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## **THE BILLABONG CIRCUS**

**By Jean Mann & Sean Dawes**

**"Kookaburra" & "Ringtail" Words and Music: Marion Sinclair**

**TIME: Approx 1 hour.**

**THE FIRST PART IS STAGED IN FRONT OF A CURTAIN THAT HAS BEEN PAINTED TO LOOK LIKE A BILLABONG.**

**A REMOVABLE FENCE IS STANDING L.S.**

**A SIGNPOST 'TO CIRCUS' STANDS R.S.**

**WHEN THE CURTAIN IS EITHER ROLLED UP OR DRAWN ASIDE FOR THE SECOND HALF OF THE PLAY IT DISCLOSES A CIRCUS ARENA.**

**A TIGHTROPE WIRE, BALLET BARRE, BALLS, PROP BOX, SEE SAW, JUMPING BLOCK ETC.**

**THERE IS ANOTHER FENCE STANDING L.S. THIS IS USED FOR HIDING NECESSARY PROPS. IT CAN BE PART OF THE CIRCUS RING SURROUNDS, AND PAINTED TO BLEND IN WITH OTHER EQUIPMENT.**

**THE PLAY COMMENCES WITH THE KOOKABURRA ROUND BEING SUNG OFF STAGE. WHEN THE ROUND IS COMPLETED, ONE KOOKABURRA SLOWLY APPEARS ON THE FENCE L.S. KOOK 1 HAS A GOOD PERSONALITY. HE MAKES HIS PRESENCE FELT BY LOOKING ABOUT AND STARING AT THE AUDIENCE. SUDDENLY LAUGHS, THEN LOOKS DOWN BEHIND THE FENCE AND CALLS TO KOOK 2.**

KOOK 1	Come on sleepy head. Wake up.
KOOK 2	(A SLEEPY VOICE FROM BEHIND THE FENCE) I am awake.
KOOK 1	You don't sound very awake. And you look as if you are still asleep.
KOOK 2	(SLOWLY APPEARS ON THE FENCE AND IS A LITTLE GRUMPY) How could anybody sleep with you making so much noise.
KOOK 1	(LAUGHS AGAIN AND KOOK 2 FALLS BACKWARDS OFF THE FENCE. KOOK 1 CEASES LAUGHING AND LOOKS DOWN BEHIND THE FENCE) Come up here and talk to me.

KOOK 2 (FROM BEHIND FENCE) Only if you promise not to be so noisy.

KOOK 1 I was only laughing.

KOOK 2 (APPEARS ON FENCE AGAIN) I can't see anything to laugh about.

KOOK 1 It's a lovely day. (KOOK 2 IS NOT IMPRESSED)  
Did you hear the singing?

KOOK 2 I heard it.

KOOK 1 Don't you like it?

KOOK 2 I think it's silly. Listen to the words.  
(SINGS THE FIRST TWO LINES IN A DEEP, DISGUSTED VOICE)  
Kookaburra sits on an old gum tree.  
Merry, merry King of the bush is he.  
(STOPS AND LOOKS DOWN AT FENCE)  
This is only an old fence, and I can't see anything to be merry about.  
So, why laugh?

KOOK 1 (BRIGHTLY) You could make out it was a gum tree.

KOOK 2 A gum tree! This old fence. You're Kooky.

KOOK 1 Kooky! (THIS AMUSES KOOK 1 AND HE LAUGHS AGAIN.  
KOOK 2 FALLS BACKWARDS OFF THE FENCE.  
KOOK 1 STOPS LAUGHING AND LOOKS DOWN AT KOOK 2)

KOOK 2 (OUT OF SIGHT) Will you stop laughing?

KOOK 1 Sorry. Please come back.

KOOK 2 Only if you promise not to laugh.

KOOK 1 But the song tells us to laugh.  
(BREAKS FORTH INTO LAST TWO LINES OF SONG.  
THE SINGING IS IN STRONG CONTRAST FROM KOOK 2)  
Laugh Kookaburra, laugh Kookaburra,  
Gay your life must be.

KOOK 2 (APPEARS BACK ON FENCE) Ugh!

KOOK 1 Doesn't that song make you feel happy?

KOOK 2 No.

KOOK 1 Not just a teeny weeny bit?

KOOK 2 It is very dull around here. I would laugh and I might even sing

if I could find something to laugh about.

KOOK 1

Oh!

KOOK 2

I don't know why I let you talk me into coming here.

KOOK 1

Have you forgotten about the circus? We came to see the circus.

KOOK 2

The circus doesn't start until tonight. I might be too tired by then.

KOOK 1

We could go now and see them get ready.

KOOK 2

I suppose we could.

KOOK 1

There is always something happening when a circus comes to town.

KOOK 2

(LOOKING TOWARDS L.S.) Something is happening over there.

KOOK 1

Where?

KOOK 2

There. It's coming towards us. What is it?

KOOK 1

Oh! It is Wallaby. Good. I like Wallaby.

KOOK 2

The bumblefooted Wallaby?

KOOK 1

Yes. The one who keeps tripping over.

KOOK 2

Then we might stay for awhile. We might be able to have some fun.

KOOK 1

Don't tease him too much. He's really very nice.

KOOK 2

Whatever is he doing?

(THE KOOKABURRAS ARE STILL LOOKING TOWARDS L.S.  
AS WALLABY CAN BE HEARD APPROACHING)

WALLABY

(OFF STAGE) One, two, three, hop. (VOICE GETTING  
NEARER)  
One, two, three, hop.

(THE KOOKS LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND THEN TURN  
TOWARDS L.S. AS WALLABY ENTERS. HE IS CARRYING  
AN OVERNIGHT BAG AND IS ENDEAVOURING TO SKIP  
WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS)

One, two, three, hop. One, two, three, hop.

KOOK 2

(LAUGHS AND IN CONSEQUENCE WALLABY GETS A  
FRIGHT AND TRIPS OVER)

KOOK 1

(LOOKS AT KOOK 2 AND SHAKES HIS HEAD.  
KOOK 2 STOPS LAUGHING)

WALLABY

(IS STILL ON THE GROUND. HE RUBS HIS KNEE AND

LOOKS UP AT THE KOOKABURRAS)

Why did you laugh?

(THERE IS A SILENCE AS THE KOOKS LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER AND THEN BACK TO WALLABY.

THEY LOOK VERY INNOCENT)

I know you can talk. I've heard you.

(STILL SILENCE. THE SAME ACTION AS BEFORE.

THEY LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER AND THEN AT WALLABY)

WALLABY

(MANAGES TO STAND UPRIGHT BY JERKING THE BACK OF HIS COLLAR. HE HAS FALLEN OVER SO MANY TIMES HE HAS PERFECTED THIS METHOD OF GETTING UP)

Oh well. If you are not going to speak to me I may as well be on my way. (PICKS UP HIS BAG AND MOVES C.S.)

KOOK 2

(NOT IN HIS NORMAL VOICE BUT IN A HIGH PITCHED SQUEAKY TONE.) Where are you going, Wallaby?

WALLABY

(IS STARTLED. HE TURNS AROUND QUICKLY AND OVERBALANCES. THIS TIME BOTH KOOKS LAUGH)

It isn't funny. You wouldn't like to keep falling over.

(HE RUBS HIS LEG, OPENS HIS OVERNIGHT BAG AND TAKES

OUT A LARGE BAND AID BOX. ROLLS UP THE LEG OF HIS TROUSERS AND THERE ARE BANDAIDS STUCK EVERYWHERE. HE ADDS ANOTHER. THE KOOKS ARE LOOKING AT HIM IN SURPRISE. WALLABY ROLLS DOWN HIS TROUSER LEG, LOOKS UP AT THE KOOKABURRAS AND GRINS)

KOOK 1

All better? (WALLABY LAUGHS AND THE KOOKS DECIDE TO HAVE A CHAT) Are you going to the circus, Wallaby? (WALLABY NODS AND GETS UP IN HIS OWN PECULIAR WAY)

KOOK 2

Are you going to be a clown?

WALLABY

(IN A DETERMINED VOICE AND LOOKING DIRECTLY AT THE KOOKABURRAS) I am going to be an acrobat.

KOOK 2

An acrobat?

KOOK 1

You could never be an acrobat, Wallaby.

KOOK 2

You are a bumblefoot.

WALLABY

That isn't a very nice thing to say.

POSSUM

(SUDDENLY A VOICE CAN BE HEARD OFF STAGE.

IT IS MISS POSSUM. SHE IS SINGING.

WALLABY AND THE TWO KOOKS LOOK TOWARDS R.S)

POSSUM                    I can see in the dark tra la  
                               And I can see in the night.  
                               I can walk in the dark tra la.  
                               But find it hard when it's light.

