

# **Once Upon a Crime (In the Twilite Zoan)**

By Butch Maxwell and Bert Furioli

## At a Glance

---

**Genre:** Interactive Musical Comedy Murder Mystery

**Running Time:** Variable — presented across a three-act dinner-theatre evening; timing depends on audience interaction and meal service

**Cast:** 5 performers (2W, 3M), plus brief audience roles

**Setting:** A storybook kingdom, played in and around the audience; Grandma's bubbling cauldron anchors the action

**Audience Participation:** Extensive — audience members appear as a Mirror Reflection, Goldilocks, a telephone Operator, and the final Narrator; the full audience questions suspects and completes Detective Cards

## Ideal Venues

---

- Dinner theatres
- Community theatres
- Fundraisers
- Performing arts organizations
- Civic organizations
- Corporate and private events

## Program Notes

---

Old King Cole is weary of royalty and longs to return to his carefree former life as a frog. Only the wicked witch who enchanted him can lift the curse — and she is now hiding in plain sight as Grandma, an apparently sweet old lady with a bubbling cauldron and a suspicious interest in dinner guests.

When Little Red Riding Hood arrives with Big Bad Wolf Jr. close behind, familiar fairy-tale grudges collide with the eerie narration of Odd Sterling. A poisoned stew leaves the narrator dead, every suspect has a motive, and the audience must question the characters, weigh the clues, and identify the killer before this fractured fairy tale reaches its decidedly unhappily-ever-after ending.

## The Mystery Theatre Experience

---

An evening with Mystery Theatre Unlimited begins before the first scene. Upon arrival, guests receive a program, Detective Card, pen or pencil, and a Character Fun Fact Card. As the cast mingles in character, guests are encouraged to read their Fun Facts, exchange information, and meet the suspects before the mystery officially begins.

# The Evening's Format

---

A typical performance follows this sequence:

1. **Guest Arrival & Character Mingling** — Characters circulate, meet the audience, and establish relationships before the scripted action begins.
2. **Act One** — Odd Sterling introduces the fairy-tale kingdom as Old King Cole hunts for the witch who cursed him, Grandma prepares her stew, Little Red Riding Hood makes a delivery, and Big Bad Wolf Jr. pursues an old grievance.
3. **Dinner / Intermission** — Characters may remain available for informal interaction as appropriate.
4. **Act Two** — The suspects converge around Grandma's cauldron. Odd Sterling samples the poisoned stew and dies, leaving four characters with motives and opportunities.
5. **Question & Answer Period** — Audience members question the suspects directly.
6. **Guessing Break** — Guests complete Detective Cards identifying the killer and explaining their deductions.
7. **Act Three** — An audience Narrator presents the evidence, the solution is revealed, and the story reaches its final musical exit.

## Audience Participants

---

Once Upon a Crime draws several audience members into short, guided comedy bits. The cast selects and coaches each participant in the moment; no advance preparation or theatrical experience is required.

The audience roles are:

- Mirror Reflection — interacts with Grandma during Act One
- Goldilocks — interacts with Big Bad Wolf Jr. during Act One
- Operator — assists Little Red Riding Hood during a telephone exchange in Act One
- Narrator — reads the solution with the cast during Act Three

The entire audience also participates by questioning the suspects and completing Detective Cards before the solution is revealed.

## Characters

---

The show is played by five performers, with four additional roles assigned to audience volunteers.

**Old King Cole**

Not the jolly old soul of legend. Once a frog, he wants the witch who transformed him to reverse the spell — and he is prepared to do whatever it takes.

### **Little Red Riding Hood**

Now grown up and running her own delivery business. She is famous for leading the original Big Bad Wolf to his death at Grandma's house and has developed a formidable attitude.

### **Grandma**

The quintessential little old lady and celebrated cook — except that beneath the apron she is the wicked witch who cursed Old King Cole.

### **Big Bad Wolf Jr.**

The original Big Bad Wolf's son. He has never lived up to his father's fearsome reputation and is determined to avenge his death.

