

## **Descriptive notes for The Great Piratical Rumbustification 2024**

These descriptive notes will give character and set descriptions, and a full summary of the performance including visual moments.

### **Oliver Terrapin**

The character is eight years old but played by an adult actor. Oliver loves pirates. He wears a grey school uniform. He has long black hair tied in a ponytail.

### **Mr Terrapin (Henry)**

The father of Oliver and is worried about money with the move to the new house. A lighting effect makes him look as though he goes green when he thinks about money or of someone says 'money'. He wears a brown suit, white shirt, brown tie and brown shoes. He has a beard and he too has long hair but tied up in bun on top. At the end of the play he removes his jacket and wears a black and white striped waistcoat.

### **Mrs Terrapin (Millicent or Milly)**

The mother of Oliver and desires a bigger house. She would like to take up pottery. She wears a waisted dress with pale blue polka dots and has white trim on collar and sleeves. She carries a black handbag and wears black shoes. When she is doing her pottery she wears a waist length colourful apron. At the end of the play she wears a shawl wrapped round her waist.

### **Orpheus Clinker**

Orpheus Clinker is the babysitter of Oliver but actually is a retired pirate. He wears a long green coat over the top of a brown knitted waistcoat. He has dark olive knee length trousers and wears a blue sash round his head adorned with a tricorn hat with a green feather. He wears an eye patch, a silver glove (with his hand remaining in a fixed position to represent a 'hook'), black and white striped hose on his left leg and a wood effect hose on his right leg (to represent a wooden leg). For the party, he loses his green coat and wears a long frilly colourful apron. NOTE: His silver gloved hand is not metal and his wooden leg is not wooden. They are just costume pieces.

### **Roving Tomasina**

One of the three pirates we meet in scene 4. She wears a full brown skirt with the occasional skull and crossbones. She wears a fitted black waistcoat over a red and white striped shirt with red trim (on sleeves, round her waist and red necklace). She has striped hose and buckled black shoes. She wears a tricorn hat.

### **Sir John also known as Terrible Crabmeat**

A very ricj pirate who hides his wealth behind his public persona, Sir John. He wears dark knee length pants with a light blue satin waistcoat with gold trim down the front. He wears a satin red coat with gold trim and adorned with jewels and a ruffle at his neck. He wears white hose and bucked shoes. He has a tricorn hat with a white feather.

### **Mother Goose**

An older woman who runs a babysitting service. She gets easily muddled. Her costume is a mix of a nursery rhyme image of Mother Goose and a real goose. She has gold glasses and wears a light blue and white gingham bunched up dress with a puffy white shawl (to

resemble goose wings). She has yellow stockings and wears yellow Crocs on her feet (to resemble goose legs). She wears a flowery bonnet.

### **Servant**

A long term household staff member of Sir John. She is dressed like a Victorian household servant with a long, dull, grey dress with a long white apron and a white bonnet.

### **Waiters**

Three waiters in the upmarket restaurant the Terrapins go to. They wear black T-shirts and pants with a long white apron.

### **Rumbling Dick Rover**

Another pirate (named by Margaret Mahy). He wears a white pirate shirt with a dark blue and red waistcoat. He wears vertical striped red and blue high waisted pants with a white trim down the side. He has knee-high brown boots. He has a blue and white striped cravat and a long blue knitted hat.

### **Wild Jack Clegg**

Another pirate (named by Margaret Mahy). He wears a white pirate shirt with a dark blue and red waistcoat. He wears vertical striped red and blue high waisted pants with a white trim down the side. He has knee-high brown boots. He has a blue and white striped cravat and a long blue knitted hat.

### **Pirate (played by Bee Ansell)**

An unnamed pirate. She wears a waisted dress with a full skirt of thin black and white stripes. Underneath she has a petticoat with skulls and crossbones on it. She has a red and white striped shirt underneath. She wears knee high black boots and a black top hat.

### **Stop Go Workers**

Two road workers who slow down Terrible Crabmeat's journey to the party. Dressed in overalls with orange fluoro vests and a yellow hard hat.

### **Set Descriptions**

On the right hand side of the stage is a three-sided house with a door on the left hand wall opening towards centre stage. The walls are light beige patterned wallpaper. There is a window on the right hand wall. On the wall flat on to the audience there is a small sepia family photo. Narrow corrugated plastic sits angled on top of the walls to represent the roof. There are two red metal chairs and one red metal stool positioned around a square red metal table. Next to the door hangs a very small red frypan (called a saucepan in the show) and a very large wooden spoon.

