes, indeed, Mr Mayor. Both were thoroughly enjoyable. It was so kind of you to treat me like a family member. So kind! To tell you the truth, I’ve never been treated so kindly by strangers in all my life! If I’ve said it once, I must have said it a hundred times: ‘*You never know what you don’t know until you don’t know it and then know it!*’”

“Before I came to Marfield, Mr Mayor, I never would have believed that a stranger could receive such generosity. I’d like to repay such kindness if I could. Is there anything I can possible do for you, Mr Mayor? Is there any way I can help? Any way at all?”

**A MALE VILLAGER:** (*Excited voice*)

“The dragon, Mr Mayor! The dragon! Tell him about our ‘*Neighbour from Hell!*’”

**A CHORUS OF VILLAGERS:**

“Aye, the dragon! Tell him about the dragon, Mr Mayor!”

**WIZARD YAFFE:** (*Puzzled voice*)

“The dragon? It’s been many a moon since I’ve heard anyone speak of dragons. I thought they’d all be extinct by now.”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Perhaps... perhaps, Wizard Yaffe, you could help us with our angry neighbour who lives on top of ‘*The Hill of Fear*’ at the village edge?”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“What precisely is the problem, Mr Mayor, and how does this angry dragon blight your lives?”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“For the past ten years, Wizard Yaffe, he’s made our lives a misery with his frequent raids and fires of destruction. Now, if you could use some of your magic to turn the dragon into a friendly neighbour so that we can live alongside him peaceably, we’d be ever so grateful.”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“Well I never! Do you know, Mr Mayor, most people in your position would have asked me to kill the dragon or get rid of him, but not you kindly souls. Instead, you asked for magic to change him into a good neighbour.”

“Alas, I do not possess the magic you need, but have no fear, for you possess it in abundance; enough magic to turn any angry dragon into a friendly one.”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** (*Puzzled voice*)

“Us? We possess no magic, Wizard Yaffe. We’re nought, but simple folk!”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“Yes you do, Mr Mayor, believe me, you do. Your magic comes from within you. It sits beneath your very noses and can be found under all your roofs. Send out every adult into your village, scour its streets and bring back every child you can find.”

“However, be diligent in the choice of children you return with. Though all be God’s children, some may be little devils at heart.”

“Only bring me back children with smiles on their faces and love in their hearts. It is a well-known fact that children with dumpy, mumpy and grumpy faces are of no use to anyone. They only make you feel dumpy, mumpy and grumpy!”

“But a smile and a heart of love; well, that’s an entirely different matter. To be endowed with such a blessing as these twin powers is the most potent magic on Earth. Fetch me such children, Mr Mayor, for they possess all the magic you need.”

*All the villagers leave the stage in search of such children as the wizard described, and shortly after return with one each. The crowd of children stand before Wizard Yaffe, and leading them is their self-appointed gang leader, Frances McNally. Frances is slovenly dressed, dirty of face, speaks rudely and is constantly picking her nose and flicking bogies everywhere.*

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

“The Mayor says you want to see us, Wizzy!”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** *(Disapproving voice)*

“Frances, don’t be so rude to our guest! His name is Wizard Yaffe, so please address him properly.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

“Yeh, yeh, yeh! What do you want, Wizzy?” *(Frances flicks a bogey)*

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“The Mayor has told me all about your angry dragon neighbour and has asked to be given some magic to turn him into a friendly neighbour. But I’ve told him that you children possess all the magic that’s needed to bring about such change.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Gobsmacked response)*

“Us! You’re bonkers, Wizzy! We’ve no magic! We’re not wizards! What magic do we possess?”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“The Magic of Love. This is the most powerful magic in the whole universe, Frances, and it is the only magic capable of changing any creature and transforming any situation it touches! Love! The Magic of Love!”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Spluttered response)*

“The Magic of Love! You’re bonkers, Wizzy, stark raving bonkers!”

*(Frances flicks a bogey)*

**WIZARD YAFFE:** *(Smiling face)*

“I know how you presently feel, Frances. Believe me, I do. There was a time, not so long ago, when I was also a sceptic, but that was when I didn’t know what I now know.”

