**Buttons (and Cinderella)**

Buttons: Hello boys and girls! (*Waits for audience response. Not a sausage.)* I said hello boys and girls! *(Response.)* Yes, that’s better! Welcome to Hardup Hall. My name’s Buttons, and I’m the main man here. Anything you need here, you ask me. That’s what everyone else does! Do you like the uniform? *(He indicates his costume / uniform.)* I have to wear this all the time, even the hat! *(He is not wearing one and suddenly realises.)* Oh, I’ve done it again. *(He scampers to the wings and his hat is thrown to him.*) I keep forgetting to wear it and I’ll get into terrible trouble if I’m caught without it on. Could you lot help me out. When I come on and say hello and I’m not wearing my hat, can you call out “Button, Buttons, where’s your hat?”. Shall we try that? (*He tries this a couple of times with the audience*.)

 Thanks! Anyway, you’re not seeing the old place at it’s best, unfortunately. The Baron, that’s Baron Hardup, the owner, he’s a little short of cash at the moment, so we’re having a little auction of this and that. And that, and that, and that… Well, it’s his new wife, you see. He fell in love with her beauty, and she fell in love with his bank account. She’s still off on her round the world cruise, spending his money faster than he can make it! I reckon she’s been round the world twice already, just forgotten to get off! Now that would be bad enough, but she’s left us coping with her two horrible daughters, Salmonella and Listeria. They’re not so much spoilt as ruined. They say looks aren’t everything, and they’d better hope so, because they haven’t got any. You won’t find them listed in “Who’s Who?’’. They’re in “What’s that?”

Buttons: (*To the audience*.) Hiya folks!

Audience: Buttons, Buttons, where’s your hat?

Buttons: You think I look fat? That’s not very nice! Oh, my hat yes… thanks guys! *(He nips to the wings and grabs his hat before turning to Cinders.*)

Cinders: Oh Buttons, I’m so excited. I’ve finished all my chores and tonight I’ll be going to the Royal Ball!

Buttons: (*Looking at her in awe and wonderment*.) Cinders, you look beautiful!

Cinders: What me? In this tatty dress? It’s just something I made myself. I’ve just never had the chance to wear it!

Buttons: Well it doesn’t matter who’ll be at the party, you’ll be the prettiest girl there!

Cinders: You are sweet! And you look very smart too…

Buttons: Yes, well as the Baron’s personal butler, I have to look the part. Thought I’d brush the cobwebs off the posh gear. I even bought a new tie…

Cinders: Oh yes, let’s see it.

Buttons: Nah, I had to take it back.

Cinders: Why?

Buttons: It was too tight!

Cinders: Very funny! Oh, Buttons, just think, in a few hours time, I’ll be at the palace! Oh, how lucky I am!

Buttons: You certainly are. But then we must have both had a lucky streak today, because… (*cockily*) … I have just won on the lottery…

Cinders: (Incredulous.) Really?

Buttons: (*Looking very pleased with himself*.) Yup!

Cinders: How exciting, How much did you win?

Buttons: (*Even more pleased with himself*.) Five, zero, zero, zero!

Cinders: Five Thousand pounds!?

Buttons: Well, no actually. Fifty point, zero, zero pence. What shall we spend it on!

Cinders: Oh, Buttons you are daft. Just put it away and save it for a rainy day!

Buttons: You know, that’s what my grandfather used to say. He was always scrimping and saving and when he died he left me a sealed strong box. He said that he’d put something in it for a ‘rainy day’ and that when I really needed it, I should open the box…

Cinders: And did you?

Buttons: Yup! It was a pair of wellies and an umbrella!

Cinders: Oh Buttons! You are silly! What would I do without you around to make me laugh?