



READER'S THEATER SCRIPT

BARTHOLOMEW BALDERDASH

AND THE

KINDNESS MACHINE



By Page Turner



Scripts are what actors use when they're in a play or a movie. This script can also be used to put on a play or reader's theater performance.



PARTS OF A SCRIPT

CHARACTERS/CAST

Characters are the people (or animals) in the play. Together, the people in a play are called a cast.

DIALOGUE

Dialogue is what the characters in the script say.

SCENE

A scene is like a chapter in a book. When the action or setting changes there will often be a new scene.

SETTING

This is where the scene takes place.

STAGE DIRECTIONS

Stage directions tell the actors what to do.

These are not said out loud.

We have named these Stage Direction and used parentheses and italics so you don't confuse them with the words the actors say. This is an example of how the stage directions look

NARRATOR

The Queen modeled a very snazzy hat shaped just like a chicken.

And Now...On With the Show!



BARTHOLOMEW BALDERDASH AND THE KINDNESS MACHINE

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Narrator
Bartholomew Balderdash
Chi Chi The Chinchilla
Queen Beneficent
Magic Mirror
Miss Collywobbles
Sir Reginald Flapdoodle
Chef Cannoli
Bakery Customer #1
Bakery Customer #2
Bakery Customer #3
Birthday Girl
Birthday Party Kids
People In The Crowd At The Queen's Contest
Kinder Winder Man With Rope
A Witch
A Boy With A Smile Stretcher

SCENE 1

SETTING: Outside Bartholomew's Workshop

NARRATOR

Once upon a time a young inventor
named Bartholomew Balderdash dreamed
of inventing something special.

BARTHOLOMEW

I want to create something
big and important!



NARRATOR

He told his pet chinchilla, Chi Chi.

Chi Chi

Squeak!

NARRATOR

Chi Chi agreed.

SCENE 2

SETTING: The Queen's castle

NARRATOR

Meanwhile, in another part of the kingdom lived a Queen with a Magic Mirror. No, not that Queen. This Queen was generous and good. Her name was Queen Beneficent. Every morning Queen Beneficent looked in her Mirror and said...

Stage Direction

[The Queen looks into her mirror.]

QUEEN

Mirror Mirror on the wall, show me the KINDEST ones of all.

NARRATOR

And the Mirror would show her
all the kind people in the kingdom.

But one day the Mirror said...



MIRROR

Queen, I hate to say it, but no one is acting very kindly today.

QUEEN

Oh, dear. What can we do?

MIRROR

Well, I'm just thinking out loud, but why
don't we have a Kindness Contest?

QUEEN

Oh, Mirror. That's a fabulous idea. The person with the best idea for
spreading kindness shall be awarded the royal medal of
Compassion Helpfulness Insight Caring Kindness Empathy
and Niceness.

MIRROR

<GASP> Not the Royal Chicken?

QUEEN

Yes! It even comes with this snazzy hat.

NARRATOR

The Queen modeled a very snazzy
hat shaped just like a chicken.

MIRROR

Delightful!



SCENE 3

SETTING: Outside Bartholomew's workshop

NARRATOR

The Queen sent messengers throughout
the kingdom. When Bartholomew
heard about the contest, he said...

BARTHOLOMEW

This is it, Chi Chi, I'm going to
invent a Big and Important Kindness
Machine and win the contest!

Chi Chi
Squeak!

Stage Direction
[Bartholomew builds a machine.]

NARRATOR

Bartholomew built his machine
with gizmos, gadgets and doohickies.
He even used a thing-a-ma-bob or two.

Chi Chi
Squeak!



BARTHOLOMEW

You're right. A Kindness Machine must use kind words.

Huh...where can we go to find words?

Chi Chi

Squeak!

BARTHOLOMEW

Yes! The library!

Stage Direction

[The Magic Mirror is watching off to the side.

Bartholomew doesn't see it.]

SCENE 4

SETTING: The library

Stage Direction

[The Magic Mirror is still watching everything that's going on.]

NARRATOR

Bartholomew and Chi Chi pushed
his machine to the library where he
found Miss Collywobbles, the librarian,
balancing on a huge stack of books.

Miss Collywobbles wobbled!



BARTHOLOMEW

Whoa...careful Miss Collywobbles!

NARRATOR

Bartholomew held the stack of books for Miss Collywobbles.

MISS COLLYWOBBLES

Oh my gosh. Oh, thank you Bartholomew.

BARTHOLOMEW

You're welcome.

Miss Collywobbles can you
help me collect words for my
Big and Important Kindness Machine?

MISS COLLYWOBBLES

Of course. But first I must shelve all of these books.

BARTHOLOMEW

I'll help

MISS COLLYWOBBLES

Oh, that's very kind.

MIRROR

It certainly is.



NARRATOR

When they were finished putting everything where it belonged, Miss Collywobbles climbed on top of the Kindness Machine with a stack of books. As she fed them into the machine, a long paper appeared filled with thoughtful words.