“Listen carefully, children. I want you all to march hand in hand all the way up ‘*The Hill of Fear*.’”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Spluttered response)*

“‘*The Hill of Fear!*’ March up ‘*The Hill of Fear.*’ You’re bonkers, Wizzy! You’re off your trolley, mate! No human has ever climbed that! Besides, if we so much as dare trespass on the dragon’s domain, he’ll frazzle us to cinders! He’ll... he’ll turn us all into McNally burgers!” *(Frances picks her nose and puts the bogey in her mouth and swallows it)*

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“I want you children to march up ‘*The Hill of Fear*’, holding hands and wearing smiley faces.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Spluttered response)*

“Smiley faces! March up the dragon’s hill, holding hands and wearing smiley faces! You’re round the bend, Wizzy! You’ve blown a fuse, mate!”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“I want you children to march up ‘*The Hill of Fear*’, holding hands, wearing smiley faces and singing happy songs.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Spluttered response)*

“Happy songs! March up the dragon’s hill, holding hands, wearing smiley faces and singing happy songs! You’re off your rocker, Wizzy! You’ve completely lost the plot, mate! If the dragon catches us strolling up his hill as though we’re on some picnic outing, it’ll be us that’s swallowed up and spat out! You’ve lost a screw, Wizzy!”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“Listen, children. Do precisely as I say and the dragon won’t harm you. Keep your love focused on the dragon’s anger every step of the way, and I promise you, once you reach the top of the hill, all of his anger will have melted away. Your love will do this. It is your love that will perform this magic.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Uncertain tone of voice)*

“I don’t know about that, Wizzy. Me and the gang will have to pow-wow before we’ll consider signing up to such a risky venture.”

*Frances McNally and all the other children huddle in a circle nearby as Wizard Yaffe and the other villagers wait on. Minutes later, Frances McNally returns to give the wizard their answer.*

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

“We’ve talked it over, Wizzy and.....we’ll do it! Let’s face it; we’ve got nothing to lose either way! If you’re right, then we’ll be okay, and even if you’re wrong, if the angry dragon doesn’t get us today; he’ll only gobble us up next month or the month after! Come on gang, let’s do it!”

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

“Good on you, Frances! Good on all of you, children. Put your trust in ‘*The Power of Love*’ and you’ll not find your magic wanting. Now listen carefully children. Once you start your march up ‘*The Hill of Fear*’, do not pause in stride, do not break your chain of hands and do not stray in smile or stop singing; even for one second.”

“Whatever the dragon throws at you, however angry he becomes, keep constant in your belief that love will win through. Stop, pause or hesitate for even one second and your magic shield will be shattered by the ‘*Power of Doubt*’ that will evaporate your courage, confidence and conviction. Allow this to happen and the dragon’s anger will engulf you in flames and you’ll never be seen again!”

“Courage, confidence and belief in ‘*The Power of Love*’ will enable you to climb ‘*The Hill of Fear*’, all the way to the top and only doubt will stop you dead in your tracks.”

“Now go! Focus your love on the dragon’s anger and you shall melt his anger away. Oh, and by the way, his name is Douglas and he once lived at the heart of your village 50 years ago.”

*All the village children leave the Village Square and walk towards ‘The Hill of Fear’ as the curtain comes down to prepare for the next scene. Behind the curtain, the sound of children singing gets fainter and ever fainter. The Narrator appears before curtain to address the audience.*

## **Act Three: Scene Two**

**THE NARRATOR:**

“As the children climbed ‘*The Hill of Fear*,’ their fear level started to rise and increase with every step they took. The dragon sensed the presence of intruders on his hillside and became determined to blow them to smithereens with a huge fireball of fiery anger from the pit of his stomach.”

*As the curtain rises for the next scene, The Narrator moves to the side of stage from where he can comment on the action taking place centre-stage.*

*The scene on stage reveals the backcloth of ‘The Hill of Fear’. The children have started to march up the hill holding hands, wearing smiley faces and singing a happy song. The ‘moon walk’ can be used to simulate distance moved by the marching children. At the top of the hill, the angry dragon looks down on them as he prepares to blast them to smithereens.*

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:** *(Angry roar)*

“A...h.....h! I’ll kill ‘em! I’ll massacre ‘em! I’ll murder every last one of ‘em! Arrgh! Arrgh!”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Warrior leader’s voice)*

“Don’t stop anyone! Don’t be intimidated by the dragon’s anger! Keep marching, keep holding hands, keep smiling and keep singing! Put your faith in Wizzy and trust in ‘*The Power of Love!*’”

**THE NARRATOR:** *(A grave voice)*

“Douglas released a mighty fire ball towards the marching children; determined to stop them dead in their tracks. The climbing children genuinely feared their days were numbered and that the dragon’s fireball would burn them to ashes.”

*(Softer voice)* “But when the fireball reached the advancing children, instead of incinerating them, something magical happened. The fireball split in two to avoid impact with the children and went ‘wh.....oosh’, around both flanks, leaving the children untouched.”

“The children gasped in utter astonishment as the fireball split in two and flew past them on both sides.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Astonished voice)*

“Christopher Columbus! Did you see that, gang? I told you to put your trust in ‘*The Power of Love*’ and that Wizzy would come up trumps. I told you!”

**FRED LARKIN JUNIOR:** *(Astonished voice)*



“Well, blow me down with a feather duster! That wizard was bang on the mark. He said that our love was more powerful than the dragon’s anger. Well, would you believe it? Blow me down if I don’t speak a word of the truth.”

