

CHRISTMAS MUMMERS PLAY
(Traditional)

Characters: The Presenter
 Father Christmas
 Old Bet
 Old Barleycorn
 Pickle Herring
 The Doctor
 Little Devil Doubt

(Actors enter loudly, disturbing the proceedings)

OLD BARLEYCORN

Open the door and let us in!

THE DOCTOR

We come your favor for to win!

OLD BET

We Shall fight,

OLD BARLEYCORN

and we shall fall,

PICKLE HERRING

and we shall try

ALL

to please you all!

PRESENTER

We come here to wish you cheer! Money in your pockets all this year. I'm the presenter sent before, and with my broom I'll clear the floor. Room! Make room, clear the way! Make some room to see our play!

FATHER CHRISTMAS

In comes I, Old Father Christmas. Hard times or not, Old Father Christmas will not be forgot. Old Father Christmas will not be forgot.

OLD BET

In comes I, Old Bet, as ugly as can be. Now every man within this place must now be kissed by me!

BARLEYCORN

In comes I, Old Barleycorn, the best in all the land; I'll fight and I'll fall for the sake of you all, If I can only stand!

PICKLE HERRING

In comes I, Mister Pickle Herring, for to join this dance. I had to wear my granny's nightdress, 'cause I couldn't find my pants!

DOCTOR

I am the doctor, pure and good, and with my pills, I'll stop the blood,

BET

Old Barleycorn, the play's begun; let's fry this hare and have some fun.

BARLEYCORN

We'll beat it and whale it and cut it in slices, and take an pot and boil it with spices.

BET

We'll fry this hare!

BARLEYCORN

We'll boil it, I said!

BET

Fry it!

BARLEYCORN

Boil it!

BET

We'll fry it, and no more be said; for if you dare to boil this hare, with my pan, I'll crack your head!

BARLEYCORN

My head's of iron! My neck's made of steel! You can crack all you want, but you can't make me feel!

BET

I'll cut your old coat full of holes and make the buttons fly!

BARLEYCORN

I'll cut you small as little flies and use you to cook my mince pies!

BET

I'll make your blood run cold as clay; I'll fry you, and throw this hare away!

OLD FATHER CHRISTMAS

Now, Old Bet, see what you've done! You've killed our own beloved one!

BET

Horrible! Terrible! See what I've done! I've cut him down like the evening sun!

PRESENTER

Is there a doctor to be found to cure this deep and deadly wound?

PICKLE HERRING

Is there a doctor near at hand to heal him again and make him stand?

DOCTOR

Whoa! Whoa! Hold my horse, Pickle Herring.

PICKLE HERRING

Will he kick?

DOCTOR

No.

PICKLE HERRING

Will he bite?

DOCTOR

No.

PICKLE HERRING

Does it take two to hold him?

DOCTOR

No.

PICKLE HERRING

Hold him yourself then.

DOCTOR

What's that, you sassy rascal?

PICKLE HERRING

I've got him, sir!

OLD BET

What's your fee, Doc?

DOCTOR

Eleven guineas, nine pounds, nineteen shillings, eleven pence, three farthings, six pecks of gingerbread for me, and six loaves of oats for my horse.

OLD BET

That's too much.

DOCTOR

Forget the gingerbread, and the oats.

PICKLE HERRING

Whoa, Whoa!! I'll give you a bale of water and a bucket of hay.

OLD BET

What can you cure?

DOCTOR

The itch, the stitch, the stone, the bone, the young, the old, the hot, the cold, the measles, the wheezles, the spots, the gout, and if there's nineteen devils in, I can bring twenty out. Here, dose him with this bottle.

OLD BET

What's in it?

DOCTOR

Three quarts of nim-nam, one ounce of brains from a saw-horse, one pound of marrow out of a stool's leg, one pint of pigeon's milk, strained through a side of sole leather, stewed in an old sow's horn, and stirred with a frog's feather.

OLD BET

I'll hold his head, you dose him.

BARLEYCORN

Good morning to you all! A-sleeping I have been, and I've had such a sleep as the like was never seen; but now I'm alive, and well unto this day; so let's have a little dance, and end this silly play!

DEVIL DOUBT

In comes I, Little Devil Doubt! If you don't give us money, I'll sweep you all out! It's money we want, and money we crave! If you don't give us money, I'll sweep you to your grave!

SONG

We are not London actors,
Who act upon the stage.
But we are jolly plowboys,
Who work for little wage.
Love and Joy come to you,
And to you a wassail too.
May God bless you and send you a happy new year,
May God send you a happy new year!