

The Play's the Thing - Scene 1

The Scene: A large sunlit room. There are three doors leading from the room, and a large picture window, looking out over rolling countryside. (Doors are not labelled, but door one leads to a small cupboard, door two to the kitchen, and door three to the library)

The Cast of Characters: Freddy, a young boy, who is staring out of the window, his hand resting thoughtfully on his chin.

Freddy: Hmmmm....

He tilts his head to the other side, and rests his chin on the other hand

Freddy: Hmmmmm....

Door three opens suddenly. Another boy, Wil, bounds into the room

Wil: Hi Bro! How are ya?

Freddy: Good morning, young brother, and how are you?

Wil: Eh?

Freddy: I said, Good morning, young sir, and how do you do, today?

Wil: Why are you talking funny?

Freddy: We're in a play. They always talk funny in plays.

Wil: Yes, indeed they do, my good man. Like that!

Freddy: Yes!

Wil: Yes!

They move purposefully to the window and talk silently to each other for a short time. Wil walks to centre stage

Wil: Where is the Princess?

Freddy: Good question! I haven't seen Princess Clara for days. I wonder if she wandered up yonder?

Wil: Up where?

Freddy: Up yonder. I did just ponder whether she'd taken a wander up yonder hill...

Wil looks confused

Wil: Where is yonder?

Freddy: (pointing towards the green hills through the window) Over there!

Wil: Hmmmm....Freddy: (pondering, and looking towards the hills) Hmmmm....

Wil: Well, I can't just stand here pondering all day! I'm off to see Hardy. He's working in the library. Wil exits stage left, through door one. Freddy looks out of the window once more and looks at his watch. Thirty seconds pass. There is a distant coughing sound. Wil re-emerges from door one.

Freddy: Wrong door? Wil: Wrong door. Just a cupboard. Bye! (he exits stage centre through door two) Door Two re-opens. Wil returns. Freddy: Wrong door? Wil: Wrong door. Just a kitchen. Bye! (he exits stage right through door three) Door Three immediately re-opens. Wil jumps back into the room. Freddy: Too dark? Wil: Definitely too dark in there. I'm going back this way! (he exits once again through door one)

From outside the window, there is a grunting sound. Freddy makes his way over to the window, and opens it.

Freddy: Hello! Who's there! (no reply). Hello! (louder this time).

Sheep (or Goat): Baaaaa!

Freddy: Eh? What?

Sheep: Baaaaa!

Freddy looks down outside the window. A goat is grazing just below the window ledge. In the distance a small figure appears on the horizon.

Freddy: Hey! Who's that?

Door One opens, and Wil steps out, brushing dust from his arms and body

Wil: (rushing to window) Who's what?

Goat: Baaaaa!

Freddy: Look, over there (pointing), over yonder!

Wil: (yawning) Yonder, yonder, yonder...

Freddy: No, over there! Who is that?

Clearly visible now is a small figure running over the hills and dales towards them. The compact figure is moving fast, and is being pursued by a group of animals.

Freddy: Wow! That guy can really run!

Wil: Well, so would you if you were being chased by a flock of killer goats!

The small figure (whose name is Michael) arrives beneath the window, out of breath.

Freddy: Hello, who are you?

Michael: Huh? (he struggles for breath)

Freddy: What brings you here? What do you want? Why are you here?

Michael: Me? Oh, I'm just a lonely goatherd. I've been searching for XabiAlonso everywhere (he bends down to cuddle the goat by the window)

Wil: XabiAlonso?

Michael: Yes! My fastest goat! (he strokes the animal's back proudly)

Wil: What is a goatherd, anyway?

Michael: What do you think? I herd goats. Goats go this way, I herd them. Goats go that way, I herd them this way. Goats run off, I herd them. Herding, that's all. Just herding.

Wil: What is herding?

Michael: Look at me? Am I stupid? I've just run over that mountain, with a herd of goats. We were looking for our last goat who had run off. I kept my goats in a group. I herded them. Herding, see? Herding.

Wil: OK. So why are you here?

Michael: I'm looking for the Princess. Have you seen her?

There is a loud bang in the distance. Door Three opens. Hardy, a taller boy, walks in, carrying a small sports bag with the handle of a tennis racket sticking out of it

Hardy: Ah, hello! Tally Ho and JoJolly-dee! Anyone for a spot of tennis? (he sets his bag down on the ground with a heavy thud)

Freddy: We're actually looking for the Princess.

Hardy: Princess, princess? What princess?

Freddy: Princess Clara of course. Have you seen her?

Hardy: Erm...No, no, haven't seen her anywhere! Tennis, anyone?

Door Two opens. Michael walks in, followed by twelve goats. He opens door one. Goats one and two enter door one. He shuts the door. Goat three manages to open door three with its teeth. Goats three, four and five enter door three. Michael shuts door three behind them. He opens door two. Goats six, seven and eight have opened the fridge and are proceeding to devour the contents. Michael hurriedly shuts the door. He starts running from door to door. He opens door one. Goats one and two exit door one and go through door three, which goat five has forced open. Goats nine and ten are busy chewing on the curtains by the window. Hardy is talking to XabiAlonso. Goat twelve has gone to sleep.

Michael: I MUST find her!

Freddy and Hardy (together): Well, she's not in HERE!

Michael: Well, I'm going out to look for her!

Michael exits stage left, pursued by goats. They exit through door one.

Freddy: Strange. Very strange.

There is a scrabbling noise from behind door one. Michael, plus goats, emerge from the store cupboard. They exit through door two. The scene closes with munching sounds coming from the kitchen.