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

“Keep holding hands, Fred Larkin Junior, or I’ll knock you down you stupid boy. Break ranks and you’ll break Wizzy’s spell.”

**A CHORUS OF VILLAGE CHILDREN:** *(Marching up the hill)*

“We can do it! We can do it! The dragon’s fiery breath can’t touch us! We can do it! We will do it! We shall do it!”

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

“Told you we could, gang. Told you! Now keep marching, holding hands, smiling and singing all the way to the top. We’ll soon be there!”

**THE NARRATOR:** *(Confident voice)*

“With the growth of increased confidence in every stride they took up ‘*The Hill of Fear*’, the marching children sang out louder, smiled broader and marched on stronger.”

“When the dragon saw his huge fireball split in two before the point of intended impact and miss its target, he was overcome with rage. He drew upon every ounce of anger he’d been harbouring for the past 50 years and prepared to blast the intruders off his hillside with every breath his lungs would expel”

*(Softer voice)* “But just before he exhaled his fireball of destruction, the advancing army of marching children had moved close enough for him to recognise their faces and their song. This sudden recognition had the immediate effect of stopping Douglas in his tracks.”

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:** *(Pointing to the faces he recognises)*

“I..... I know that face! I know him! I..... know her! And I know him! I know that song! I..... I used to sing it in the Village Square 50 years ago. I used to sing it with them!”

*(Pointing)* “That’s... that’s Abdul Yesmit! And that’s Rosie Cox; I used to play hide and seek with them, but they always won. And... that’s smarty pants Annie, the cleverest girl in the Village School. And that’s Jim Furrow next to Mary Walsh. And blow me down if that isn’t Fred Larkin Junior out front alongside Frances McNally, who’s still picking her nose and flicking bogies everywhere!”

*Recognising faces from the past, melts the dragon’s anger, leaving him sitting there, looking down on the children like a big, soft pussycat. One by one, the children, headed by Frances McNally, approach Douglas and give him a pat of love as they speak his name endearingly.*

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Patting Douglas as she speaks)*

“We love you, Douglas. We all love you!”

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:** *(Emotionally confused with the dramatic change taking place inside him)*

“What’s happening to me? What’s happening? I’ve lost all my anger. Where has it gone?”

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

“It’s the pats of love, Douglas. The pats of love we gave you. We put our love inside you and it took all the anger out of you. We’ve exchanged your anger with our love.”

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:**

“Love? What’s this love you speak of, and where is it to be found?”

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

“Granny McNally says it’s to be found anywhere, anytime and is within every creature that walks the Earth. Granny McNally says it is ever present for those of us who seek it out, but sometimes we need to look harder, as it is often shy or afraid to boldly show its face. It often hides behind anger. You look puzzled, Douglas.”

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:**

“But...but why...how...how have you all stayed so young despite the passage of 50 years? Not one of you seems to have aged a day since I last saw you 50-years-ago, when we were village playmates!”

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Picking her nose and flicking bogies)*

“I’ve never been your playmate, Douglas. You must mean Granny McNally. She’s often spoken of a dragon playmate she had as a child; a dragon called Douglas, like you.”

**MARY WALSH:**

“And so did my Granny!”

**ROSIE COX:**

“And mine!”

**ANNIE SMART:**

“And mine!”

**SALLY BUTTIN:**

“Mine too!”

**ABDUL YESMIT:**

“My Granddad said he used to ride you like a horse.”

**JIM FURROW:**

“And mine pretended to be driving a tractor as you piggy-backed him.”

**SALLY BUTTIN:**

“You mean dragon-backed, surely!”

**JIM FURROW:**

“Yeh... yeh. Whatever!”

**FRED LARKIN JUNIOR:**

“My Granddad said that he once gave you a black eye, Douglas.”

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:**

“Ah yes. I remember that occasion only too well. But are you sure you weren’t my playmates? How can you possibly look identical to your grandparents? It’s spooky!”

**ANNIE SMART:** (Intelligent voice of a very intelligent child)

“Genetics, Douglas! It’s all down to peas in a pod and genetics. Think of it as the seed of life spread around the garden of mankind. Whereas a plant may die; its seed will live on and grow in identical image to that of its parent.”

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:**

“Ah... I see... or at least I think I do.”

**ANNIE SMART:**

“Even in the shadow of death itself, Douglas, we all face life anew. There is never a time when everything a creature is and stands for dies with them. There is never a time when a body leaves this life without leaving behind them life anew!”

“Even in the experience of our death, our face lives on. As does our culture, religion, beliefs, mannerisms and gestures. Even the way we stand, walk and talk! All these parts of us and mannerisms live on in the family we leave behind on this side of the green sod, even when we inhabit the other side! Genetics; that’s all it is, Douglas. Genetics!”

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:** (*Amazement*)

“Well, I never! I never knew that!”