### **Odd Sterling**

The strange, cigarette-wielding creator and narrator of a spooky anthology series, forever steering the evening toward another dimension.

## **Character Fun Facts**

---

Before the performance begins, each guest table receives one Character Fun Fact Card. The cards introduce the suspects, encourage conversation, and give performers natural material for the pre-show mingle.

**Old King Cole** is looking for the old witch who cast a curse upon him many years ago.

**Little Red Riding Hood** has an attitude problem. She has an attitude; you got a problem with that?

**Grandma** narrowly escaped the Salem bonfires by hopping on her broom and flying away.

**Big Bad Wolf Jr.** wants nothing more than to avenge the murder of his father.

**Odd Sterling** was terrorized as a child by his mother's telling of Grimm's Fairy Tales.

## **Key Props, Costumes, and Sound Needs**

---

- A visible cauldron with a “Please do not feed the audience” sign, plus a ladle or large spoon and assorted spice containers
- An old boot used as a clue
- An oven mitt with a demonic face, played as the puppet Lucifer
- A picnic basket and red hooded cloak for Little Red Riding Hood
- Wolf ears, gloves, furry feet, and a sheepskin disguise for Big Bad Wolf Jr.

- A crown and robe or cloak for Old King Cole
- A witch's dress or related costume pieces concealed beneath Grandma's apron
- A dark suit and prop cigarette for Odd Sterling
- A paper bag with a silly face drawn on it
- A bowl, a glass of water, Detective Cards, pencils, and a prepared Narrator card
- Playback for the show's musical numbers and sound cues

## ACT ONE

*ODD STERLING enters.*

ODD STERLING

Good evening. I'm Odd Sterling. Tonight, I am going to tell you a fairy tale. A scary fairy tale. You will be so scared, you will probably do this -

*Odd runs around frightened and puts a bag over his head. It has a silly face drawn on it.*

But don't do this, because your kids will make fun of you.

***SFX: “The Twilight Zone” theme.***

You unlock this door with the key of imagination. No, not that one. That's the key to your garage door. No, not that one. That's the key to your front door. No, not that one. That's the key to a brighter future at West Virginia Northern Community College.

That's it. Only that key will open this door. Beyond it is another dimension, a dimension not only of sight and sound but of mind; a dimension as vast as space and timeless as... time. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, of things and ideas, between science and superstition, between a rock and a hard place. It lies between the pit of man's arms, in the summit of his beer belly, and in the lint between his toes. This is the dimension of imagination. Or dementia. I always get those two things mixed up. That's the signpost up ahead - your next stop, the Twilite Zoan.

Submitted for your approval: A king who, as legend would have you believe, is a jolly old soul. Yet this king is haunted by a past from which he cannot recover. Once Upon a Time — in the Black Light Zone.

*OLD KING COLE enters.*

***SFX. A fanfare.***

*Old King Cole looks around for the source of the fanfare.*

First, we come upon a castle. And every castle has a king. This is Old King Cole. A distant relative of Nat. He is a jolly old soul.

## ONCE UPON A CRIME

OLD KING COLE

A jolly old soul is me.

ODD STERLING

He calls for his pipe.

OLD KING COLE

Where is my pipe?

ODD STERLING

He calls for his bowl.

OLD KING COLE

Where is my bowl?

ODD STERLING

He calls for something to put into his pipe.

OLD KING COLE

That's why they call me "Your Highness."

ODD STERLING

And it explains why he is such a jolly old soul.

OLD KING COLE

Where are my fiddlers three?

ODD STERLING

We can't afford real musicians. That's why we have the pre-recorded music.

OLD KING COLE

That's just as well. I hate fiddle music. In fact, I hate my bowl and pipe. And I hate being a king.

ODD STERLING

Yes, despite the PR, Old King Cole is not really a jolly old soul at all.