POSSUM                    (AS POSSUM ENDS THIS VERSE SHE ENTERS R.S. AND  
                               ALMOST BUMPS INTO THE SIGN POST. SHE JUST STOPS IN  
                               TIME AND ENDEAVOURS TO READ THE NOTICE BY  
                               GETTING VERY CLOSE TO IT. AFTER SATISFYING  
                               HERSELF THAT SHE IS GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION ...  
                               WHICH SHE ISN'T ... SHE PIVOTS, SKIPS, AND  
                               COMMENCES TO SING AGAIN)  
                               I can run in the dark tra la,  
                               And I can skip in the night.  
                               I can hunt in the dark....  
                               (AT THIS POINT POSSUM ALMOST BUMPS INTO WALLABY  
                               WHO HAS SMARTLY STEPPED BACKWARDS TO AVOID A  
                               COLLISION, BUT HE FALLS IN THE EFFORT.  
                               POSSUM'S VOICE TRAILS OFF WHEN THIS HAPPENS) .. .tra  
                               la, but find it...  
                               (GOING TOWARDS WALLABY TO HELP HIM GET UP) I am  
                               so sorry. Are you all right?  
                               (SHE OFFERS HER HAND TO HELP BUT IT IS OBVIOUS  
                               SHE  
                               CANNOT SEE VERY WELL. HER HAND IS NOWHERE IN  
                               THE  
                               VICINITY OF WALLABY'S OUTSTRETCHED HAND.  
                               THE KOOKS LAUGH AT THIS AND WALLABY GETS  
                               HIMSELF UP IN HIS OWN PECULIAR WAY)

WALLABY                Don't take any notice of them. But why don't you look where you're  
                               going?

POSSUM                    I am sorry. I didn't see you.

WALLABY                Well, you wouldn't, would you? I mean ... how would you be able  
                               to see anybody or anything, if you always dance about like that?

POSSUM                    I love dancing. (DOES ANOTHER TWIRL)

WALLABY                But you can't always dance. Let me see you walk in a straight line.

POSSUM                    (IMMEDIATELY WALKS BACKWARDS IN A STRAIGHT  
                               LINE)  
                               See. There you are. I'm walking in a straight line.  
                               (THE KOOKS ARE DOING SOME BUSINESS HERE OF  
                               LOOKING AT ONE ANOTHER AND THEN AT POSSUM AND  
                               WALLABY. THEY DO NOT SPEAK)

WALLABY                (AMAZED) No, you're not. You were walking backwards.

POSSUM I know. (WAGGING HER FINGER AT WALLABY)  
But it was a straight line.  
(THEY BOTH LAUGH AND AT ONCE BECOME FRIENDS)

WALLABY What's your name?

POSSUM They call me Miss Possum. You may call me Possum.

WALLABY My name is Wallaby.  
(THEY SHAKE HANDS WITH A LITTLE DIFFICULTY  
BECAUSE ONCE AGAIN POSSUM'S HAND IS IN THE  
WRONG DIRECTION)

Where are you going, Possum?

POSSUM I am going to the circus.

WALLABY To the circus? You are going the wrong way?  
(THE KOOKS NOD)

POSSUM (PUZZLED) But I read the sign post.

WALLABY I know, but the arrow is pointing that way. (INDICATES)

POSSUM Oh!

WALLABY Can't you see very well?

POSSUM Not in the daytime. (THEN BRIGHTENING) I can see in the night  
(THEN DESPONDENT) But that doesn't help in the daylight.

WALLABY No. I suppose it doesn't. (AS AN AFTER THOUGHT)  
Why are you going to the circus?

POSSUM I want to be a dancer.

WALLABY (EXCITEDLY) In the circus? (POSSUM NODS)  
I am going to the circus, too. I want to be an acrobat ... or a tight  
rope walker.

(THIS IS TOO MUCH FOR THE KOOKS. THEY LAUGH AND  
WALLABY RUSHES AT THE FENCE, TRIPS OVER, AND THE  
KOOKS FALL OFF THE FENCE BACKWARDS, STILL  
LAUGHING)

POSSUM Those birds are very cheeky.

WALLABY (PICKS HIMSELF UP) They are probably right. I could never be  
an acrobat. I don't know my right foot from my left.

POSSUM (ASTOUNDED) You don't know your right from your left?

WALLABY That's right. (WAVES HIS RIGHT HAND AS A GESTURE)

POSSUM Yes, you do.

WALLABY                    No, I don't.

POSSUM                    But you do. You just said ... that's right.  
(WAVES HER RIGHT HAND)

WALLABY                    I was only answering your question. You said, Don't you know your  
right hand from your left. And I said, that's right.  
(WAVES RIGHT HAND AGAIN).

POSSUM                    That's it. Don't you see? This is your right hand.  
(WAVES HER RIGHT HAND)

WALLABY                    No, it isn't.

POSSUM                    But it is.

WALLABY                    No, Possum. It is YOUR right hand.  
(POINTING TO POSSUM'S HAND)

POSSUM                    I know this is MY right hand. (POINTING TO WALLABY'S  
RIGHT HAND) But that is YOUR right hand.

WALLABY                    Oh! Now I see. That's right. (WAVES RIGHT HAND)  
Ha. Ha. This is my right hand. (THEN SADLY) But what about my  
feet? My hands aren't bumblefooted. It's my feet. They are  
bumblefooted.

POSSUM                    We can easily fix them.

WALLABY                    You can?

POSSUM                    Of course. I will teach you to dance.  
(DURING THE ABOVE CONVERSATION THE KOOKS HAVE  
RETURNED TO THE FENCE AND HAVE BEEN LISTENING  
TO  
EVERYTHING, GIVING APPROPRIATE LOOKS TO ONE  
ANOTHER. WHEN THEY HEAR THE LAST REMARK THEY  
START TO LAUGH. POSSUM LOOKS STERNLY IN THE  
DIRECTION OF THE KOOKS)  
Enough of that.  
(THE KOOKS IMMEDIATELY CEASE LAUGHING)

WALLABY                    Dance! Possum, nobody could teach me to dance.  
(THE KOOKS SHAKE THEIR HEADS)

POSSUM                    (NOT TO BE DAUNTED) We'll start with marching.

WALLABY                    I don't think my feet will march.  
(THE KOOKS TEND TO AGREE)

POSSUM                    Of course they will. You've never tried, have you?  
(WALLABY SHAKES HIS HEAD)

Then watch me very carefully.

(TURNS TOWARDS THE AUDIENCE AND WALLABY DOES LIKEWISE. PLACES HER LEFT FOOT FORWARD AND CHANTS)

POSSUM Put your left foot in and your left foot out.  
Put your left foot in and shake it all about.  
Now, you do it.

WALLABY (PLACING HIS LEFT FOOT FORWARD)  
Put my left foot in and my left foot out.  
Put my left foot in and shake it all about.

POSSUM Good. Now your right.

WALLABY (STILL WAVING LEFT FOOT) This is my left foot, not my right.

POSSUM Oh dear! Don't start that all over again. Put your right foot in.

WALLABY Oh! (LAUGHS. THE KOOKS START TO LAUGH ALSO)

POSSUM (LOOKS STERNLY AT THE KOOKS)  
There is no need for you to get funny.  
(THE KOOKS CEASE LAUGHING)

WALLABY Will you do it with me Possum? I feel a bit silly doing it on my own.

POSSUM All right Wallaby.

TOGETHER Put your right foot in and your right foot out.  
Put your right foot in and shake it all about.

POSSUM Now you can march.

WALLABY (ASTOUNDED) March! How?

POSSUM It's easy. I'll show you. (POSSUM STARTS MARCHING)  
Left, right, left, right, left, right, left. See?

WALLABY Do you really think I could?

POSSUM You can only try. If you don't try now, you will never do it.

WALLABY (LOOKS AT THE KOOKABURRAS. SHAKES HIS FINGER AT THEM) And don't you dare laugh. (THE KOOKS LOOK INNOCENTLY AT ONE ANOTHER AND SHAKE THEIR HEADS)

POSSUM Don't take any notice of them. Let's start.  
(POSSUM DOESN'T MOVE. SHE GIVES WALLABY THE SIGNAL TO COMMENCE AND CALLS) Left, right, left, right, one, two, three, hop, left, right, left, right, one, two, three, hop.  
(EXCITEDLY) You've got it. You've got it. (WALLABY KEEPS MARCHING AND THE KOOKS ARE ENJOYING THE



PERFORMANCE)

WALLABY            You know I think you're right.  
(RIGHT FOOT COMES DOWN ON 'RIGHT'. REPEATS)  
You know I think you're right. (THIS TIME WALLABY'S LEFT  
FOOT COMES DOWN ON THE WORD 'RIGHT'. HE STOPS  
AND WAVES HIS LEFT FOOT IN THE AIR) No, this is my left.

POSSUM            You see. It is easy. You know your right foot from your left and you  
can march without falling over.

WALLABY            (WALKS TOWARDS POSSUM) Thank you Poss.....  
(AND IMMEDIATELY TRIPS OVER. QUICKLY GRABS  
HIMSELF BY THE BACK OF THE NECK OR COLLAR AND IS  
UPRIGHT IN ALMOST AN INSTANT. LAUGHS) Or am I?

POSSUM            Don't worry. You can't expect to learn everything at once.  
You at least know your left from your right, but I still can't see very  
well in the daytime.