Stage Direction

[As Miss Collywobbles feeds books into the machine, it begins saying kind words: Considerate, Compassionate, Thoughtful, Joyful, Gentle, Empathetic, Friendly, etc.]

Chi Chi
Squeak!

BARTHOLOMEW

You're right Chi Chi. Kind words are important. But so are kind actions. Who would perform kind actions?

Chi Chi
Squeak!

BARTHOLOMEW

Yeah, a kind actor! Right, to the theater!

Stage Direction

[The Magic Mirror is still watching.]



SCENE 5

SETTING: An empty theater

NARRATOR

Bartholomew pushed his machine to the theater where they found the great actor Sir Reginald Flapdoodle sobbing on stage.

SIR FLAPDOODLE

Boo Hoo Hoo Sniffles Boo Hoo Hoo....

BARTHOLOMEW

What's wrong Sir Flapdoodle?

NARRATOR

Sir Flapdoodle waved at the theater full of empty seats.

SIR FLAPDOODLE

Isn't it obvious? I need an audience and applause!

Boo hoo hoo....

BARTHOLOMEW

We can help with that!

NARRATOR

Bartholomew and Chi Chi and
Miss Collywobbles clapped and
whistled and cheered for Sir Flapdoodle.



SIR FLAPDOODLE

Oh, oh thank you. Thank you! You're too kind.

BARTHOLOMEW

Sir Flapdoodle, I need a kind actor to perform kind actions for my Kindness Machine. Can you help?

Stage Direction

[Sir Flapdoodle bows.]

SIR FLAPDOODLE

I am honored to
participate in this noble endeavor.

NARRATOR

Sir Flapdoodle climbed onto the Machine and sat next to Miss Collywobbles. Then he spoke into the cone attached to the Machine and said...

SIR FLAPDOODLE

To Be Kind or Not to Be Kind. That is the question.

Stage Direction

[The Magic Mirror is still watching everything.]

MIRROR

It certainly is!



Chi Chi
Squeak!

BARTHOLOMEW

Once again Chi Chi you are correct.
Kind people have sweet thoughts.
Hmm, where can we go to find sweet things?

Chi Chi
Squeak!

BARTHOLOMEW

Yeah, to the bakery!

SCENE 6

SETTING: A bakery filled with customers

NARRATOR

At the bakery, they found Chef
Cannoli running this way and that.

Stage Direction

*[Chef Cannoli runs around trying to take care of customers.
People shout non-stop orders.]*



BAKERY CUSTOMER #1

Some scones, please!

BAKERY CUSTOMER #2

I'd like a slice of chocolate cake.

BAKERY CUSTOMER #3

I need two dozen donuts and I was here first!

BAKERY CUSTOMER #2

Where's my chocolate cake?

CHEF CANNOLI

Yes, Yes, I'm coming. I'm coming.

Oh, boy, I need some help!

BARTHOLOMEW

Chef Cannoli, we can help!

CHEF CANNOLI

Thank you! That's very kind.

Stage Direction

[The Magic Mirror watches. They still don't know it's there.]

MIRROR

Yes, very kind indeed.



NARRATOR

Bartholomew, Miss Collywobbles,
and Sir Flapdoodle put on aprons.
They took orders and helped customers.

Stage Direction

*[Bartholomew, Miss Collywobbles, Chef Cannoli, Sir Flapdoodle, and
Chi Chi all run around the bakery helping customers.]*

CUSTOMER #1

One croissant!

CUSTOMER #2

Four jelly rolls

CUSTOMER #3

Don't forget my scones!

Customer #1

I also need a dozen bagels!

NARRATOR

When they were, finished Chef Cannoli
climbed on top of Bartholomew's Kindness
Machine with three boxes of pink frosted
cupcakes.



Stage Direction

[Chef Cannoli climbs on the machine with a box of cupcakes and feeds them into a tube. Pink smoke puffs out of the machine.]

NARRATOR

He fed the cupcakes into the
Machine creating a lovely pink smoke that
wafted around the kingdom giving
everyone who smelled it sweet thoughts.

Stage Direction

[Bartholomew looks at his machine and grins.]

NARRATOR

Bartholomew looked his Machine up
and down and grinned. Now it had
gadgets and gizmos and doohickeys
and thingamabobs but it also had a
librarian and books and an
actor and a chef and cupcakes.

BARTHOLOMEW

We did it Chi Chi. We created something
Big and Important that will spread kind
words and actions and thoughts throughout
the kingdom. I'm gonna win the prize!



SCENE 7

SETTING: A road leading to the castle

Stage Direction

[Bartholomew pushes his machine down the road.]

NARRATOR

Bartholomew joined a huge crowd
of people on their way to the Queen's
castle for the Kindness Contest.

Stage Direction

*[Bartholomew comes across a group of crying children. They
are surrounded by the remains of a birthday party.]*

BIRTHDAY PARTY CHILDREN

Sniffle Sniffle. Boo Hoo hoo. Waaaaaa!

BARTHOLOMEW

Oh, dear. What's wrong?

BIRTHDAY GIRL

People trampled over my cake and party
decorations on their way to the Kindness Contest.
And now my party is ruined.