OLD KING COLE

I wasn't always a king, you know. I used to be a frog. Until a wicked old witch turned me into a prince.

ODD STERLING

Naturally, then, the prince grew up to be a king. After his father croaked.

OLD KING COLE

I wish I was back on my lily pad. Catching flies all day —

*[Sticking out tongue to catch a fly]*

— saying “rivet” over and over again.

ODD STERLING

Actually, I believe that frogs say “ribet” not “rivet.”

OLD KING COLE

Oh, so you speak amphibian?

ODD STERLING

Actually, I speak fluent salamander.

OLD KING COLE

*[Hopping across the room]*

If I could only find that witch, maybe I could convince her to lift this spell and turn me back into a frog!

ODD STERLING

But the king has long since lost touch with the whereabouts of the wicked old witch. After her last sighting in “Oz.”

OLD KING COLE

I’ve tried everything. I hired private investigators. I did an Internet search. I even took all my horses and men off the job of putting Humpty Dumpty together again. Alas, to no avail. Rivet.

ODD STERLING

Frustrated, yet determined to find the witch, the king began a house-to-house search of the entire kingdom.

OLD KING COLE

*[Holding the boot.]*

My only clue is this boot she left behind.

*The King exits with boot, hopping.*

ODD STERLING

And, as it would happen in stories such as this, the king was about to visit a certain old grandma this very day. A grandma who is not just a grandma, but also a wicked old witch.

*GRANDMA enters. She wears an apron with objects in the*

*pockets and carries a large, oversize spoon and an oven mitt with a demonic face on it.*

GRANDMA

*[Cackling a standard witch cackle.]*

Hee hee hee hee!

ODD STERLING

Knowing that the king is about to pay her a visit, Grandma is busily preparing a meal for her guest.

GRANDMA

It never hurts to suck up to people in power.

*She drops a piece of dry ice into the caldron, causing it to steam over as she stirs it.*

*[In her witch voice.]*

Double, double, toil and trouble... Here's a piece of Double Bubble!

*[Dropping gum into the caldron and looking at audience.]*

You're laughing now, but this is your dinner.

*[Tasting the brew.]*

Hmm. It needs something. But what? Oh wait! I know!

*[Picking up a fish tail and holding it over the cauldron.]*

Sing for me now, Ariel!

*[Dropping it in.]*

See if they can find you now, Nemo!

*[Tasting the brew again.]*

No, still not right.

*[To her oven mitt.]*

What do you think, Lucifer?

*.Grandma holds it up like a hand puppet and talks for it.*

LUCIFER

I don't know. Did you put in any bat's wings?

GRANDMA

Yes.

LUCIFER

Hair of the dog?

GRANDMA

*[Going to a bald man.]*

All of them.

LUCIFER

Then there's only one thing left —

GRANDMA

... a virgin.

*She and the puppet look around the room.*

LUCIFER

We're out of luck tonight.

GRANDMA

Ah! I know just the thing! It needs — meat!

LUCIFER

Do we have any Hansel and Gretel left?

GRANDMA

No. But I think it needs something else. Something more carnivorous. Maybe like a dog, or a bear, or... a wolf. Yes, a wolf! That would be perfect! Now, how do I find a wolf

*She goes to a hand-held "mirror" that actually has no glass in it; it is just a frame. Peering into it, framing a selected audience member in it.*

Romper, bomper, stomper, boo. Tell me, tell me, tell me do...

MIRROR REFLECTION

*[An audience member.]*

Don't you mean "Mirror, mirror on the wall"?

GRANDMA

Well, you're not on the wall, are you?

MIRROR REFLECTION

No, but you're off the wall.

## ONCE UPON A CRIME

GRANDMA

Watch it. I'm a mean old witch, remember? But, while we're on the subject, then, who is the fairest one of all?

MIRROR REFLECTION

I think I'm going to have to take the Fifth on that one.

GRANDMA

*[Aside.]*

How did I get a smart aleck mirror?