The actors walk on the chairs to create the illusion that the house is very small and there is no space to live properly. The furniture is made of metal and very strong so the actors won't break the furniture.

On the floor is a large painted pirate treasure map with a compass on the left and a red dotted line across the width of it.

Upstage is a silhouette of the cityscape of Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland including the SkyTower with a small red light at the top of it.

In scene 3, the right hand wall of the house is moved further right to make a bigger house. The move of the house creates a new purple red coloured wall in the centre facing the audience and also creates another doorway in the middle of the house which is curtained off (as if there is more of the house beyond). The sepia family photo has gone replaced with a large coloured family photo on the new coloured wall. The actors move the table and a chair and a stool to create more space.

The table and chairs are then moved for the phone call to Mother Goose, then moved by the waiters to create a restaurant table on the left side of stage. Mr Terrapin picks up the table and takes it offstage at the end of the second restaurant scene. The chairs are then used to create the front seat of a car for Mr and Mrs Terrapin.

Orpheus Clinker brings in a small stack of wood which has a theatrical fire effect on the top of it. When he pretends to light it with matches, the effect is turned on and a fan flutters white silk over some orange and green light to create a flame. Oliver brings on a large black cauldron.

## **Story Summary**

Warning - spoiler alert. The following gives a summary of the entire performance, including scenes which rely on pantomime and visual moments.

### Scene 1 of 17 scenes

We hear the pirates singing off stage. Oliver is racing his mother, Mrs Terrapin home. The Terrapin family live in a very small house. Mr Terrapin arrives home. Oliver, their eight year old son, is studying pirates at school and asks Mr Terrapin to teach him a sea shanty. The singing of sea shanties, for school homework, by Mr Terrapin and Oliver leads to an argument about needing a bigger house. This argument ends in a stylised and silly tango by the family. At the end of the short tango, they remain seated and frozen at the table.

### Scene 2

The pirates who live in the city circle round the house as they look for a possible place for a pirate party in the future. The pirates sing a round each with a different part of the song.

### Scene 3

The family hears the singing and we see them all looking out the window. Oliver is convinced it is pirates. The argument about needing a bigger house becomes a reality. During a lighting change the house grows bigger and we find Mr Terrapin, who is worried about all the costs of a new house, hiding under the table. Mrs Terrapin and Oliver love the size of the new house. Every time Mr Terrapin thinks about money he turns green (through the use of lighting) and goes limp.

### Scene 4

Three pirates, Roving Tomasina, Orpheus Clinker and Terrible Crabmeat, meet up and express their desire for a pirate party. As they leave Terrible Crabmeat drops his handkerchief which Oliver picks up and offers it back to him.

#### Scene 5

Oliver knows he has seen a real pirate and wants to play pirates at home. But Mr Terrapin says they must hang the washing out. They hang two sheets out on a washing line extending from the left hand side of the house to offstage left. Oliver then encourages his father into playing on the furniture as if it were a pirate ship. Mrs Terrapin enters with two cupcakes as afternoon tea, and Mr Terrapin and Oliver pretend she is a mermaid with treasure.

#### Scene 6

The three pirates appear from behind the sheets and sing enticingly to Oliver. His father doesn't see them. Oliver goes to look for the pirates but keeps missing them. He takes off the sheets but only finds his mother behind them bent over the washing basket.

#### Scene 7

Oliver puts jam from a jam sandwich on the outside door handle and barricades the front door with the furniture to keep the pirates out. He calls out to his mother for help with folding one of the sheets. He pulls it suddenly which ties up his mother and he pretends she is his pirate captive. Mr Terrapin arrives and can't enter the front door so climbs in the window to find his wife tied up. He wants to take her out to a dinner hosted by a rich man Sir John to learn how he made his fortune. Mrs Terrapin asks him to organise a baby sitter through the Mother Goose Babysitting Service.

#### Scene 8

As Mr Terrapin waits for Mother Goose to answer the phone, he moves the table and two chairs into centre of the stage. Mother Goose enters and they have a conversation on the phone while seated across the table from each other. Mother Goose gets very confused and mishears things leading to an unnecessarily complicated phone call but she organises Orpheus Clinker to be the babysitter. When she asks for his credit card number Mr Terrapin goes green and he faints.

