The Magic Sword
By Katharine Pyle
From the book, St. Nicholas Book of Plays and Operettas

THE SET:
The jars of candy, Noah's Ark, and music-box for the first act are painted scenery, and should be in such proportion to the actors as the real ones would be to the toys—that is, five or six feet in height.
The doll's-house furniture in the second and third scenes should be of the usual size, but copied as closely as possible from toy furniture.

CHARACTERS:
(The gestures and movements of the actors should be stiff and mechanical, as toys might be supposed to move.)
-Jumping-Jack
-Wooden Soldiers
-Toy Captain
-Doll (AKA New Doll & Rosaline)
-Fairy Prince (AKA the Mechanical Bear)
-Old Dolls
-First Old Doll
-Second Old Doll

COSTUMES & MAKE-UP:
-The Bear's costume can be hired at a good customer's; but if this is not convenient, a suit may be made of brown Canton flannel, sewed into a loose shape, somewhat like that of a little child's night-garment, the sleeves and legs ending in mittens and stockings of the same material. Make a mask of cardboard resembling in shape a blunt cornucopia, cover with Canton flannel, and end it in a hood that draws over the head. Sew ears of flannel on in the proper places. A bearskin rug may be fastened about the body over this costume, and the whole sewed up the back with large stitches that will rip easily.
-Jumping-Jack wears a mask, and in the first scene a harlequin suit and stiff, pointed cap. In the second scene he wears a long, narrow gown of checked calico, and a pointed cap of the same material, mask, and white beard.
-Doll/New Doll/Rosaline has a blond wig; her cheeks are painted very red, and her eyebrows are painted, highly arched. Her costume for the first scene is a slip of white paper-muslin, trimmed with coarse lace, through which are run pink ribbons. In the second scene she wears a pale-pink slip.
-Rosaline as the Doll is a beautiful doll, wrapped up as high as the arms in brown paper and twine.
-The Old Dolls are dressed in stiff, old-fashioned silk frocks, cheeks are very red, eyebrows arched, and have smoothly banded black wigs.
-The Toy Soldiers are costumed in imitation of the wooden soldiers that may be bought at any toy-shop.
-Fairy Prince is dressed in a tunic of shimmering silk, and wears a sword at his side.

ACT I

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Scene: Shelf in Old Mother Candytop's toy-shop. Jars of differently colored stick-candy, a Noah's Ark, and a music-box in the background. Wooden Soldiers are standing in a row. There is a harlequin Jumping-Jack, and against the wall leans a beautiful Doll, wrapped up as high as the arms in brown paper and twine.

A clock strikes twelve. For an instant afterward all remains as it was; then the music-box plays for a short time, the Toy Soldiers present arms, and the Doll turns her head stiffly from side to side, and looks about her.

JUMPING-JACK: Now the mother of the toys is fast asleep in bed; the shop is shut up so that people could not come in to buy if they wished to; and we toys can have things all our own way. Hey, there! You soldiers, what are you about?

TOY CAPTAIN: Don't interrupt us. I must keep my soldiers in good drill, for who knows but that we may be sold almost any day?

JUMPING-JACK: Stupid things! Just as if it would make any difference if you were! You would have to keep just as still if you were in the nursery as you are here.

TOY CAPTAIN: Attention! Present arms! Shoulder arms! Forward, march! (Toy Soldiers march off.)

JUMPING-JACK: How I hate them all! They are so stupid! Now I'll make a face at that doll, and scare her. (Makes a face.)

DOLL: (Covering her face with her hands.) Oh, oh! There is that dreadful Jumping-Jack again! I hate the sight of him. Please stop making faces at me!

JUMPING-JACK: Then why don't you come and talk with me?

DOLL: You're so wicked that I'm afraid. You made such faces at the plaster cat that it split all down the back, and had to be thrown out on the ash-heap.

JUMPING-JACK: Then you'd better take care, or maybe I'll make faces at you.

DOLL: No, no; you mustn't, you wicked toy!

JUMPING-JACK: (Fiercely.) Yes, I will--unless you talk with me.

(Enter the Fairy Prince.)