WALLABY            And you can at night?

POSSUM            Yes. All possums can see very well in the night.

WALLABY            I think I've got an idea.  
(WALLABY OPENS HIS OVERNIGHT BAG AND TAKES OUT  
A BANDAGE)

POSSUM            What are you going to do with that?

WALLABY            I am going to blindfold you.

POSSUM            Blindfold me!

WALLABY            Yes. Blindfold you.  
(THE KOOKS LOOK AT EACH OTHER IN SURPRISE)

POSSUM            Whatever for?

WALLABY            Because you might think it is night time.

POSSUM            (DUBIOUSLY) Oh. I don't know about that.  
Do you think it will work?  
(THE KOOKS SHAKE THEIR HEADS)

WALLABY            I can't promise. We can only try.  
(POSSUM NODS A RELUCTANT APPROVAL AND WALLABY  
BLINDFOLDS HER. POSSUM PUTS OUT HER HAND BUT  
DOESN'T MOVE) Go on, Possum. Walk.

POSSUM            But I can't see.

WALLABY            Just think it is night time and walk forwards.

POSSUM But it is day time. And I can't see very well in the day time.

WALLABY Try dancing.

POSSUM I'm frightened. I could fall over. Please take off my blindfold Wallaby.

WALLABY Oh dear. (STARTS TO UNTIE THE BANDAGE, THEN GETS ANOTHER IDEA) I know what we can do. You can follow me. Place your hand on my shoulders.  
(WALLABY HELPS POSSUM WITH MUCH DIFFICULTY. AT LAST THEY ARE READY AND FACING R.S.) Right?  
(POSSUM IMMEDIATELY PUTS HER RIGHT FOOT FORWARD AND KICKS WALLABY IN THE LEG) Oh!

(THE KOOKS START TO LAUGH, BUT WHEN WALLABY SHAKES HIS FINGER AT THEM, THEY STOP. WALLABY RUBS THE SORE SPOT ON HIS LEG)

POSSUM Sorry Wallaby. I thought you said, Right.

WALLABY I did. But I didn't mean you to move. I'll tell you when I am ready. Right? (POSSUM KICKS WALLABY AGAIN AS SHE MOVES FORWARD WITH HER RIGHT LEG)  
Oh, Possum. (RUBS HIS LEG AGAIN)

POSSUM Sorry, Wallaby. It is so dark. I am a little confused.

WALLABY That's all r..... (PLACES HAND TO MOUTH JUST IN TIME)  
That's O.K. Possum. Are you ready to march?

POSSUM I think so.

WALLABY Don't be frightened. Just raise your leg to commence marching and follow me. Ready?  
(WALLABY RAISES HIS RIGHT LEG AND POSSUM RAISES HER LEFT. THEY PAUSE WITH LEGS IN THE AIR)

THE KOOKS MAKE AN 'AH AH' SOUND.  
WALLABY LOOKS AT THEM. THE KOOKS LOOK BACK.  
WALLABY POINTS TO HIS RIGHT LEG.  
THE KOOKS SHAKE THEIR HEADS.  
WALLABY TURNS HIS HEAD AND SEES POSSUM HAS HER LEFT LEG RAISED.  
WALLABY PLACES FINGER ON HIS CHIN AND THINKS)

Possum, why have you got your left foot raised?

POSSUM Aren't we going to march?

WALLABY Yes.

POSSUM You always commence marching with your left leg.

WALLABY You do? (THE KOOKS NOD)

POSSUM Always. Wallaby, my left leg is aching. When are we going to start?

WALLABY (STANDS UPRIGHT)  
 Sorry Possum. We'll start now. Ready?  
 (POSSUM NODS AND THE KOOKS LOOK INTERESTED)  
 Left, right, left, right, left, right, one, two, three, hop.

(POSSUM AND WALLABY MARCH AROUND THE STAGE  
 AND ALL APPEARS TO BE SUCCESSFUL WHEN WALLABY  
 HEARS FOX CALLING IN THE DISTANCE)

FOX (OFF STAGE) Rabbit, Rabbit. Rabbit.

WALLABY (STOPS MARCHING. POSSUM CONTINUES AND IN  
 CONSEQUENCE THEY FALL IN A HEAP.  
 THE KOOKS QUICKLY DISAPPEAR WHEN THEY HEAR  
 FOX) Sorry Possum.

POSSUM Why did you stop? I was just beginning to enjoy myself.

WALLABY Sssh! Listen.  
 (FOX CAN BE HEARD CALLING RABBIT IN HE DISTANCE)

POSSUM Why?

WALLABY Can't you hear somebody calling?

POSSUM No.

WALLABY (LOOKS AT POSSUM AND REALISES THE BANDAGE IS  
 COVERING HER EARS. HE GETS UP IN HIS OWN SPECIAL  
 WAY AND UNTIES THE BANDAGE)  
 Now can you hear?  
 (AGAIN FOX CAN BE HEARD CALLING RABBIT IN THE  
 DISTANCE)

FOX Rab-bit. Rab-bit. Rab-bit.

POSSUM (BLINKS. SHAKES HER HEAD. LISTENS, THEN NODS)  
 Yes. It sounds like Fox, the Ringmaster at the circus.  
 (POSSUM IS STILL ON THE FLOOR)

WALLABY He doesn't sound very pleased.

POSSUM I wonder why he is calling Rabbit?

WALLABY I have no idea.

(FOX CAN BE HEARD CALLING AGAIN, BUT STILL IN THE DISTANCE) Look. The Kookaburras have gone. I wonder if they are frightened of Fox..

POSSUM I shouldn't think so. Fox isn't all that bad.

WALLABY Isn't he?

POSSUM Not really.

WALLABY Then it is a shame. I was just beginning to like those two birds.

(POSSUM IS PICKING HERSELF UP FROM THE FLOOR WHEN KOOK 2 POPS UP QUICKLY ON THE FENCE AND GIVES A SHORT LAUGH. WALLABY TURNS AND FALLS OVER)

WALLABY Oh dear. Just when I said I was beginning to like you ... you laugh and make me fall over.  
(PULLS HIMSELF UP AGAIN BY HIS OWN METHOD)

KOOK 1 (JOINS KOOK 2 ON THE FENCE)  
Sorry. He didn't mean to frighten you.

WALLABY Well, he did.

KOOK 1 He came to tell you something.

POSSUM (IS RATHER SURPRISED AS SHE HASN'T HEARD THE KOOKS SPEAK BEFORE) I didn't know Kookaburras could speak.

KOOK 2 That's because we go to sleep in the night and you go galloping all over the place.

POSSUM Sorry. Am I very noisy?

KOOK 2 Sometimes.

POSSUM Oh dear.

WALLABY Don't worry about it, Possum. You romp in the night time and they laugh in the day time.

KOOK 2 Haven't you heard of Ringtail? Ringtail, the song?

POSSUM (SHAKES HER HEAD) No

KOOK 2 Then I'll sing it to you.  
(KOOK 1 PLACES HIS HAND OVER HIS EYES)

KOOK 2 (SINGS)  
There's a ringtail possum on a moonlit roof

Who's out for hours of fun;  
With his lively cousin from the tree next door  
He'll romp till night is done.  
I will vainly try to close a sleepy eye  
Through the din so din and long,  
And ere he snuggle in his hidey-hole  
Sing this reproachful song:  
Why must you romp on MY roof, Ringtail?  
Why must you romp on MY roof, Ringtail?  
If you need spaces for non-stop races,  
Possum, why choose MINE?

POSSUM	Oh, my goodness.
KOOK 1	(POLITELY) I've heard another verse.
WALLABY	I don't think Possum wants to hear it.
KOOK 1	It's quite nice really.
WALLABY	Really?
KOOK 1	Would you like me to sing it? (WALLABY LOOKS AT POSSUM)
POSSUM	Yes, please.
KOOK 1	Should my rovings carry me across the sea Where Ringtails never roam, And in lonesome moments as the sun sinks low I dream of home sweet home - In my ears will echo all the merry sounds Of the Bush folks' moonlight glee, And in the wakeful silence as the night wears on My heart will sing to me. Do come and romp on MY roof, Ringtail, Do come and romp on MY roof, Ringtail, If you need spaces for non-stop races, WHY NOT RACE ON MINE?
WALLABY	(CLAPS) See Possum, not everyone minds you romping about at night.
POSSUM	I'll try and be more quiet. (IN THE DISTANCE WE CAN HEAR FOX AGAIN CALLING RABBIT) I can hear Fox again.
KOOK 2	I nearly forgot. That's what we came back to tell you. Rabbit is running away from Fox.
WALLABY	Who is Rabbit? And why is he running away?
KOOK 2	We heard.....