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

“It’s a funny, old world, Douglas. You never know what you don’t know until you don’t know it and then you know it! Wizzy says that.”

“Anyway, Douglas, we’ve been told that you once lived in the Village of Marfield, and we’d all love it if you came back to live in our world with us. Granny McNally says that

we've so much to do to save the planet. Come back to Marfield with us, Douglas. Help us to save our planet. Please be part of our world again."

**A CHORUS OF CHILDREN:**

"Yes, Douglas, please come back to our world."

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:**

"But... but won't I be too big to fit in? I was turned out of the village 50 years ago for being too big and I'm four times larger now. I'll never fit in. I know I won't."

**FRANCES McNALLY:**

"Oh yes you will, Douglas. We'll find you a place. You're the children's dragon and we want you in our world. Will you come back? We all love you."

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:**

"Yes, I will. I love you too. Do you know, I feel so happy, I feel a song coming on!"

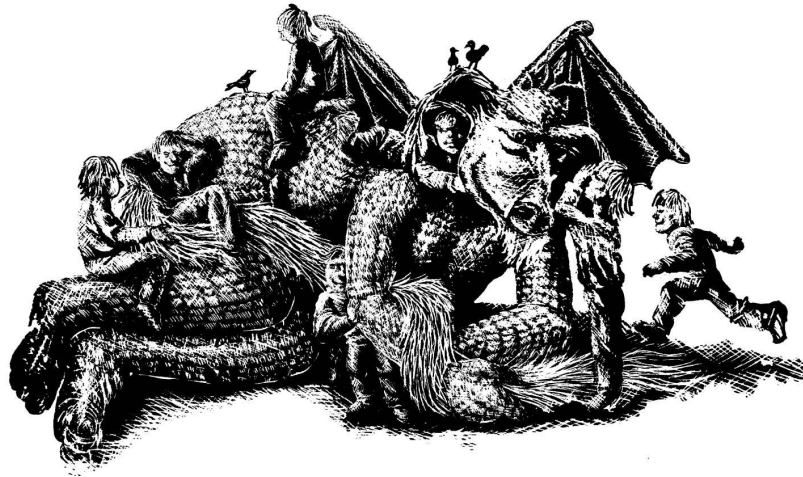
*Douglas starts singing the 'Our World' song and the children join in the chorus. Alternately, the Producer may want to use a different song. The curtain comes down to prepare for the last scene of the play.*

## **Act Three: Scene Three**

*The Narrator appears before curtain to address the audience.*

**THE NARRATOR:**

"And do you know, the children were as good as their word. They told Douglas that they'd find him a suitable place to live among them again, and they did: in the middle of the Village School playground!" He was back in the centre of their world, where he would happily remain for the next 200 years.



*The curtain is raised for the final scene which is in the Village School playground where Douglas the Dragon now lives. The children are about to play a game of hide and seek. The dragon has been designated as the 'seeker' and is completely covered up with a large sheet. To the edge of the school playground, The Mayor of Marfield, Blacksmith Jones and Granny McNally are saying farewell to Wizard Yaffe who is recommencing his travels.*

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Picking her nose and flicking bogies at Fred Larkin Junior)*

"Take that, you stupid boy! Take that, 'Junior'!"

**FRED LARKIN JUNIOR:** *(Angry voice)*

"Do that again, Smelly McNally, and... and I'll bust your fat nose!"

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Defiant response)*

"Yeh... yeh! You and whose army, 'junior'. You couldn't bust a balloon if you poked it with a pitchfork! Come to think of it, I doubt you could lift a pitchfork, 'junior,' you stupid boy!"

**FRED LARKIN JUNIOR:**

"Open your big mouth again, McNally, and I'll lift you off your feet and knock you into the middle of next week!"

**NANCY WISE THE TEACHER:**

"Now then, you two. Stop it! Stop it now before I bang both your heads together! Now play nicely, please. This is a playground, not a war zone."

"Fred Larkin, let go of Frances McNally's pigtails, now! And you stop flicking bogies, Frances McNally. Filthy habit!"

**FRANCES McNALLY:** *(Bossy voice)*

"Come on, everyone! Let's play hide and seek. Douglas is on. No peeking now, Douglas."

*(Frances picks her nose and flicks a bogey towards Douglas)*

**DOUGLAS THE DRAGON:** *(Voice from beneath the sheet covering him)*

"I'll stop peeking, Frances McNally, when you stop making smells downwind, picking your nose and flicking its contents everywhere! One, two, three, four..."

*To the side of the school playground, Wizard Yaffe is preparing to resume his travels and is saying his farewells.*

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:** *(Eating the remains of an apple pie as he speaks)*

"I'm so...s...sorry to see you leave us so soon, Wizard Yaffe. It only seems like yesterday when you arrived. And yet, you've done so much in the brief time you've been in the village. So much! Who would ever have believed that the gentle creature over there playing hide and seek was once an angry monster bent on destruction?"