FAIRY PRINCE:

Star gleam,
And moonbeam!
Quick as a flash I slip through the window, and here I am! But what a strange place it is! (Looking at the Noah's Ark.) Never before did I see a house like that--no bigger than a fairy's house might be. (Examining the music-box, which plays for a moment or two.) And such a queer chest, with music coming from inside of it! (Sees the Doll.) Oh, you beautiful fairy! Who are you?

DOLL: I am a doll.

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FAIRY PRINCE: A doll! What is a doll? Pray, tell me.

JUMPING-JACK: A poor thing made of wax and cloth and sawdust.

FAIRY PRINCE: O beautiful Doll, come with me to the court of the Fairy Queen, and she will change you into a real fairy; and you shall be named Rosaline; for your cheeks are as pink as rose-leaves, and not a fairy in all the court is so beautiful as you.

DOLL: Indeed, I will gladly go with you.

JUMPING-JACK: Ah, but wait a bit; for I shall have something to say to that first.

FAIRY PRINCE: You?

JUMPING-JACK: Yes, I, the Jumping-Jack of the toy shelf! I have frightened the toy horse till he could not stand; I have made such a face at the toy cat that it split; and if you try to take the Doll away I will make a face at her, too; and then--aha!

FAIRY PRINCE: Then out, my Magic Sword! (He draws his Magic Sword and points it at the Jumping-Jack.)

   Magic blade, and hilt of gold,
   Work the charm as thou art told!
Let his face be stiff as if made of wood, so that he cannot stretch or twist it!

JUMPING-JACK: Ow! Ow! He has bewitched me so that I cannot move my face at all!

FAIRY PRINCE: And now, beautiful Doll, let us away.

DOLL: Yes, but see! I am so wrapped up in paper and tied about with string that I cannot move.

FAIRY PRINCE: Then come once more, my Magic Sword! (He cuts the string, and lays the sword down beside him, while he helps the Doll to unwrap and step from the paper. Then he drops on one knee and takes her hand in his. At this moment, the Jumping-Jack creeps up toward them and steals the Magic Sword, hiding it behind him.) There! You are free. And now away--away to the court of the Fairy Queen!

JUMPING-JACK: But first let me see if the Magic Sword will not work for me as well as you. (Pointing it toward them.)
   Magic blade, and hilt of gold,
   Work the charm as thou art told!
Let the Doll sleep and forget everything until tomorrow night, when the toys awake again!

DOLL: Oh, I am going to sleep--I feel that I'm going to sleep! My eyelids weigh like lead. Farewell, Fairy Prince, farewell--farewell! (She sleeps.)

FAIRY PRINCE: (Springing toward the Jumping-Jack.) Ah, wretched toy! Give me back my sword.

JUMPING-JACK: (Pointing the sword at the Prince.) Stop! (The Prince stands, unable to move.) What
fate is there bad enough for you? You shall be changed into a mechanical bear; and in that shape you shall wander through the world until you hold the fairy sword in your hand once more, and when that time comes you may turn its shining blade toward me. Ha! Ha!

(The Fairy Prince shrinks back in dread; and the Jumping-Jack stands, holding the Magic Sword triumphantly above him, while the music-box plays in the background.)

ACT II

Scene: The doll-house. The Old Dolls are sitting in a row in three red wooden chairs. The New Doll, Rosaline, sits in the rocking-chair beside the table. At one side of the room stands a large square chest covered with green-and-white-checked paper, and fastened with a hook--like that of the well-known toy jack-in-the-box.

The cuckoo-clock is heard crying the hour of twelve in the nursery outside. There is a moment of silence, and then the Old Dolls rise stiffly, and the New Doll turns her head from side to side, and looks about her.

NEW DOLL: Where am I?

OLD DOLLS: This is the doll-house.

NEW DOLL: And how did I come here?

OLD DOLLS: You were brought here all done up in paper, just as we were long ago; for yesterday was Christmas.

NEW DOLL: And am I to live here always?

OLD DOLLS: Yes, you will live here until you break; and you will be the mistress of the whole house, because you are so beautiful and new.

NEW DOLL: (Sighing.) Ah, me!

FIRST OLD DOLL: Why do you sigh?

NEW DOLL: I sigh when I think of the Fairy Prince, and how he, too, told me that I was beautiful.

FIRST OLD DOLL: We have never seen a fairy prince; but we have as neat and tidy a little doll-house as any one would wish to see.