RABBIT (BEFORE KOOK 2 CAN SAY ANY MORE, RABBIT RUSHES IN FROM R.S. WEARING A HAT AND A LONG COAT. IT IS A GARISH OUTFIT. HE IS LOOKING BACKWARDS TO SEE IF ANYONE IS FOLLOWING. THE KOOKS FALL OFF THE FENCE. RABBIT IS HOT AND FLUSTERED AND DOESN'T SEE EITHER POSSUM OR WALLABY. HE TRIPS OVER THEM. NATURALLY HE GETS A FRIGHT WHEN HE FINDS HIMSELF IN A HEAP ON THE FLOOR. EVERY TIME HE SPEAKS HE CHANTS THE WORDS IN A SING SONG VOICE. THIS IS PARTLY EMOTIONAL AND PARTLY THROUGH OVERWORK)

Oh dear. I am so sorry. You gave me such a fright.

WALLABY (WHO HAS HAD A BIT OF A FRIGHT HIMSELF, COPIES RABBIT AND CHANTS TOO) And you gave us a fright.

POSSUM (THE CHANT CATCHES ON) We all have had a fright.

RABBIT I thought you were old Fox. (THEY ALL CLAMBER TO THEIR FEET WITH WALLABY DOING IT IN HIS OWN SPECIAL WAY)

WALLABY (WALLABY AND POSSUM CONTINUE TO CHANT THE SAME AS RABBIT) Are you frightened of Fox?

RABBIT No. Not REALLY frightened. But my goodness I am hot.

WALLABY Let me try and help you.

(THE KOOKS POP UP ON THE FENCE AGAIN AND LOOK ON WITH INTEREST. WALLABY ENDEAVOURS TO TAKE OFF RABBIT'S COAT WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS)

POSSUM Here. Let me help.

(THE THREE ARE GETTING INTO A TANGLE AND THE KOOKS LAUGH. POSSUM LOOKS AT THEM STERNLY AND THEY STOP)

POSSUM Can't you birds behave. This is no laughing matter.

RABBIT (RABBIT IS REALLY FRIGHTENED) Where did they come from?

Are they friends of Fox? (THE KOOKS SHAKE THEIR HEADS. THE COAT IS NOW OFF AND WALLABY IS STROKING IT)

POSSUM They are talking Kookaburras.

RABBIT Talking Kookaburras! They haven't said a word.

WALLABY They only talk when they want to ... sometimes they sing.

RABBIT Sing! Would you like to join the circus?  
(THE KOOKABURRAS SHAKE THEIR HEADS AGAIN)

POSSUM Why were you running away?

RABBIT Because I would like to be on my own for awhile.

WALLABY On your own!

POSSUM Why do you want to be on your own?

WALLABY I don't like being on my own.

RABBIT But I am never on my own.

WALLABY & POSSUM Never?

RABBIT Well, hardly ever.

WALLABY Why are we talking like this?

POSSUM Yes. Why are we talking like this?

WALLABY Who started it?

POSSUM He did. (POINTS AT RABBIT)

WALLABY So he did.

POSSUM (STILL CHANTING) Why do you talk like this?

RABBIT It is all because of Fox.

WALLABY (ALSO CHANTING) All because of.....(STOPS WHEN REALISING HE IS STILL CHANTING. CONTINUES IN HIS NORMAL VOICE) Oh dear. I mean. All because of Fox!

POSSUM (ALSO SPEAKING NORMALLY) What has Fox got to do with you (BACK TO CHANT) talking like this?

WALLABY And why are you wearing this coat?

RABBIT It helps with my image.

POSSUM To (CHANTS) talk like this?

RABBIT No. To wear the coat.

WALLABY I don't seem to understand.

RABBIT I am a singer at the circus.

WALLABY And Fox makes you wear this all the time?  
(HOLDING UP THE COAT)

RABBIT Except when I am sweeping the floor.

WALLABY Do you really have to sweep as well as sing?

RABBIT Fox is very lazy. He makes me do everything.

WALLABY I don't think I would like that.

POSSUM But you still haven't told us (CHANTING) why you talk like this?

RABBIT Because when I am not singing, I am practicing and when I am not singing or practicing, I am sweeping the floor, and when I am not singing or practicing or sweeping the floor, I am doing something else and still singing and.....

POSSUM Stop. Stop. We get the message. Your voice is strained.  
(RABBIT NODS. THE KOOKS LOOK INTERESTED)

WALLABY And this coat is part of your pop star image?

RABBIT (NODS AGAIN) Sort of ... but I don't feel like a pop star.

POSSUM You don't look like one either.

WALLABY I think Fox must be a slave driver.

RABBIT And now he wants to cure me with his own patent throat spray.

WALLABY And to think I wanted to join the circus!

RABBIT (ASTOUNDED) You wanted to join the circus?

POSSUM I still do.

WALLABY You do?

POSSUM Of course. I'm not frightened of Fox. He is always very pleasant to me.

RABBIT (CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT)  
Pleasant! Fox has never been pleasant in his whole life.

POSSUM I have always found him to be very polite.

RABBIT He is only polite when he wants something.

WALLABY I have never met Fox.

RABBIT That makes you a very lucky fellow.

FOX (CALLING OUT AGAIN AND COAXING FROM OFF STAGE)  
Rabbit. Rabbit. Come on Rabbit. I didn't mean it. I really wasn't going to hurt you. Come on home to Foxey. I only want to make you better.

WALLABY He doesn't sound so bad.

RABBIT That is only because he wants me back.



FOX (CALLING LOUDER) I've had enough of this nonsense.  
I'LL freeze your ears for ice blocks Rabbit. Do you hear me?  
(RABBIT GRABS HIS EARS AND PANICS. HE CLINGS TO  
WALLABY. POSSUM TAKES CHARGE OF THE SITUATION.  
THE KOOKS FALL BACKWARDS OFF THE FENCE)

POSSUM (WHISPERING) Rabbit. You go and hide behind the fence.  
Wallaby, put Rabbit's coat and hat into your bag.  
(POSSUM HELPS RABBIT HIDE AND WALLABY QUICKLY  
SHOVES THE CLOTHES INTO THE BAG)

FOX (HIS VOICE IS HEARD CLOSER AND CLOSER)  
I'll feed you to the lions. I'll feed you to the tigers, and if anything is  
left over I'll eat.....

(FOX RUSHES IN FROM R.S. WEARING HIS RINGMASTER'S  
UNIFORM.  
POSSUM IS STANDING INNOCENTLY TO THE RIGHT OF  
THE FENCE. SHE IS UNPERTURBED.  
WALLABY IS STANDING SLIGHTLY BEHIND POSSUM. HE  
ISN'T EXACTLY HAPPY BUT GATHERS COURAGE AS THE  
FOLLOWING CONVERSATION PROGRESSES)

FOX (FOX SEES POSSUM FIRST AND QUICKLY SLIDES TO A  
HALT AND HIDES THE SPRAY GUN BEHIND HIS BACK. HIS  
PERSONALITY CHANGES AND HE BECOMES  
DISARMINGLY CHARMING) Good afternoon, Miss Possum.

POSSUM (EXTRA SWEET AND CHARMING) Good afternoon Mr Fox.

FOX (SEEING WALLABY FOR THE FIRST TIME)  
Good afternoon, Mr ... er ... er ...

POSSUM Mr Wallaby, Mr Fox.

FOX Good afternoon to you, too, Mr Wallaby.

WALLABY Good afternoon, Mr Fox.

POSSUM Lovely weather we are having, Mr Fox.

FOX Delightful, Miss Possum.

POSSUM And what brings you this way, Mr Fox?

FOX I am looking for my Rabbit, Miss Possum.

POSSUM Your Rabbit, Mr Fox?

FOX A very clever Rabbit, Miss Possum.

POSSUM Oh! And what does your very clever Rabbit do, Mr Fox?

FOX He sings and plays the guitar, Miss Possum.

WALLABY                    You don't see many singing, guitar playing Rabbits, Mr Fox.

FOX                        Indeed you don't, Mr Wallaby. And that is why I need him so badly.

POSSUM                    Need him, Mr Fox. Why do you need him?

FOX                        He is the star of my circus, Miss Possum.

WALLABY                    A pop star, Mr Fox?

FOX                        A kind of pop star, Mr Wallaby.  
(FOX HAS HAD ENOUGH OF THIS SMALL TALK AND IS  
EDGING TOWARDS L.S. STILL TRYING TO HIDE  
SOMETHING BEHIND HIS BACK)

WALLABY                    What is behind your back, Mr Fox?

FOX                        (A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE, BUT RISING TO THE  
OCCASION) Oh! ... er ... just a little throat spray, Mr Wallaby.  
(HE PRODUCES A LARGE SPRAY GUN. THE OLD FLYTOX  
TYPE)

                              My Rabbit has a sore throat and I am going to help him get better.

POSSUM                    Maybe he has gone to see a doctor, Mr Fox.

FOX                        (SURPRISED) A doctor! Never. I have always been able to cure  
him with my own patent throat spray.

WALLABY                    Perhaps he is frightened of your own patent throat spray and has  
run away.

FOX                        Run away! My lovely singing Rabbit would never run away from  
me.  
I am far too kind and generous.

POSSUM                    Really, Mr Fox!