**GRANNY McNALLY:**

"Yes she was! I can vouch for that, along with her poor mother. I'm so glad that our Frances is learning to let go of all the anger which was eating her up. Why, she could almost pass for 'normal' now if only she could break herself off that filthy habit of picking her nose and flicking her infernal bogies everywhere!"

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

"I was referring to..... Oh never mind. Anyway, Wizard Yaffe, have a safe journey. We'll never forget you and all you've done for Marfield Village. We'll be forever indebted to you."

**WIZARD YAFFE:**

"Thank you, Mr Mayor, but I've done so little to command such gratitude, and far less than what you credit me with. It's your children to whom you owe your thanks and appreciation. It was '*The Power of their Love*' that saved the day and recycled the dragon's anger back into love."

"Never underestimate '*The Power of Love*', Mr Mayor, or the importance that the young will play in all our futures. Though today, as adults, we may rule the roost; come tomorrow, it will be they who hold the reins of influence. Place your trust in the love of your children and '*The Power of their Love*' will prove to be ample reward; as it continues to change for the better, every creature and situation they encounter in our world. Bye, Granny McNally. Bye, Mr Mayor. Bye, Blacksmith Jones."

**BLACKSMITH JONES:**

"Bye, Wizard Yaffe. May the wind be always at your back and the sun smile kindly on you. Click not your heels and you'll keep your feet well shod. Farewell, dear friend."

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Farewell, Wizard Yaffe. You be sure to call our way again.”

**GRANNY McNALLY:**

“God speed, wizard. God speed. Heed my advice and make haste to your next cover point before six this evening, before it starts raining heavily.”

**WIZARD YAFFE:** *(Puzzled voice as he looks up at the clear, blue, cloudless sky)*

“Rain heavily you say, Granny McNally! Are you sure? The sun’s cracking the flags and there’s no hint of a dark cloud in sight!”

**THE MAYOR OF MARFIELD:**

“Take my humble advice, Wizard Yaffe, and ignore the smiling sky. If you are wise, and I’m sure you are, you’ll pay heed to Granny McNally’s forecast. She’s never been known to be wrong in her weather predictions. If Granny McNally says it will rain by six, you’d do well to stay within arm’s length of a good umbrella!”

**WIZARD YAFFE:** *(Shouts across to the playground)*

“Bye, Douglas. Bye, Frances. Bye, everyone.”

*All the children, their teacher and Douglas join the rest of the villagers to wave off Wizard Yaffe as they sing ‘Let it All Out’ to end the play. Alternately, the Producer may want to use a different song.*

## THE END

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### ‘An Introduction to Physical Theatre’

#### What is ‘Physical Theatre’?

Physical theatre is the use of people, their physical actions and gestures, to create, perform or enhance a theatrical experience. In the context of ‘Douglas the Dragon’, many children who have difficulty in taking a more traditional role in a play can become involved in physical theatre. They help interpret the story as a piece of theatre by involving themselves in a variety of ways with the creation of scenery, special effects and interpreting aspects of the plot. Using costumes or ‘props’, or simply their bodies, an individual, or group of individuals, may become a whole dragon, part of a house or the side of a mountain. By working in collaboration, using their actual bodies or props in unison, they can create the physical characteristics or illusion required.

Physical theatre is an excellent means of involving children of all interest, abilities and aptitude, in drama and performance. It is also a very effective method of overcoming the limited means and staging facilities of small schools. The production challenges of

‘Douglas the Dragon’ provide a wide range of opportunities for engagement at all levels of the school community.

Stuart Merry  
Former Headmaster of Emley First School  
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire  
HD8 9RT

### **Songs to Accompany Douglas the Dragon Play**

#### **Song One: ‘Follow Your Heart’**

Lyrics & Composition by Stuart Merry.

Produced by William Forde.

Sung by: F. Carville.

Copyright: Stuart Merry: June, 2006.

#### **Song Two: ‘Spiky Cheer Up’**

Lyrics & Composition by Stuart Merry.

Produced by William Forde.

Sung by: Edward Bowers

Copyright: Stuart Merry: June, 2006.

#### **Song Three: ‘You On My Mind’**

Lyrics & Composition by Stuart Merry.

Produced by William Forde.

Sung by: Kevin Carville.

Copyright: Stuart Merry: June, 2006.

#### **Song Four: ‘Our World’**



Lyrics by John Foyle and William Forde.

Composed by John Foyle (Deceased).

Arranged and Produced by William Forde.

Sung by: Kevin Carville and Emley First School Choir.

Copyright: William Forde: June, 2006.

### **Song Five: 'Let it All Out'**

Lyrics & Composition by Stuart Merry.

Produced by William Forde.

Sung by: Saint Mary's Catholic College Junior Choir, Hull.