MIRROR REFLECTION

Don't criticize me. I'm just a reflection of you!

GRANDMA

In that case, I better get my hair done right away.

*[To mirror.]*

Listen, I need to find a nice animal for my stew tonight. Can you send me one?

MIRROR REFLECTION

What do I look like, Uber Eats?

GRANDMA

I'd break you, but I don't need seven years bad luck.

*[To Lucifer.]*

Now what am I going to do?

LUCIFER

Why don't you send out for Little Red Riding Hood?

GRANDMA

Do you think she could bring me a wolf?

LUCIFER

She lured one in here before.

GRANDMA

You're right, of course! It's a simply devilish idea!

*[Cackling.]*

Hee hee hee hee.

## ODD STERLING

Certain that her plan will work, Grandma decides to have the unwitting Red Riding Hood deliver a package with the sole purpose of luring a wolf into her wicked stew.

*Grandma dials a cell phone.*

Using her magic, she sends for Red — Wait a minute, that's a cell phone.

## GRANDMA

No, actually, it's a *spell* phone. No more chanting over entrails for me. Just punch a few buttons and —

*She dials.*

## OPERATOR

*[An audience member]*

If you'd like to make a spell, please hang up and cast again.

## GRANDMA

Darn!

*She dials again.*

*LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD enters carrying another mobile phone. She positions herself away from Grandma.*

## ODD STERLING

Meanwhile, at the offices of Red Riding Hood, Inc...

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Into the phone.]*

Riding Hood, here.

## GRANDMA

Oh, Red Rover, Red Rover, I dare you to come over.

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Aside.]*

This woman really annoys me.

*[Into the phone.]*

What do you need this time, Grandma? More Depends?

## GRANDMA

Oh, no, dear, I'm quite continent. Actually, I need some

special spices. I am preparing a dinner for a very important guest.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Special spices? All right, I'll have the stork drop them off. He's flying out that way to make another delivery to the Old Woman in the Shoe.

GRANDMA

No, no! I want you to deliver them yourself.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Look, Grandma, I'm a little busy, here. I just found out that my accountants, Winken, Blinken and Nod, were embezzling from the company.

GRANDMA

Oh, please? I'll pay you!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

You better believe you'll pay me.

GRANDMA

I'll tell you what: You could stay for dinner. I'll introduce you to my special guest!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

A man, I suppose. Look, Grandma, I'm sick of your trying to fix me up with guys. They're always such losers!

GRANDMA

Nonsense, dear! I select only the best available bachelors for you.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Like those seven dwarfs?

GRANDMA

Now, now. Woke up, dear. They're not "dwarves." They are "vertically challenged."

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

They were facially challenged, too! They're creepy!

GRANDMA

There was no "Creepy." Let's see, there was Sickly, Elderly, Attention Deficit-ly...

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Aside.]*

You see what I put up with? How long is it gonna take this old lady to die, anyway?

GRANDMA

Anyway, this one is different. This is the king!

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Wait a minute, are you trying to *fix* me up with King Kong again? One date with him was enough.

*[Muttering]*

Always pawing at me.

GRANDMA

No, dear, it's Old King Cole. If you come right away, you'll get to meet him.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Aside.]*

A real king! If I suck up to him, maybe I could get the Royal Delivery Contracts.

*[Into the phone.]*

I'll be there.

ODD STERLING

Unable to resist the temptation to grab some graft, Little Red Riding Hood makes preparations to leave at once for her grandma's house.

*Little Red Riding Hood exits, still holding the phone to her ear.*

GRANDMA

*[Still into the phone.]*

And don't forget to take the route straight through the woods. No need to worry about the Big Bad Wolf, my dear. He was killed years ago.

*[She hangs up.]*

*Well, that's taken care of. Now, where is my caldron cozy?*  
*[Exit.]*

ODD STERLING

But, of course, Grandma knows full well that the woods are full of wolves. And that one is sure to follow Red Riding Hood.