FOX                        Yes. My Rabbit has a lovely life. He loves singing. He loves the  
crowds. Plenty of carrots. Lots of friends. Plenty of time to do what  
he wants. (AND AS AN AFTER THOUGHT) And I pay him well.

POSSUM                    You do?

FOX                        But of course, Miss Possum. Now you can understand how my  
lovely singing Rabbit would never run away from me.

POSSUM                    Yes. We see. Don't we Wallaby?

WALLABY                    Er ... yes. Of course we do, Mr Fox.

FOX                        And now, if you haven't seen my very clever Rabbit, I must be on  
my way and look for him. It will soon be dark. I don't want him to  
get lost. (FOX DOFFS HIS HAT AND BOWS) Good afternoon,  
Miss Possum. And very charmed to meet you, Mr Wallaby.

WALLABY                   And me too, Mr Fox. (FOX EXITS L.S).  
THE KOOKS APPEAR ON TOP OF THE FENCE)

RABBIT                   (COMES OUT FROM BEHIND THE FENCE. HE IS STILL  
CHANTING) Has he gone?

WALLABY                Yes. (THE KOOKS LAUGH AND RABBIT JUMPS.  
THEY STOP LAUGHING WHEN POSSUM SPEAKS)

POSSUM                 This is no time to laugh.

KOOK 1                 We thought you would be happy now that Fox has gone.

POSSUM                 Rabbit isn't happy. He is frightened.

KOOK 1                 Sorry.

POSSUM                 Did you hear everything that Fox said, Rabbit?

RABBIT                 (STILL CHANTING) Yes. And I couldn't believe my ears.

KOOK 2                 Perhaps Fox has frozen them already.

KOOK 1                 Of course they're not frozen. Can't you see ... Rabbit has floppy  
ears.

POSSUM                 Rabbit ... was Fox speaking the truth?

RABBIT                 Fox never speaks the truth. He is a fibber. He is mean and miserable  
and stingy, and...

POSSUM                 (RAISING HER HAND TO STOP RABBIT. SHE SPEAKS  
KINDLY) That's enough.

RABBIT                 (DESPERATELY) Don't you believe me?

POSSUM                 Yes. We believe you, don't we Wallaby?  
(SHE TURNS TO SEEK SUPPORT FROM HIM)

                            Wallaby, what are you doing?

                            (DURING THE LAST FEW LINES WALLABY HAS BEEN  
BUSY.  
HE HAS PULLED OUT RABBIT'S COAT AND HAT FROM THE  
OVERNIGHT BAG. HE HAS THE HAT ON AND IS  
ENDEAVOURING TO GET INTO THE COAT. THIS IS A VERY  
DIFFICULT EXERCISE BECAUSE HIS TAIL KEEPS GETTING  
IN THE WAY. POSSUM LAUGHS AND GOES TO HELP HIM)

POSSUM                 Oh Wallaby, you really are funny. Come and help him, Rabbit.  
It might make you feel better.  
(RABBIT NERVOUSLY GOES TO HELP)

KOOK 2                   It's his tail. Poke in the tail.  
(RABBIT AND POSSUM FINALLY GET THE TAIL UNDER CONTROL. RABBIT IS GRADUALLY RELAXING AND BEING URGED ON BY THE KOOKS. WALLABY IS EVENTUALLY DRESSED IN RABBIT'S GEAR. THERE HAS BEEN MUCH MERRIMENT AND LAUGHTER DURING THIS EFFORT AND FOX HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN.)

WALLABY               Stand back. Stand back, and make way for the pop star.  
(RABBIT AND POSSUM RETIRE NEAR THE BACK OF THE FENCE AND WALLABY STRUTS UP AND DOWN THE STAGE.  
HE IS UNAWARE OF BEING THE PERFECT CLOWN)

                              I still want to join the circus Possum. How about you?

POSSUM                 Of course I do.

KOOK 2                 What about Mr Fox?

KOOK 1                 Do you think he'll come back?

RABBIT                 (GRABBING HER EARS AND CHANTING)  
I almost forgot about Fox.

POSSUM                 Don't worry Rabbit. If he does come back I am sure we can handle him.

WALLABY               He'd be no trouble at all.

RABBIT                 If only you could. We would be so happy.

KOOK 1                 And we could laugh.

KOOK 2                 Yes. We'd really have something to be merry about.

WALLABY               Watch this. (HE FACES R.S. AND SWAGGERS ALONG)

FOX                     (HAS COME CREEPING BACK L.S. POSSUM AND RABBIT SEE HIM BUT IT IS TOO LATE TO WARN WALLABY. FOX TIP TOES UP BEHIND WALLABY AND MARCHES HIM OFF THINKING HE IS RABBIT. FOX IS NOT SWEET AND SUGARY ANY MORE. HE IS BACK TO HIS NORMAL VOICE)  
Ah! I've got you now my little friend.  
(STARTS PUSHING WALLABY OFF R.S. AND THE KOOKS FALL BACK OVER THE FENCE.)

WALLABY               I am not your friend.

FOX                     That's enough. Thought you could run away, didn't you?

WALLABY               (PROTESTING) I haven't run away. I'm not Rabbit. I am Wallaby.

FOX (STILL PUSHING THE RELUCTANT WALLABY)  
Don't play games with me. I know a Wallaby when I see one.  
(BOTH EXIT WITH WALLABY STILL PROTESTING.)

RABBIT Oh dear, Possum. Now what will we do?

POSSUM Don't worry about Wallaby. He'll think of something.  
(THE KOOKS APPEAR ONCE AGAIN ON TOP OF THE FENCE. THEY ARE VERY INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING CONVERSATION)

RABBIT Shouldn't we go and help him?

POSSUM Not now. Wallaby wanted to join the circus.  
This could be his only chance.

RABBIT (DOUBTFULLY) Oh!

POSSUM (PICKING UP WALLABY'S OVERNIGHT BAG)  
I'll go and help him later. But first of all you must see a doctor about your voice. (WALKS TOWARDS L.S.) I know where one lives.

POSSUM (LOOKS TOWARDS THE SKY) Fox was right about one thing. It is getting darker. I am beginning to see better already. Come with me.

(POSSUM AND RABBIT EXIT BEHIND THE FENCE AND IN DOING SO SLIDE IT OFF STAGE.  
THE KOOKABURRAS LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER IN SURPRISE AND LAUGH QUIETLY.  
THE CURTAINS ARE NOW EITHER ROLLED UP OR DRAWN ASIDE TO EXPOSE THE CIRCUS ARENA.  
FOX'S VOICE WITH WALLABY STILL PROTESTING CAN BE HEARD OFF STAGE)

WALLABY Why won't you listen to me? I am not Rabbit. I am Wallaby.

FOX Don't start that nonsense again.

WALLABY But I can't play and I can't sing. I can hardly do a thing.

FOX You can play. You can sing. And now you will do everything.  
(THEY ENTER R.S. FOX PUSHES WALLABY WHOSE TAIL COMES OUT FROM UNDERNEATH HIS COAT.  
FOX LOOKS DOWN AND TRIPS OVER THE TAIL)

WALLABY Oh dear. Now look what has happened.  
(BENDS DOWN AND LISTENS TO FOX'S HEART)

He is still breathing. He must have knocked himself out.  
(WALLABY TAKES OFF HIS HAT AND FANS FOX. THEN HE  
FANS HIMSELF) Gosh, I am hot. It is this coat. (TAKES IT OFF)

I wouldn't like to wear that for very long. Poor Rabbit.  
(FANS HIMSELF AGAIN, AND THEN FANS FOX)

Now I am in a pickle.  
(WALLABY WALKS AROUND THE ARENA LOOKING AT  
THE EQUIPMENT. HE CONTINUES TO FAN HIMSELF WITH  
THE HAT, OCCASIONALLY TRIPPING OVER. EVERY TIME  
HE PASSES FOX HE GIVES HIM A FAN WITH THE HAT)

However did I get myself into this mess? I can't leave Fox here.  
He might die. He isn't very nice, but I wouldn't want him to die.  
I wish Possum was here. She would think of something to do.  
(ANOTHER WALK, ANOTHER TRIP AND MORE FANNING  
OF  
FOX)

FOX (STARTS TO COME AROUND. AND TRIES TO SIT UP)  
Where am I? What happened?

WALLABY You had a bit of a fall.

FOX Who are you?

WALLABY Don't you remember?

FOX (SCRATCHING HIS HEAD) I'm not sure.

WALLABY (THINKING THIS IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE)  
I am Wallaby and I have come to join the circus.

FOX You have?

WALLABY Yes. You are going to make me a star.

FOX A star?

WALLABY Yes. You know. My name is going to be up in lights outside the  
circus.

FOX It is?

WALLABY Of course. Are you sure you don't remember?

FOX No. But I am feeling very hot.

WALLABY (GATHERING MORE COURAGE) Let me take off your coat Mr  
Fox. That will make you feel better.

FOX (WALLABY HELPS FOX TAKE OFF HIS COAT) Thank you.  
What did you say your name was again?

WALLABY Wallaby, Mr Fox. And I am going to be your new acrobatic star.