Copyright: Stuart Merry: June, 2006.

### **'Follow Your Heart'**

When your heartache you can't hide, When your anger's deep inside,  
Love will find the way. There is a way to heal, Tell me the way you feel,  
Together we'll start a new day.

Open your heart  
And make a new start,  
Take hold your feelings, don't wear a frown.  
Take a new step  
And don't ever let  
Your anger and feelings bring you down.

Anger makes the way seem harder  
Clouds the brightest sky.  
Wipe away your tears of sadness, Hold your head up high.

Open your heart  
And make a new start,  
Take hold your feelings, don't wear a frown.  
Take a new step  
And don't ever let  
Your anger and feelings bring you down.

Sunshine follows every storm cloud, Dries up all the rain.  
Love can light the darkest moment, Lighten every pain.  
I'll say it again.

Take a new step  
And don't ever let  
Your anger and feelings bring you down.  
Sing a new song,  
Journey along,  
Come with us back to Marfield Town.

Follow your heart, the future's brighter,  
Let love lead you on.  
Face your fears,  
Make your load lighter,  
And you'll go on and on.  
And on, and on, and on.

Take a new step  
And don't ever let  
Your anger and feelings bring you down.  
Sing a new song,  
Journey along,  
Come with us back to Marfield Town.

Take a new step  
And don't ever let  
Your anger and feelings bring you down.  
Sing a new song,  
Journey along,  
Come with us back to Marfield Town.

(Fading Away)

Take a new step  
And don't ever let  
Your anger and feelings bring you down.

Sing a new song,  
Journey along,  
Come with us back to Marfield Town.

Lyrics & Composition copyright: Stuart Merry: June, 06.

### **‘Spiky Cheer Up’**

In my home we have four dogs and two cats,  
A pony and a goose and a rat.  
We’re rather too full  
But there’s a place here for you,  
And a frog, though you’re rather too fat.

### **Chorus:**

*So come on now Spiky cheer up,  
Move on into our shack.  
We’ll make a home here for you,  
We’re your fam’ly now, so never look back.*

Every day we’ll find us something to do,  
Somewhere to sleep and to eat.  
But you’d better watch out when our Mum is about,  
‘Cos if she sees you she may give me a clout.

You see, we’ve got four dogs and two cats,  
A pony and a goose and a rat,  
With a frog and you, Spiky, Lummy oh crikey,  
She’ll probably tell you to scat.

### **Chorus:**

*So come on now Spiky cheer up,  
Move on into our shack.  
We’ll make a home here for you,  
We’re your fam’ly now, so never look back.*

No one should live their life all alone;  
Everybody needs a place to call home.  
And when I look in your eyes, hear your dragon's sighs,  
I'll never leave you all on your own.

**Chorus:**

*So come on now Spiky cheer up,  
Move on into our shack.  
We'll make a home here for you,  
We're your fam'ly now, so never look back.*

Everyone needs a pal of their own,  
Everybody needs someone to love.  
So sit yourself down and lose that frown,  
Praise the Lord in Heav'n above.

**Chorus:**

So come on now Spiky cheer up,  
Move on into our shack.  
We'll make a home here for you,  
We're your fam'ly now, so never look back.

Lyrics & Composition copyright: Stuart Merry: June, 06.

**'You On My Mind'**

When I felt I was alone,  
When there was no place called home,  
When I needed someone  
Just to call my own.  
You took time to listen  
To anger's deep despair,  
But the mountain took you  
You're no longer there.

You on my mind,  
Sharing the moments that we found.  
You on my mind,  
You on my mind.  
Days in the sun,  
When we would run,  
Things were new.  
We found the joy sharing our lives.  
Things were so diff..er..ent then,  
Times I could live for again.

You in my heart, now we're apart,  
Where could I go.  
What lies ahead, I should have said  
Things I'd been meaning to say,  
Words I put off one more day;  
Words I'd been meaning and feeling  
And longing to say.

You in my soul, making me new,  
Making me whole.  
I'll never find  
Someone like you.  
You on my mind, yes you on my mind,  
You on my mind  
In... my... heart.

Lyrics & Composition copyright: Stuart Merry: June, 06.

### **'Our World'**

We don't have to fly  
To other planets in the sky,  
We have all we need.  
Nurture all we sow  
And soon a living thing will grow  
From a tiny seed.  
Changes must be faced  
Due to carelessness and waste,  
Let's go green again.

Given half a chance  
We can make this planet dance,  
Be a team again.

**Chorus:**

*Never surrender all the wonder  
And the splendour  
Of our world.  
This is God's garden,  
A beautiful garden,  
Will we ever learn?*

*What are we doing to our world?  
What are we saying to our children?  
If we don't rearrange our world,  
They'll be no future for our children.*

We need actions more than words  
In the wetlands we enjoy.  
Save the disappearing birds,  
Find a nest but don't destroy.  
If we could plant 10,000 trees  
And see them grow,  
And fill the ocean with  
A cleaner river flow,  
And make the air we breathe  
As pure as driven snow,  
We'd all be better off on our world.