SECOND OLD DOLL: Yes; and look at the little tables and chairs, and the little gilt clock that almost looks real.

NEW DOLL: Yes; it is very lovely. Ah, if the Fairy Prince could but see it!
FIRST OLD DOLL: And look at the sideboard full of little china dishes, pink china ham, and china chicken, and shiny china bread.

NEW DOLL: And what is in that box over yonder?

SECOND OLD DOLL: That we don't know. It was a Christmas present, too, and it doesn't belong in the doll-house.

NEW DOLL: Then why was it put here?

SECOND OLD DOLL: That we don't know, either.

NEW DOLL: Let us look in it. It may be that there is something in it that is more beautiful even than all the rest--something such as they do not have even in Fairyland.

OLD DOLLS: (Anxiously.) Better not open it.

JUMPING-JACK: (Sings inside the box.)
Open the lid! Open the lid!
Here inside of the box I'm hid.
Oh, what a wonderful sight you'll see
If you only will open the lid for me!

NEW DOLL: Whatever it may be inside there, it is asking me to let it out.

OLD DOLLS: Do not open it!

JUMPING-JACK: (Sings inside the box.)
Everything in the house is thine.
Open, then, beautiful Rosaline!

NEW DOLL: Do you hear? Whoever it is is calling me by the name that the Fairy Prince gave me. And now indeed I must open it; for who knows but what it may be the Fairy Prince himself? (She unlocks the lid. The Jumping-Jack flies up with a squeak. The Dolls shriek.)

JUMPING-JACK: Not the Fairy Prince, beautiful Rosaline; but nevertheless it is one who carries the prince's magic sword. Don't you remember an old friend like me?

NEW DOLL: Alas! I remember you indeed. You are the Jumping-Jack.

JUMPING-JACK: Yes, the Jumping-Jack himself. With the prince's sword I made myself a box, and fastened myself in, and followed you here; and it was only necessary that you should let me out for me to have you in my power once more!

OLD DOLLS: Shut the lid! Oh, shut the lid, and fasten him in once more!

JACK: (He steps out of the box. He is dressed in a long, tight dress of green-and-white-checked calico, and wears a pointed cap.) I can close the lid and fasten it myself. (Turning to the Doll.) Ah, lovely Doll, you thought you had escaped me; but it is not so easy to free yourself from Jumping-Jack, ugly and
despised though he may be. (The Dolls hide their faces, trembling.) Not quite so beautiful here as in the fairy's court, perhaps; but still it will do as a makeshift. And we will live here always, just as the Dolls said and you shall be my servants; for I am still the master of the Magic Sword.

ACT III

Scene: The doll-house. Jack is eating at the table. The Dolls are serving him.)

JACK: (Pushing back his chair.) My spring and whiskers! But that was the best meal I've had for many a long day. A china ham, a china chicken, and a whole china loaf! Here, you lazy Dolls, you may put the dishes away now. (Stretches and gapes.) How sleepy I feel! Oh, what a soft sofa! Just the place for a nap; and, Rosaline, you shall sit at my head and sing me to sleep. (He stretches himself on the sofa. The New Doll sits at his head.)

ROSALINE: (Sings.)

The shelf was gay, and the moon was bright,
When I saw the Fairy Prince, one night.
Now sadly I think of him, and weep--
Jumping-Jack, are you yet asleep?

(Jack yawns)

His eyes were as bright as bright could be,
Like the shining balls on the Christmas tree;

But he vanished away while I slumbered deep--
Jumping-Jack, are you yet asleep?

(Jack snores. A soft knocking is heard at the door.)

ROSALINE: Hark! Someone is knocking.

(Soft knocking again.)

BEAR: (Singing outside.)

Black and grim in my hairy hide,
I wander over the nursery wide.
What care I if I sleep or wake?
Ah, if my stitches would but break!

ROSALINE: There is some one singing outside. Look from the window, and tell me who it is; but step softly, for the Jack is asleep!

FIRST OLD DOLL: I see nothing but the great nursery window, and the mantelpiece high up above the house-top; and I hear nothing but the ticking of the cuckoo-clock in the nursery outside.

BEAR: (Sings.)
The nursery's dark and the nursery's wide,
And my works they grumble and growl inside.
Who would guess, as they look at me,
How right and slender I used to be?