FOX You are?

WALLABY Yes. You must have had a bad fall, Mr Fox. Don't you remember promising me lots of money, plenty of free meals, a lovely soft bed and time off to visit my friends.

FOX I did?

WALLABY Yes. And Miss Possum, too.

FOX Miss Possum?

WALLABY You promised to star her as the Dancing Darling of your circus.

FOX I promised all that?

WALLABY (OVERDOING IT) More, much more.

FOX (BEGINNING TO HAVE SOME DOUBTS) I don't feel very well. Could you bring me a drink of water? I think there's some over there.  
(POINTS BEHIND FENCE)

WALLABY Delighted to be of service, Mr Fox.  
(WALLABY COLLECTS A GLASS OF WATER FROM BEHIND THE FENCE L.S. HE TRIPS AS HE RETURNS WITH THE WATER, AND IT SPILLS ALL OVER FOX)

Oops! Sorry Mr Fox.

FOX (THE WATER HAS BROUGHT FOX BACK TO REALITY AND HE SPRINGS TO HIS FEET SHOUTING) And so you should be. Now I remember. I didn't promise to make you an acrobatic star. You can't even walk properly. You're a bumblefooted Wallaby.

WALLABY (WEAKLY) You can't blame me for trying.

FOX (THINKING QUICKLY AND SEEING A CHANCE TO GET SOME SLAVE LABOUR) Would you really like to be an acrobat?

WALLABY (CAN HARDLY BELIEVE HIS LUCK) Oh yes, please.

FOX Then I'll teach you. I can do anything, you know.

WALLABY I am sure you can, Mr Fox.

FOX (PICKS UP A BROOM FROM BEHIND THE FENCE AND HANDS IT TO WALLABY IN A HORIZONTAL POSITION) Use this as a balancing pole. (DRAWS AN IMAGINARY LINE WITH HIS FOOT) Make out this line is a tight rope and walk along here.

WALLABY (TRIES TO DO WHAT HE HAS BEEN TOLD BUT OVERBALANCES. THE BROOM SAVES HIM FROM

FALLING OVER AND IT LANDS WITH THE BRUSH SIDE ON THE FLOOR. WALLABY IS STILL HOLDING IT FIRMLY)  
Oops! There I go again.

FOX (REALISING THIS IS THE TIME TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WALLABY) Now that is a good sweeping position. I think you would make a better sweeper than an acrobat.  
(FIRMLY) And so start sweeping.

WALLABY (SWEEPS SLOWLY AND QUIETLY PROTESTS) But.....

FOX No buts. Just sweep.  
(HE WALKS TOWARDS L.S. LEAVING HIS HAT AND COAT BEHIND) And keep sweeping until I return. I won't be long. The work has got behind since Rabbit left. This time I will find him and bring him back. Goodbye Wallaby. And remember, don't stop working. I'll teach you to try and trick me.

WALLABY (SWEEPING VIGOROUSLY) Er ... no Mr Fox. I will keep working.  
(FOX EXITS L.S. WALLABY CONTINUES SWEEPING, BUT MORE SLOWLY.  
HE SWEEPS PAST A SEESAW AND FLICKS IT UP AND DOWN. THEN ON TO A TUMBLING BLOCK. THIS IS TOO TEMPTING. HE SPRINGS ONTO THE BLOCK WITH THE AID OF THE BROOM AND AFTER A LITTLE WOBBLING STAYS UPRIGHT. HE GRINS AND OBTAINS ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THIS EFFORT. HE JUMPS DOWN ... THEN UP AGAIN. HE DOES THIS TWO OR THREE TIMES, GETTING BETTER EACH TIME. THEN HE SWAGGERS BACK TO THE SEESAW AND FLICKS IT AGAIN)

WALLABY I wish Possum and Rabbit were here. The three of us could fix that old Fox and we could have a lot of fun.

POSSUM (ENTERS R.S. WALKING BACKWARDS. SHE IS CARRYING WALLABY'S OVERNIGHT BAG AND PEERING TO THE RIGHT AND TO THE LEFT. SHE TURNS AT THE SAME TIME AS WALLABY. THEY COLLIDE)

POSSUM Ooh! Wallaby. I thought you were Fox.

WALLABY And I thought you were Fox.

POSSUM Isn't he here with you?

WALLABY No. He's gone off again looking for Rabbit.

POSSUM And left you in charge?

WALLABY Not exactly in charge. Only in charge of the broom.

POSSUM Oh!



WALLABY Thank you for bringing me my bag, Possum.

POSSUM No trouble at all. It was an excuse to get into the circus ... just in case I met Fox.

WALLABY Oh, I see. (LAUGHS) Possum, where is Rabbit?

POSSUM He's gone to see the doctor about his throat, but he should be here soon.

WALLABY Then he is coming back?

POSSUM Of course. He's not frightened any more. He now knows he has some friends.

WALLABY Oh yes. Friends do make a difference. Where are the Kookaburras?  
(THE KOOKS APPEAR ON TOP OF THE FENCE)

KOOK 1 Were you looking for us?

WALLABY (IS A LITTLE STARTLED) Not really. I just wanted to make sure you were all right.

KOOK 2 Thank you Wallaby.

POSSUM I thought you would be in bed. Maybe asleep.

KOOK 2 There is far too much happening around here for us to go to sleep.

KOOK 1 We came to see the circus.

POSSUM Then sit there quietly and behave.  
(THE KOOKS NOD AND WALLABY IS BACK PLAYING WITH THE SEESAW)

WALLABY Possum, let's have a seesaw? I've never had a seesaw.

POSSUM I don't know if we should.

WALLABY Please Possum. I'll help you get on.

POSSUM (REMEMBERING WALLABY'S PAST ATTEMPTS)  
I'll help myself get on.

WALLABY (THEY BOTH MANAGE. POSSUM FIRST AND THEN WALLABY. OF COURSE WALLABY BEING THE HEAVIER SHOOTS POSSUM UPWARDS. WALLABY LOOKS AT HER FOR A LITTLE WHILE AND THEN SPEAKS)  
Come on down, Possum.

POSSUM I can't

WALLABY Why not?

POSSUM Because you are too heavy. That's why not.

WALLABY Oh! Then I'll get off.  
 (BEFORE POSSUM CAN STOP HIM WALLABY IS OFF THE SEESAW AND POSSUM LANDS ON THE FLOOR WITH A THUD. WALLABY GOES TO HER RESCUE BUT IS UNSUCCESSFUL IN HIS ATTEMPT.  
 THIS IS TOO MUCH FOR THE KOOKS.  
 THEY LAUGH. WALLABY AND POSSUM GET A FRIGHT, AND THEY BOTH END UP ON THE FLOOR. THEY GLARE AT THE KOOKS WHO FALL SLOWLY BACKWARDS OFF THE FENCE)

Those birds. Sometimes I like them and sometimes I don't.

POSSUM They're all right. They are meant to laugh. It would be a funny old world if we couldn't laugh.

WALLABY I am sorry, Possum. Did I hurt you?

POSSUM (FREES HERSELF) No, I don't think so.

WALLABY (HAS PULLED HIMSELF UP IN HIS OWN PERFECTED WAY AND HOLDS OUT HIS HAND TO POSSUM) Let me help you.

POSSUM (ALMOST PUTS OUT HER HAND AND THEN REMEMBERS IT IS WALLABY WHO IS OFFERING HELP)  
 I think I'll help myself, thank you Wallaby.

WALLABY Good. (HE HOPS OVER TO THE BALLET BARRE)  
 Whatever is this?

POSSUM (BECOMES EXCITED AS SHE JOINS WALLABY AT THE BARRE) It is a ballet barre.

WALLABY What do you do with a ballet barre?

POSSUM It is used by dancers. I'll show you.  
 (SHE PLACES HER HAND ON THE BARRE IN THE CORRECT POSITION. WALLABY FALLS IN BESIDE HER AND DOES LIKEWISE. HE TRIES TO COPY POSSUM'S BALLET MOVEMENTS WITHOUT SUCCESS. HE IS HOPELESS, BUT VERY FUNNY.  
 POSSUM PLACES HER FOOT INTO 1ST POSITION)

This is a Demi Plies.  
 (THE KOOKS REAPPEAR ON THE FENCE)

WALLABY A what?

POSSUM (IGNORES THE REMARK. SHE LOVES BALLET AND IS IN HER ELEMENT) This is a Full Plies.  
 (POSSUM GOES INTO A SERIES OF DEMI POINTE WORK FACING THE BARRE) Relevés in 1st and 5th. Up for 1,2. Close count 3. Echappe relevé from 1st and 3rd to 2nd. In echappe from

3rd, change the feet.  
(POSSUM IS IN ANOTHER WORLD)

WALLABY (IS DESPERATELY TRYING TO COPY HER. ONLY FOR HOLDING ON TO THE BARRE HE WOULD HAVE FALLEN MANY TIMES. HE IS VERY IMPRESSED WITH POSSUM AND WHEN SHE FINISHES, HE CLAPS. THE KOOKS LAUGH QUIETLY) More. More.  
(THE KOOKS LAUGH AGAIN)

No, not you. (THE KOOKS STOP LAUGHING)

Show me some more, please Possum.