Pure organic land where  
Poisoned chemicals are banned,  
There's a need for it.  
Nothing else to spoil  
And no pollution of the soil,  
Let's all go for it.

Making fancy things  
From crocodile and leopard skins,  
We all wonder why.  
Ivory sought for gain,

The reason elephants are slain,  
What a way to die.

**Chorus:**

*Never surrender all the wonder  
And the splendour  
Of our world.  
This is God's garden,  
A beautiful garden,  
Will we ever learn?*

What are we doing to our world?  
What are we saying to our children?  
If we don't rearrange our world,  
They'll be no future for our children.

We experiment and kill  
In our own cosmetic den.  
We cause pain against their will  
To please the vanity of man.  
Within a perfect world  
They'd be no acid rain,  
We'd save our planet  
If only we used our brain,  
With common sense  
We'd build the ozone layer again,  
We'd all be better off in our world.

What are we doing to our world?  
What are we doing to our world?  
This.....is.....our..... world.

Lyrics by John Foyle & William Forde.

Composed by John Foyle (Deceased).

Produced and Arranged by William Forde.

Copyright: William Forde: June, 2006.

## **'Let It All Out'**

Don't hold on to anger, Let it all out.  
Just be like a dragon,  
Give a mighty loud shout.  
I will never hear you  
If you don't ever speak.  
And bellowing like a dragon  
That don't make you a freak.

### **Chorus:**

*Bellow, whisper or blow,  
Tell me all the things  
You really want to let go.  
Words will hurt us longer  
When the feeling's left in.  
So let it all out  
'Co...s I'm Listenin'.*

Say the things you want to,  
Say what's it's about.  
I'll be close beside you  
When you let it all out.  
Come on do some talkin'  
I'm just ready to hear.  
I'll sit here close beside you  
With a listenin' ear.

### **Chorus:**

*Bellow, whisper or blow,  
Tell me all the things  
You really want to let go.  
Words will hurt us longer  
When the feeling's left in.  
  
So let it all out  
'Co...s I'm Listenin'.*



Don't let hurt destroy you,  
When you're bursting to shout.  
You must face your dragons  
'fore you let it all out.  
Get some love inside you,  
Put your anger out.  
Learn to love yourself,  
That's what it's a.....about.

#### **Chorus:**

*Bellow, whisper or blow,  
Tell me all the things  
You really want to let go.  
Words will hurt us longer  
When the feeling's left in.  
So let it all out  
'Co...s I'm listenin'.*

*So let it all out  
'Co...s I'm listenin'.*

Lyrics & Composition copyright: Stuart Merry: June, 06.

#### **Anger Management Steps**

The stages identified below represent the basic structure and outline the process of my Anger Management Programme, where the purpose is to change the excessive aggression of an individual to a healthy and more appropriate response.

The methods used to produce response change are not exclusive, and represent some of the tried and tested successful means of working with angry people.

##### **Stage One:**

Take a baseline analysis. To do this, Identify the aggressive response, its frequency and usual outcome, along with the types of situation in which the inappropriate behaviour occurs. This enables more accurate monitoring of change at different programme stages (e.g. at the start of the programme, midway, programme end and follow up).

##### **Stage Two**

Get the individual to identify and acknowledge major fears, and show them a step-by-step approach of coping with such fears both mentally and practically. Methods can include Positive Self-Talk, Auto-suggestion, Rationalisation, Relaxation Training, Muscle Control, Breathing Exercises, Systematic Desensitisation, Stress Inoculated Training, Rational Emotive Therapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Positive Thinking.

### **Stage Three**

Increase the image, confidence and self-worth of the aggressive person so that they can grow to accept and love themselves, and become more able to express love for others. Identify '*positives*' in their lives and within personal response patterns, and positively reinforce at every opportunity.

### **Stage Four**

When self-worth, increased confidence, love and self-acceptance have been established, the expression of inappropriate anger and aggression is encouraged in a safe and appropriate environment. This is helped by talking anger out, writing it out, acting it out, drawing and painting it out, or by any appropriate vigorously creative activity. '*Relaxation Training, Muscle Control, Breathing Exercises and Posture*' are also helpful ways to sustain improvement, along with the '*Positive Reinforcement*' of significant others and appropriate '*Self-Talk*.' Workers also use '*Role Play, Drama and Behavioural Rehearsal*.'

William Forde, February 2012.

## **Author's Background**

William Forde was born in Ireland and currently lives in Haworth, West Yorkshire, England. He is the father of five children and the author of over 30 published books and a musical play.