#### Scene 9

Oliver finds his father on the floor and gets him up. They then get disturbed by the thumping steps and shadowy lighting effect of the babysitter as he approaches the house. Orpheus is invited into the house and Mr Terrapin questions his experience and wonders aloud about his piratical appearance. Mrs Terrapin enters and is shocked to see the pirate. Mr Terrapin hurriedly escorts her out of the house.

#### Scene 10

Orpheus shares his plan with Oliver about using their house as the location for a pirate party. They go outside and Oliver is startled when Orpheus pulls out a gun. But it is a party flare which spells out 'Pirate Party' in the sky to alert the other pirates in the city as to where the party is. NOTE: We use a confetti cannon for the party flare which creates a loud bang and then there are bangs from the fireworks. There are flashy firework lighting effects. The actors pretend they can read the words 'Pirate Party' behind the audience – there are no words behind you.

#### Scene 11

Three waiters enter and move the table and chairs across to the left of the stage. They set it with a tablecloth, napkins, soup bowls and spoons. Mr and Mrs Terrapin enter and are

overwhelmed at the expensive and fancy restaurant they find themselves in. They taste the soup but Mr Terrapin finds it to be thin and tasteless and calls out for some salt. Mrs Terrapin is embarrassed by his behaviour. He spies the party flare and questions why there's a party happening in their part of town. He surprises himself and Mrs Terrapin when he describes it as a rumbustification.

#### Scene 12

Sir John is getting dressed by his servant so he can attend the dinner that the Terrapins are at. He doesn't want to go. He spies the party flare and asks his servant to bring his pirate clothes and wheelchair. He reminds the servant that he's not really Sir John but called Terrible Crabmeat as Sir John is just a guise for his incredible pirate wealth. He heads off in the motorised scooter.

#### Scene 13

Back the restaurant, Mr and Mrs Terrapin are struggling with a very boring after dinner speaker. Mr Terrapin is annoyed that Sir John hasn't shown up and that the soup was so tasteless. They hurriedly exit.

#### Scene 14

Two road workers with a Stop Go sign each enter. Terrible Crabmeat enters on his motorised wheelchair. He gets frustrated at being stopped so frightens the workers off with a piratical cry.

#### Scene 15

Oliver and Orpheus enter with a large cauldron for the pirate stew and an open fire which Orpheus lights with a match. He then lights a bonfire (lighting effect only) out the back on the patio. Roving Tomasina arrives having seen the message from the party flare. She gives Oliver her contribution to the stew. Rumbling Dick Rover arrives with their contribution to the stew. Terrible Crabmeat arrives but crashes upstage behind the house. He meets Oliver and gives him his contribution to the stew. The party continues and then the pirates begin to dance in slow motion. NOTE: There is no actual fire. These are all lighting effects.

#### Scene 16

The Terrapins are sitting in the chairs on the left of stage and Mrs Terrapin is holding a steering wheel as if she is driving a car. They talk about the disaster of the evening but then Mr Terrapin sees the party and the pirates at their house out the car window.

#### Scene 17

The party continues and two more pirates have since arrived. Oliver looks out into the audience and notices that more pirates have arrived (the audience). The music stops and the pirates all line up along the front of the stage. Terrible Crabmeat asks the audience if they have come for a piratical rumbustification. The pirates encourage the audience to stand and teaches them a simple routine to a pirate song. The pirates continue with the party but each stop as they notice Mr and Mrs Terrapin arrive in their midst. The audience is asked to be seated. NOTE: When Oliver says, "Look, more pirates have arrived" there are no other pirates in the audience. He is meaning the people in the audience and he may see children who have dressed up as pirates or children who may want to pretend to be pirates for a short time. You don't need to stand and join in and the pirates won't be coming in to the audience.

Oliver is pulled up by his parents and asked what is the meaning of what is going on. Oliver says that his mother said he could expand once they got a bigger house. Terrible Crabmeat interrupts and ask why it has to have a meaning. Mrs Terrapin recognises him as Sir John. The Terrapins bow and make a fuss of the fact that if Sir John is there then the party must be respectable. Sir John introduces himself as Terrible Crabmeat and tells the Terrapins to get out of their 'silly clothes' and to relax and enjoy themselves.

Oliver gets his parents to try the pirate stew which they agree is tasty with the right amount of salt. Terrible Crabmeat asks Orpheus to wipe out the pot and for the pirates to fill it with their treasure. He explains that the treasure now belongs to the Terrapins. They can now pay for the bigger house and Mr Terrapin will stop going green.

The show ends with all the cast singing a song and performing party tricks to each other.

This is the end of the descriptive notes.