POSSUM (BOWS) And for my finale I will show you an Arabesque.

RABBIT (QUIETLY ENTERS R.S. UNKNOWN TO POSSUM AND WALLABY. RABBIT SEES POSSUM DOING HER 'FINALE')  
Whatever are you two doing?  
(THERE IS NO HINT OF A CHANT IN HIS VOICE AND POSSUM AND WALLABY THINK IT MUST BE FOX.  
WALLABY GRABS THE BROOM AND SWEEPS VIGOROUSLY.  
POSSUM IS THE FIRST TO RECOVER.  
THE KOOKS HAVE DISAPPEARED)

POSSUM Rabbit. You gave me a fright. I thought you were Fox.

WALLABY (CEASES SWEEPING) And so did I.

RABBIT (LOOKS AT WALLABY HOLDING THE BROOM) I can see that.  
(THEY LAUGH) You dance very well, Possum.

POSSUM Thank you.

RABBIT We could do with someone like you in the circus.

WALLABY Could you do with someone like me, too?

RABBIT (PLACING HANDS ON HIPS AND SURVEYS WALLABY)  
I suppose we could try and teach you a trick or two.

WALLABY Could you?

POSSUM Rabbit, you have stopped..... (CHANTING) speaking like this.

WALLABY So you have.

RABBIT I thought you'd never notice. Isn't it wonderful?

WALLABY Did the doctor hurt you?

RABBIT Of course not.

POSSUM Are you completely cured?

RABBIT As long as I don't sing too much.

WALLABY Marvellous. (AND NOW ANXIOUS TO GET ON WITH THE TRICKS) Rabbit, could you teach me some tricks now?

RABBIT All right. Let's look for some 'dress-up' clothes in the prop-box. (THEY GO TO THE LARGE COLOURED PROP BOX AND RABBIT PULLS UP THE LID. THE KOOKABURRAS POP UP AND LAUGH. RABBIT, POSSUM AND WALLABY JUMP BACKWARDS WITH FRIGHT RABBIT RECOVERS FIRST)

What are you doing in there?

KOOK 1 I'm a Jack-in-the-box.

KOOK 2 He is also a Jack-ass. (LAUGHS)

WALLABY Whatever next? (THE THREE OF THEM JOIN IN THE FUN)

KOOK 1 (PRODUCING A TU TU FROM PROP BOX) This is for Possum.

POSSUM Ooh! It's lovely.

KOOK 2 And this is for Wallaby. (RABBIT HANDS THE COSTUME TO WALLABY)

WALLABY (HOLDING IT UP) What is it?

KOOK 2 A clown's suit. (WALLABY RUSHES AT THE PROP BOX BUT THE KOOKS POP DOWN INSIDE AND CLOSE THE LID)

WALLABY (LAUGHS) They are a couple of clowns themselves. Do I have to wear it?

RABBIT Of course. Don't you want to learn some tricks?

(THE KOOKS HAVE CAUTIOUSLY OPENED THE BOX AGAIN AND WATCH THE PROCEEDINGS WITH INTEREST)

WALLABY (THOUGHTFULLY) Mmmm. (POSSUM IS NOW GETTING INTO HER TU TU AND RABBIT IS HELPING WITH THE ZIP. WALLABY STARES AT THE RESULT) Possum, you look like a real dancer.

POSSUM I am a dancer, Wallaby. Hurry up and put on your costume. I'll help you. (IN THE MEANTIME RABBIT HAS SEEN FOX'S RINGMASTER COAT AND HAT. HE PUTS THEM ON. AT LAST THE THREE OF THEM ARE READY. WALLABY'S TAIL IS NO PROBLEM

BECAUSE THE CLOWN COSTUME OPENS RIGHT DOWN THE BACK)

RABBIT                    Would you like to try the tightrope, Wallaby?

WALLABY                I'd love to. (LOOKS AROUND) Where is it?

RABBIT                    (POINTS TO A WIRE STRETCHED BETWEEN TWO POLES. IT IS VERY HIGH) Up there.

WALLABY                (LOOKING UP) Up there! Ooh! It is very high, isn't it?

RABBIT                    (TEASING) Would you like it a little higher?

POSSUM                    Don't you mean lower?

WALLABY                (QUICKLY) Definitely lower. (ALL LAUGH)

RABBIT                    Will you help me, Possum?

POSSUM                    Of course. (POSSUM TWIRLS TO THE POLE AND RABBIT SHOWS HER WHAT TO DO. THEY LOWER THE WIRE 30 mm)

RABBIT                    How about that height, Wallaby?

WALLABY                Ooh! I was thinking about here. (WALLABY HAS HIS HAND RAISED TO ABOUT SHOULDER LEVEL AND THEN GRADUALLY LOWERS IT UNTIL IT IS ALMOST ON THE GROUND. THE KOOKS STRAIN THEIR HEADS TO SEE)

RABBIT                    (TEASING AGAIN) But Wallaby. You are supposed to be practicing on a high wire.

WALLABY                Couldn't I practice on a low, high wire?

RABBIT                    (POSSUM AND RABBIT LAUGH AND LOWER THE WIRE TO ABOUT 1 OR 2 mms FROM THE GROUND) How about that?

WALLABY                (PLACING HIS FOOT GENTLY ON THE WIRE)  
That will do nicely thank you, Rabbit.

RABBIT                    Use your broom as a balancing pole.

WALLABY                (REMEMBERING FOX AND HIS TRICK)  
I seem to have done this before, but I'll try again.  
(GOES BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS AND APPEARS TO BE QUITE SUCCESSFUL FOR A LITTLE WHILE, BUT THEN HE BECOMES OVER CONFIDENT)  
  
Hey, look at me Possum? (AS SOON AS WALLABY SPEAKS HE TUMBLES, DROPS THE BROOM AND SOMERSAULTS VERY SUCCESSFULLY)

(THE KOOKS CLAP AND CALL OUT) Bravo! Bravo!

(WALLABY GLARES AND THE KOOKS DISAPPEAR INSIDE THE BOX, ONLY TO APPEAR ALMOST IMMEDIATELY)

RABBIT I think you will make a very good tumbling clown.

WALLABY (DISAPPOINTED) A tumbling clown?

RABBIT It is very hard to find a good tumbling clown in a circus

(WALLABY IS DELIGHTED AND GOES INTO AN IMPROMPTU TUMBLING ACT. RABBIT AND POSSUM CLAP

(THEN RABBIT GOES INTO ACTION, IMITATING FOX)

Roll up. Roll up. See the show.

Come in folk. We're set to go.

Hear the singers. See the clowns.

We are the greatest show in town.

May I present Miss Possum, our Darling Dancer of the Circus.

(AS POSSUM DOES ANOTHER ARABESQUE THERE IS MUCH CLAPPING FROM RABBIT, WALLABY AND THE KOOKS)

RABBIT And on my right is Wallaby.  
Our very own Wobbling Wallaby.  
The Tumbling Terror of the Circus Ring.

(WALLABY BOWS, TRIPS, TUMBLES AND IS GREAT. HE ENDS UP NEAR THE FENCE L.S WHERE HE COLLECTS A TRAY OF GLASSES FROM BEHIND THE FENCE. THE GLASSES ARE STUCK TO THE TRAY BUT OF COURSE THE AUDIENCE DO NOT KNOW THIS. HE BALANCES THE TRAY ON THE PALM OF HIS HAND AND SWAGGERS TOWARDS THE HIGH, LOW WIRE WHERE HE TRIPS.

THE TRAY WOBBLER, BUT WITH MUCH DIFFICULTY AND NONSENSE THE GLASSES REMAIN UPRIGHT. POSSUM AND RABBIT CLAP. WALLABY LAUGHS, AND PUTS THE TRAY INTO HIS OTHER HAND. HE WALKS BACK TO THE FENCE WITH THE TRAY SWINGING DOWN BY HIS SIDE THE KOOKS HAVE BEEN GOOD VALUE AS AN AUDIENCE. AS WALLABY RETURNS HE PATS THEM GENTLY ON THEIR HEADS AS IF TO SAY ALL IS FORGIVEN)

POSSUM Your turn now Rabbit, but don't sing you might hurt your voice.