*BIG BAD WOLF enters.*

***SFX: The wolf theme from “Peter & the Wolf”***

Submitted for your approval: The son of a legend. Big Bad Wolf, Junior.

BIG BAD WOLF

I hate it when they call me “Junior.” Why can’t they call me ***bad***? Or just “W?”

ODD STERLING

And as wolves do, he stalked the woods, waiting for prey to pounce upon.

BIG BAD WOLF

Actually, I’m a vegetarian. I’m really quite harmless.

ODD STERLING

It was true. This Big Bad Wolf was nowhere nearly as menacing as his namesake.

BIG BAD WOLF

But I want to be! I mean, I can be really nasty!

*He snarls.*

How was that?

GOLDILOCKS

*[An audience member.]*

You know, as big bad wolves go, you’re pathetic.

BIG BAD WOLF

Oh look, it’s Goldilocks! Aren’t you supposed to be at the Three Bears’ house?

GOLDILOCKS

Things got a little ugly after it got around I was sleeping around in their beds. So, I’ve been crashing over at the Three Little Pigs’ place.

## ONCE UPON A CRIME

## BIG BAD WOLF

They have a place? I thought it — uh, blew down.

Goldilocks.

No, it burnt down. How did I know you can't smoke in a house of twigs?

## BIG BAD WOLF

Look, can you put the word around that I was responsible for that? It would really help my reputation as a big bad wolf.

## GOLDILOCKS

Yeah, the porkers told me you're pathetic. You couldn't even work up a decent huff and puff

## BIG BAD WOLF

That's not true! I'm the Big Bad Wolf! That's what I do! I huff and puff and stuff

Goldilocks.

You're Big Bad Wolf, Jr. And you aren't a shadow of the wolf your father was!

## BIG BAD WOLF

I know. Rest his soul! I'll never feel truly big and bad until I am able to avenge my father's untimely death at the hands of an employee of the king.

## GOLDILOCKS

Well, I have a tip for you. The king will be at a little soirée this evening at the old lady's house in the woods.

## BIG BAD WOLF

What old lady? What house? Where is this?

## GOLDILOCKS

I don't know where it is, but I do know that Little Red Riding Hood is headed there.

## BIG BAD WOLF

How do you know that?

## GOLDILOCKS

I've been paying attention to the narrator.

## BIG BAD WOLF

There's one, anyway. Well, this is excellent news! Now, all I

have to do is get this Little Red Riding Hood person to show me where the house is, and vengeance will be mine!

*Big Bad Wolf puts a sheep's skin on.*

ODD STERLING

In order to keep Little Red Riding Hood from becoming suspicious, the wolf disguises himself as a harmless farm animal.

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Sneezing.]*

Darn! I'm allergic to wool.

ODD STERLING

And before long, the wolf spies his prey. And then he applies his spray.

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Spraying himself.]*

Flan-**nel** Number Five.

**SFX – “The Twilight Zone” theme.**

ODD STERLING

Submitted for your approval: A hooded girl with a propensity for wearing red... now all grown up and running a courier service for fairy tale characters. Little does she know that her next delivery will be to an address... of the Black Light Zone.

*Little Red Riding Hood enters carrying a basket.*

BIG BAD WOLF

**You're** Little Red Riding Hood?

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

What's it to ya?

BIG BAD WOLF

**Little** —?

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

I grew up!

*[Imposing on him.]*

Well, most of us do.

BIG BAD WOLF

Allow me to introduce myself. I am Big Bad er, uh —  
Baaaaaad Sheep.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Isn't Little Bo Peep looking for you?

BIG BAD WOLF

No — I mean, well, yes, something like that. I was, uh, at school with Mary and I got expelled. Now I'll never get my sheepskin.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

We'll, get out of my way before I kick your fleece! I'm on a mission.

BIG BAD WOLF

Ah, well —

*[Sideling up to her.]*

— perhaps I can help you.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Get away from me, you give me the woolies.