He is unique in the field of contemporary children's authors through the challenging emotional issues and story themes he addresses, preferring to focus upon those emotions that children find most difficult to appropriately express.

One of West Yorkshire's most popular children's authors, his books have been publicly read in over 2,000 Yorkshire school assemblies by over 800 famous names and celebrities from the realms of Royalty, Film, Stage, Screen, Politics, Church, Sport, etc. The late Princess Diana used to read his earlier books to her then young children, William and Harry and Nelson Mandela once telephoned him to praise an African story book he had written. Others who have supported his works have included three Princesses, three Prime Ministers, two Presidents and numerous Bishops of the realm. Former Chief Inspector of Schools for Ofsted, Chris Woodhead described his writings to the press as 'high quality literature.'

Forever at the forefront of change, at the age of 18 years, William became the youngest Youth Leader and Trade Union Shop Steward in Great Britain. In 1971, he founded Anger Management in Great Britain and freely gave his courses to the world. Within the next two years, Anger Management courses had mushroomed across the English-speaking world. During the mid-70's, he introduced Relaxation Training into H.M. Prisons and between 1970 and 1995, he worked in West Yorkshire as a Probation Officer specialising in Relaxation Training, Anger Management, Stress Management and Assertive Training Group Work.

He retired early on the grounds of ill health in 1995 to further his writing career, which witnessed him working with the Minister of Youth and Culture in Jamaica to establish a trans-Atlantic pen-pal project between 30 primary schools in Falmouth, Jamaica and 30 primary schools in Yorkshire.

William was awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List of 1995 for his services to West Yorkshire. He has never sought to materially profit from the publication of his books and has allowed all profit from their sales (approx £200,000) to be given to charity.

**Previous Titles include:**

'Everyone and Everything'

'Douglas the Dragon': Book 1, 'Douglas the Unloved Dragon'

'Douglas the Dragon': Book 2, 'Douglas gets Angry Again'

'Douglas the Dragon': Book 3, 'Douglas gets the Sneezes'

'Douglas the Dragon': Book 4, 'Douglas and Desmorelda'

'Douglas the Dragon Omnibus' ( All four Douglas the Dragon stories)

'Douglas the Dragon: Musical Play'

'Sleezy the Fox': Book 1. Sleezy Gets a Second Chance

'Sleezy the Fox': Book 2. Sleezy Becomes an Amazing Scapegoat

'Sleezy the Fox': Book 3. Snoozy Catches Forty Winks

'Sleezy the Fox': Book 4. Gilbert Is Reformed

'Sleezy the Fox Omnibus' (All four Sleezy the Fox stories)

'Annie's Christmas Surprise'

'Annie's Snowman'

'Annie's Pancake'

‘Annie’s Easter Bunny’

‘Annie’s Rainbow’

‘Annie’s Birthday Surprise’

‘Annie’s Music Box’

‘Annie’s Seaside Surprise’

‘Annie and the Bullfrog’

‘Annie and the Magician’

‘Annie’s Kite’

‘Annie’s Bonfire’

‘Action Annie’ (An omnibus of all twelve Annie Books)

‘Our World’ (A collaborative book of environmental stories by William Forde and Kirklees Primary School children)

‘Midnight Fighter’

‘Maw’

‘Butterworth’s Brigade’

‘Nancy’s Song’

‘Tales of Bernard’

‘Fighter’ (A combined book of ‘Midnight Fighter’ and ‘Maw’)

‘Tales from the Allotments’

‘Robin and the Rubicelle Fusiliers’

‘Lost Lucy’

‘Lost Kingdom’

‘Lost’ (A combined book of ‘Lost Lucy’ and ‘Lost Kingdom’)

‘The Valley of The Two Tall Oaks’

‘Indian Dreams Come True’

‘Two Worlds - One Heart’ (A combined book of ‘The Valley of The Two Tall Oaks’ and ‘Indian Dreams Come True’)

‘Bucket Bill’

'One Love, One Heart' (A combined book of 'The Valley of The Two Tall Oaks' and 'Bucket Bill')

'The Bear with a Sore Head'

'Elephants Cry Too'

'Solo and Soloman'

'Bes'

'Bes' (A combined book of 'The Bear with a Sore Head': 'Elephants Cry Too': 'Solo and Soloman': 'Bes')

'Four Crude Dudes and The Land of Hope'

'Two Crude Dames and Horace Catchpole'

'Greed' (A combined book of 'Four Crude Dudes and The Land of Hope' and 'Two Crude Dames and Horace Catchpole')

'The Kilkenny Cat' (a presentational publication for schoolchildren in Falmouth, Jamaica. Written originally as a single book but later revised and incorporated into 'The Kilkenny Cat' Trilogy)

'The Kilkenny Cat: Book One: Truth'

'The Kilkenny Cat: Book Two: Justice'

'The Kilkenny Cat: Book Three: Freedom'