RABBIT	(HAMS THE NEXT FEW VERSES) I am a singing Rabbit. The only one in sight. And people come to hear me, Almost every night.
POSSUM & WALLABY	(TOGETHER) Almost every night?
RABBIT	Yes. Ev'ry jolly night. They crowd and crowd around me, You don't know what it's like. The yelling and the clapping Gives me an awful fright.
POSSUM & WALLABY	(TOGETHER) Gives him an awful fright.
RABBIT	Yes. Ev'ry jolly night. (THE KOOKS LAUGH AND POSSUM AND WALLABY SHOUT FOR MORE) You're as bad as the others.
WALLABY	Go on Rabbit.
POSSUM	Yes. This is really fun.
RABBIT	When Foxy leads the cheering I want to go on strike. 'cos Foxy WAS my master The one I did dislike.
POSSUM & WALLABY	(TOGETHER) The one he did dislike.
RABBIT	Yes. Ev'ry jolly night. But Foxy's gone a hunting, He's out there on a hike, And looking for his Rabbit To sing again tonight.
POSSUM & WALLABY	(TOGETHER) To sing again tonight.
RABBIT	Yes. To sing.....(RABBITS STOPS AS FOX ENTERS L.S.) (THE KOOKS PULL DOWN THE LID AND DISAPPEAR AS FOX HURRIES ACROSS TO RABBIT)
FOX	And you will sing. (AT THIS MOMENT FOX TRIPS ON THE HIGH, LOW WIRE AND KNOCKS HIMSELF OUT. RABBIT WALLABY AND POSSUM ARE SHOCKED)
POSSUM	(IS THE FIRST TO RECOVER) Is he dead?

RABBIT (KNEELS DOWN AND LISTENS FOR A HEART BEAT)  
No. He is still breathing. I think he is only winded.

WALLABY That happened to him before and he couldn't remember anything.  
He didn't even know who I was for a while.  
(RABBIT AND POSSUM LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND SMILE)

POSSUM Oh! He couldn't remember anything?  
(WALLABY NODS AND SHAKES HIS HEAD)

RABBIT Ah! And he didn't know who he was?  
(WALLABY SHAKES HIS HEAD AGAIN)  
Good. I think I've got a good idea. (HE RUSHES OVER TO THE PROP BOX BUT BEFORE HE HAS TIME TO OPEN THE LID THE KOOKS POP UP AND HAND RABBIT A DUST COAT)  
Thank you. Just what we need. We'll put this on him.

WALLABY Whatever for?

RABBIT We'll tell him he's the cleaner.

POSSUM He'll never believe you.

WALLABY He will for a while. I've tried it.  
(THE THREE FRIENDS MANAGE TO GET FOX INTO THE DUST COAT)

RABBIT And in the meantime we can have some fun and teach Fox a lesson.

WALLABY (STANDING BACK TO ADMIRE FOX IN THE DUST COAT)  
That suits him.

POSSUM So it does.  
  
(THE KOOKS POP UP FROM THE PROP BOX AND LAUGH)

FOX (STARTS TO COME AROUND) Where am I? What happened?  
(THE KOOKS DISAPPEAR AND THE OTHERS ACT ACCORDINGLY)

RABBIT Don't you remember?

FOX No. What am I doing here?

WALLABY This is the circus.

FOX And.....

POSSUM And you are the cleaner.

FOX Am I?



WALLABY (PICKS UP BROOM) Yes. This is your broom.

FOX Is it?

RABBIT Yes. And look at this mess.

POSSUM (SHAKING HER FINGER AT HIM)  
You haven't been doing a very good job lately.

RABBIT You had better start sweeping straight away.

FOX Start sweeping?

WALLABY Yes. Sweeping. You know how to sweep. (DEMONSTRATES)

FOX I can't remember sweeping.

RABBIT Then it is about time you started to learn. Up you get.  
(WALLABY HANDS FOX THE BROOM. THE KOOKS  
APPEAR ONCE AGAIN AND WATCH WITH INTEREST. FOX  
GETS UP VERY CAREFULLY) Hurry and clean up this mess.  
Quickly, now.

FOX (SWEEPS VERY SLOWLY) I don't remember doing this before.

WALLABY You are too slow, Fox. Smarten up.  
(TO KOOKS) And don't you laugh.  
(RABBIT, POSSUM AND WALLABY FOLLOW FOX AROUND  
THE ROOM. THEY CHANT TOGETHER)  
Sweep, sweep, sweep, sweep.  
One, two, three, four.  
Sweep. sweep. sweep. sweep.  
Hurry now, clean the floor.  
Sweep, sweep, sweep, sweep.  
One, two, three, four,  
Sweep, sweep, sweep, sweep.  
Hurry now, clean the floor.  
(THIS CAN BE REPEATED AS MANY TIMES AS NEEDED)

FOX (IS BECOMING TIRED. HE STOPS) Can't I have a rest?

RABBIT No rest for the wicked.

FOX I'm not wicked.

WALLABY Yes, you are. Come on Fox. Let's start again.  
Sweep, sweep, sweep, sweep.  
Hurry now, clean the floor.

FOX (IS VERY SLOW AND STOPS AGAIN. THIS TIME HE  
PLEADS)  
Please may I stop?

RABBIT Oh well. Seeing you said, please, I suppose you may have a tiny

rest.

FOX (SITS DOWN GRATEFULLY) Thank you.

RABBIT (IS VERY SURPRISED) Goodness me. Fox is learning some manners.

FOX May I have a drink of water?  
Possum Did I hear you say, Please?

FOX Please may I have a drink of water?

WALLABY Of course. I'll fetch you one. (GOES BEHIND THE FENCE TO GET THE WATER. WHEN HE HAS GONE POSSUM FANS FOX WITH HER TU TU SKIRT.

RABBIT STOPS POSSUM FROM DOING THIS AND FANS FOX WITH THE RINGMASTER'S HAT. NO WORDS ARE SPOKEN  
WALLABY RETURNS AND ONCE AGAIN TRIPS OVER THE LOW, HIGH WIRE. IT IS ALMOST A REPETITION OF THE FIRST TIME. THE WATER SPILLS ONTO FOX AND HAS THE DESIRED EFFECT OF REVIVING HIM)

FOX Hey. Watch it. Look where you're going.  
(THE KOOKS DISAPPEAR AGAIN)

RABBIT (ASIDE) Those manners didn't last for too long.

FOX (LOOKS DOWN AT HIS CLOTHES) Why am I dressed like this?

RABBIT (HAVING ONE MORE DESPERATE TRY)  
You always wear that coat, Fox.

FOX (IS ALMOST READY TO BELIEVE HIM ... THEN HE REMEMBERS) I do not. You wear it when you sweep the floor.

RABBIT Not me. Not any more, Fox.

FOX (SEEING RABBIT IS WEARING THE RINGMASTER'S COAT)  
Why are you dressed in my clothes?  
(THEN LOOKING AT POSSUM AND WALLABY)  
  
And why are they wearing those costumes?

POSSUM (TAKING CONTROL OF THE SITUATION)  
My goodness Mr. Fox you have a bad memory.

FOX Have I?

POSSUM Don't you remember employing me to be your new Dazzling Dancer?

FOX Er ... No.

POSSUM (CONTINUING IN A SWEET VOICE) And employing Mr

Wallaby  
to be your impressive, juggling, tumbling clown? (WALLABY  
LOOKS SURPRISED, BUT PULLS HIMSELF UP PROUDLY)

FOX (IS MESMERISED BY POSSUM) I did?

POSSUM And promising Rabbit a long deserved holiday on full pay to rest  
her tired singing voice.

FOX (ASTOUNDED) A holiday! On full pay. Oh my goodness.  
I'll be ruined.

POSSUM (STILL SPEAKING SWEETLY) No you won't be ruined, Mr Fox.  
We will run the circus for you.

FOX Oh no!

POSSUM (INNOCENTLY) Don't you like us, Mr Fox?

FOX Of course I like you, Miss Possum.

WALLABY And me, Mr Fox. Do you like me?

FOX (BEGRUDGINGLY) Oh yes. I like you too.

POSSUM And you've already told us how much you like Rabbit, Mr Fox.  
(FOX JUST NODS. HE KNOWS WHEN HE IS BEATEN)

RABBIT Then we are going to be one, big, happy, circus family.  
(THE KOOKABURRAS POP UP FROM THEIR BOX AND  
LAUGH. THE THREE LOOK TOWARDS THEM AND THEN  
BACK TO FOX)

FOX Not them too.

POSSUM But of course, Mr Fox.

RABBIT They will keep us merry.

FOX Merry!

WALLABY Yes. Merry. It will be like Christmas all year round.

FOX Oh dear me!

(WALLABY HANDS FOX THE BROOM. THE OTHERS FORM  
A  
TABLEAU. POSSUM TAKES UP A DANCING POSE.  
RABBIT EXAGGERATES A SINGING POSTURE WITH  
HANDS  
AND MOUTH.  
WALLABY GRABS THE TRAY OF GLASSES, SPRINGS ON  
TO THE TUMBLING BLOCK AND WITH THE TRAY  
BALANCED ON THE PALM OF HIS HAND, STANDS LIKE A

STATUE.

FOX LOOKS AT EACH OF THEM ONE BY ONE, THEN  
SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS AS IF RESIGNED TO HIS FATE.  
HE PUSHES THE BROOM INTO A SWEEPING POSITION  
AND FREEZES.

THE KOOKABURRAS COMMENCE TO LAUGH.

RABBIT, POSSUM, WALLABY AND FOX THEN RELAX AND  
SING THE KOOKABURRA ROUND.

THE AUDIENCE CAN NOW BE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN IN  
THE  
SINGING)

THE END

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