NARRATOR

Bartholomew looked at the sad children.
Then he looked up at his Machine.

BARTHOLOMEW

Chi Chi, are you thinking what I'm thinking?

CHI CHI

Squeak!

BARTHOLOMEW

Chef Cannoli, can you please give these
children cupcakes?

CHEF CANNOLI

Of course!

NARRATOR

Chef Cannoli hopped down from the
Machine and handed out all the cupcakes.

BARTHOLOMEW

Sir Flapdoodle, can you entertain everyone?

SIR FLAPDOODLE

I would be delighted.



NARRATOR

Sir Flapdoodle climbed down from
the machine and started
juggling the squashed presents.

BARTHOLOMEW

Miss Collywobbles, we need some gifts.

MISS COLLYWOBBLES

We have books and those are the best gifts of all.

BARTHOLOMEW

Aren't those library books?

MISS COLLYWOBBLES

Oh, yes. They'll eventually have to give them back.
But stories stay with us forever?

Stage Direction

[Miss Collywobbles hands out books to the children.]

CHI CHI

Squeak!

BARTHOLOMEW

You're right Chi Chi. The contest starts any
minute. We better go. Oh, no!



Stage Direction

[The children are climbing on Bartholomew's machine.]

NARRATOR

The children were climbing on
Bartholomew's machine. They
were having so much fun that Bartholomew
didn't have the heart to ask them to stop.
So he left his Big and Important Machine behind.

Stage Direction

*[The Magic Mirror watches as Bartholomew leaves his Machine
behind for the children and walks sadly to the castle.]*

NARRATOR

The Mirror looked on...as Magic Mirrors do...
and saw Bartholomew trudge sadly
to the castle without his Machine.

SCENE 8

SETTING: Outside Queen Beneficent's Castle

Stage Direction

*[The Magic Mirror stands beside the queen as she
welcomes the crowd.]*



QUEEN

Welcome one and all to my Kindness Contest.

Please show me your wonderful ideas.

Stage Direction

[Bartholomew watches sadly from the back of the crowd.]

NARRATOR

Bartholomew wished he could show the Queen his invention.

BARTHOLOMEW

All that work for nothing Chi Chi.

CHI CHI

Squeak!

NARRATOR

A man stepped forward with a long rope.

Stage Direction

[A man steps forward with a rope wrapped around several people.]

MAN WITH THE KINDER WINDER

I think we should wrap everyone up until they are
nice to each other. I call it the Kinder Winder.

MIRROR

Hmmm...next!



Stage Direction

[A witch drags a cauldron in front of the queen.]

NARRATOR

A witch dragged a stinky, bubbling,
cauldron in front of the Queen.

WITCH

It's a Kindness Concoction, dearie.
Everyone who drinks it instantly turns kind.
They also turn green and lose all
of their hair. But hey, whatcha gonna do.

QUEEN

Oh, my!

MIRROR

Next!

Stage Direction

[The boy with the Smile Stretcher steps in front of the Queen.]

NARRATOR

A boy stepped forward with a very strange
looking gadget attached to his face.

MIRROR

Let me guess. It's a Kindness Contraption.



BOY WITH SMILE STRETCHER

Nope. It's a Smile Stretcher.

QUEEN

Oh, dear.

MIRROR

Next!

NARRATOR

Person after person shared their ideas for spreading kindness. When everyone was done, the Queen looked into her Magic Mirror and said...

QUEEN BENEFICENT

Mirror Mirror in the field. Let the winner be revealed.

Stage Direction

[Everyone leans forward to hear who the winner will be.]

MIRROR

Queen, the winner is...Bartholmew Balderdash!

Stage Direction

[Everyone gasps. Bartholomew looks shocked]



BARTHOLOMEW

Me? But I don't have a Big and Important Machine anymore.

MIRROR

That doesn't matter. I've been watching you.
Your small acts of kindness did more than any Kindness
Machine or Koncoction or Contraption could ever do.

BARTHOLOMEW

Oh! Wow!

QUEEN BENEFICENT

Bartholomew Balderdash, you have won the Royal Medal of
Compassion Helpfulness Insight Caring Kindness Empathy
and Niceness.

Stage Direction

*[The queen pins a medal to Bartholomew's
chest and hands him the chicken hat.]*

BARTHOLOMEW

Oh, thank you! Thank you!

Stage Direction

[The boy with the Smile Stretcher starts crying.]

BARTHOLOMEW

Oh, dear. What's wrong?



BOY WITH SMILE STRETCHER

I really wanted to be a Royal Chicken.

NARRATOR

Bartholomew smiled. He didn't need a machine to do something
Big and Important. And he didn't need a prize to be kind.

He pinned his medal on the boy.

BOY WITH THE SMILE STRETCHER

Thank you, Bartholomew.

Stage Direction

[The boy hugs Bartholomew. Everyone cheers.]

NARRATOR

And everyone in the kingdom lived...

Kindly Ever After.

NARRATOR

The End.

CHI CHI

Squeak!

NARRATOR

But Bartholomew did keep the snazzy hat.