BIG BAD WOLF

Oh, please let me help. I'm sort of in between jobs.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

That's not my problem. Maybe you can go get a job letting insomniacs count you.

BIG BAD WOLF

Oh, well... Miss, er, Hood? May I call you Miss Hood?

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

That's pretty personal. You can use my initials. I'm LRRH.

BIG BAD WOLF

That's a lot to say. How about simply "Red"?

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

Is that some kind of obscure 80s music joke? Listen, *Baaaaaad Sheep*, LRRH has PMS so don't give me no BS, okay?

## BIG BAD WOLF

You wouldn't happen to be going to Grandma's house, would you?

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

As a matter of fact, I am. I have a delivery from my company, Red X.

## BIG BAD WOLF

You know, the wandering the woods can be very dangerous. Perhaps, for your own safety, I should escort you.

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

**You? You're** gonna protect **me**? Ha! Listen, Lamb Chop, go back to the wool factory or wherever you came from.

**SFX: Music — "Little Red Riding Hood"**

## BIG BAD WOLF

*[Howling, then singing.]*

Hey there Little Red Riding Hood, you sure are looking good. You're everything that a Big Bad Sheep could want

*[Speaking, aside.]*

You think she's buying this?

*[Singing]*

Little Red Riding Hood, I don't think little big girls should Go walking in these spooky old woods alone

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Spoken.]*

What's it to you, fleece head?

## BIG BAD WOLF

*[Singing]*

What big lies I have

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Singing]*

The kind that make me mad

## BIG BAD WOLF

*[Singing]*

So, just to see that you don't get chased  
I think I ought to walk with you for a ways

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Spoken]*

Leave me alone, will ya?

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Singing]*

What big fists you have

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Singing]*

They're sure to pound someone bad

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Singing]*

So, before you get to grandma's place  
I think you ought to walk with me to be safe

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Spoken]*

You're the one who isn't safe.

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Singing.]*

I'm gonna keep my sheep suit on  
'Til I'm sure that you've been shown  
That I can be trusted walking with you alone

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Spoken]*

You're gonna get busted, that's what you're gonna get.

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Singing.]*

Little Red Riding Hood, I'd like to follow if I could  
But you might think I want to kill the king so I won't  
What a big smile I have, the better to fool you with

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Spoken]*

As if I'm fooled.

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Singing.]*

Little Red Riding Hood, I'm so sick of being good  
I'll try to keep up my lies, just to walk close by your side  
Maybe you'll see things my way  
Before we get to grandma's place

## ONCE UPON A CRIME

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Spoken]*

Fat chance!

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Singing]*

Little Red Riding Hood, you sure are looking good  
*You're everything that a Big Bad Wolf could want [Howl.]*

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Spoken]**Will you stop it? [Exit.]*

BIG BAD WOLF

*[Spoken]**I mean — baaa, baaa, baaa... [Exit.]*

ODD STERLING

Meanwhile, at Grandma's house in the woods, the king has  
arrived.

*Old King Cole enters carrying the boot.****SFX: A fanfare.***

OLD KING COLE

*[Looking around for the source of the fanfare.]*

Another house, another foot. It's a smelly job, but someone  
has to do it.

GRANDMA

*[Enter, behind him.]*

May I help you, young man?

OLD KING COLE

*[Startled, dropping the boot.]*

Oh!

*[Turning.]*

Hello there.

GRANDMA

Shall I wait for the other shoe to drop?

OLD KING COLE

*[Picking it up.]*

No, no, I only have the one.

*[Extending his hand]*

I am Old King Cole.

GRANDMA

I gathered that. The crown was my first clue. Besides, I think I saw you during the mingle.

*[Looking at the boot.]*

That's a strange gift. You couldn't bring flowers?

OLD KING COLE

Oh this? Oh, no, I just found this boot and was returning it. I thought it might be yours.

GRANDMA

I don't think so, dearie. That boot has been out of style for 30 years. Come in, come in! Dinner will be ready soon. I hope you like stew.