ROSALINE: There! I hear it again. Look once more, and tell me, do you still see nothing?

SECOND OLD DOLL: I see nothing but the pattern of the nursery carpet, and the two great, black, hollow shoes that the child Ann took off last night.

BEAR: (Sings.)
As fair she was as a doll could be;
Her cheeks were red, and she smiled at me.
Would she know me under this hair of mine--
The beautiful waxen Rosaline?

ROSALINE: Now I can bear it no longer! I must see for myself who is singing outside, even if the Jack should waken. (She goes on tiptoe to the door and opens it. The Mechanical Bear stands without.) Ah! What a terrible bear! (She tries to shut the door, but he slips his hairy paw within so that it will not close.)

BEAR: Wait but a moment, beautiful Rosaline.

ROSALINE: What do you want here?

BEAR: Only to come in and rest awhile.

ROSALINE: No, no; that you cannot do; for if my master were to waken and find you here, he would be in a fine rage.

BEAR: But I will step so softly on my padded feet that he will not so much as turn in his sleep.

ROSALINE: Then come in. (She opens the door, and the Bear enters.)

OLD DOLLS: Oh, how ugly he is!

BEAR: Ah, I seemed fine enough to you, Rosaline, when we met on the shelf in the toy-shop!

ROSALINE: Who are you?

BEAR: Alas! Have you so soon forgotten the Fairy Prince?

ROSALINE: But you are not the Fairy Prince!

BEAR: Yes, I am he; and it was because of you that the wicked Jumping-Jack turned me into a mechanical bear.

ROSALINE: Alas! Alas! That it should be so! But fly, Fairy Prince; for the Jumping-Jack is here!
BEAR: Here?

ROSALINE: Yes; he is asleep on yonder sofa.

BEAR: *(Eagerly.)* Then he must have my Magic Sword with him.

ROSALINE: I have not seen it.

BEAR: We must look for it; for if I can only find it, all may yet be well!

ROSALINE: But if he should waken!

BEAR: We must look for it; for if I can only find it, all may yet be well!

ROSALINE: But if he should waken!

BEAR: We will move about very softly.

*(They all hunt about.)*

BEAR: What is in that chest?

ROSALINE: That is the chest the Jack came in.

BEAR: *(He works and works at the lock with his hairy paws.)* Alas! I cannot unhook it with these clumsy paws.

*(Rosaline unhooks the box. The Bear throws back the lid, and with a glad cry lifts from it his Magic Sword.)*

BEAR: My Magic Sword! My Magic Sword! And are you once more mine?

*(The Jack begins to stir and waken.)*

ROSALINE: He is awakening! We are lost!

BEAR: Not yet. Quick! Take the Magic Sword, and rip up the stitches along my back!

ROSALINE: *(Shuddering.)* Ah, I cannot do that!

BEAR: Quick, or we are indeed lost!

*(Rosaline takes the sword and cuts the stitches. The Fairy Prince throws aside the bearskin, and steps forth. Jack rises, and stands, staring at him stupidly.)*

ALL: The Fairy Prince!

FAIRY PRINCE: And now let us see whether the Magic Sword will still serve me. *(He points it toward the Jack.)*
Magic blade, and hilt of gold,
Work the charm as thou art told!

(The Jack springs toward him with a cry, and then stands as though bewitched.)

FAIRY PRINCE: Henceforth you shall have no power to twist your face. You shall have no home but the chest; and you shall be known, not as the Jumping-Jack, but as the Jack-in-the-box.

JACK: No, no!

FAIRY PRINCE: Now, into the box with you!

(Bewailing and wringing his hands, the Jack climbs into the box, where he stands stiff and motionless as plaster.)

FAIRY PRINCE: And now, lovely Rosaline, let us away.

OLD DOLLS: But shall we never see you again?

ROSALINE: Yes, yes; when I am a fairy I will often come to see you. You will see me come slipping in through the window on a moonbeam, to tell you of the happy life in the fairy world.

(A cock crows.)

FAIRY PRINCE: Hark! The cock crows! The housemaid stirs, and the night-moth is looking for a hollow where he may hide.

PRINCE AND ROSALINE: Away--away to Fairyland!