OLD KING COLE

Yes, that would be fine. Lovely place you have here. Who decorated it? Count Dracula?

GRANDMA

*[Cackling.]*

How did you guess? The count has great taste. His nickname is Vlad the Upholsterer.

OLD KING COLE

Perhaps while we are waiting for dinner, you would try this boot on for me.

GRANDMA

Why? If you only have one of them, anyway...

OLD KING COLE

Because I am the king and it would please me.

LUCIFER

*[The oven mitt.]*

Don't do it, Grandma! Don't do it!

OLD KING COLE

Rather outspoken for kitchenware, don't you think?

## ONCE UPON A CRIME

GRANDMA

*[Hiding the mitt.]*

Oh, never mind him!

*[Sitting, then, to the king.]*

Is this some kind of fetish you have?

*[Taking off one of her shoes.]*

Whatever turns you on, your highness.

*Old King Cole kneels and puts the boot on her foot. As it becomes clear that it fits her, he rises.***SFX: A big crescendo**

OLD KING COLE

Why, it's the perfect size for you!

GRANDMA

*[Waking around in it, as if shoe shopping.]*

Well, it is a little snug in the instep. Do you have this one in a patent leather?

OLD KING COLE

If the shoe fits, Grandma, or should I call you — Wicked Old Witch?

GRANDMA

What?

OLD KING COLE

I know just who you are! Remember me?

*[Flipping his tongue out as a frog.]*

Rivet!

GRANDMA

Why, you are that annoying frog who I transformed into a prince! And by the way, you're supposed to say, "Ribet."

OLD KING COLE

Suddenly everyone's a linguist. That's right! I'm the frog. What a horrid spell you cast upon me.

GRANDMA

But I turned you into a handsome young prince. What happened?

## OLD KING COLE

I grew up! I'm an old king now, but not too old to get my revenge!

## GRANDMA

Revenge for what? I rescued you from a dull life in the swamps, hanging around with the Ugly Duckling and that troll under the bridge.

## OLD KING COLE

I enjoyed being a frog! And I demand that you restore me to my beautiful amphibian body.

## GRANDMA

Look, I'm a wicked old witch, remember? As long as you're miserable this way, I feel I've done my job.

## OLD KING COLE

If you won't remove the spell, then the only way to break it is to kill you!

## GRANDMA

Well, certainly, but you don't want to do that before dinner, do you? These people haven't even eaten yet. Besides, I am expecting my granddaughter with the final ingredient any minute now.

## ODD STERLING

As if on cue, at that very moment, Little Red Riding Hood appears.

*[Looking toward entrance.]*

Ahem! I said, "As if on cue, at that very moment, Little Red Riding Hood appears."

*[Out the exit.]*

Hey! Red! Get the lead out!

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Entering.]*

Yo, Grandma. I brought your package for you.

## GRANDMA

Oh, very good, my dear! Come in and meet the king!

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Scrutinizing.]*

This goofy-looking man is supposed to be a king? I guess all those things we hear about royal inbreeding is true.

## OLD KING COLE

I may be strange of stature, but I am great of girth.

## GRANDMA

*[To Little Red Riding Hood]*

Can't you ever find something nice to say?

*[To the king.]*

Your Highness, this is my granddaughter, Little Red Riding Hood.

## OLD KING COLE

*[Looking up at Little Red Riding Hood then, to Grandma.]*

I see you and I have different definitions of "little."

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[To the king]*

My, what a big... crown you have.

## OLD KING COLE

The better to be seen, my dear.

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

And what a big ego you have.

## OLD KING COLE

*[Looking at tunic.]*

Did I spill breakfast on myself?

*[A beat]*

Oh! You said "ego," not "Eggo®."

*The King walks away from her.*

## LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD

*[Looking at his butt.]*

And what a big behind you have!

## OLD KING COLE

*[Turning back to her.]*

The better to – sit on my throne, my dear.