

## SCENE 10.

**A Desert Faraway. Frontcloth or tabs. Dead Man's Gulch type MUSIC.**

EMP. (entering briskly R.) Come along you two!

**(PING and PONG enter R, carrying the canopied chair on poles. They are in tattered shirt sleeves.)**

PING. We're doing our best. I'm shattered!

PONG. And I'm destroyed!

EMP. Oh, do stop whingeing. Either we go to Egypt or we don't - and five thousand miles overland never hurt anybody. I'm as fresh as a daisy.

PING. (disbelieving) But we've carried you most of the way!

PONG. I am just so thirsty!

PING. Me too!

EMP. Oh, very well, you can both have a sip of the Royal water. (Unstoppers water bottle slung from his neck and takes a sip.) Only one problem though. (Holding it upside down.) It's empty.

PONG. But that's not fair! (Bursts into tears.)

PING. Yes, it's not fair! (Also bursts into tears.)

EMP. Stop that nonsense, the pair of you. I'm thirsty too! (Also bursts into tears.)

**(TWANKEY and WISHEE appear in the auditorium from doors either side. Maybe they wear leather flying helmets, goggles and scarves.)**

TWANKEY. Wishee!

WISHEE. Mrs Twankey!

BOTH. We've found the audience!

**(TWANKEY and WISHEE brief ad lib with AUDIENCE.)**

EMP. Hey, you two!

TWANKEY. Oh, look. It's the Emperor. Back to the script.

EMP. How did you get here?

TWANKEY. Balloon. We crash landed just by the box office.

EMP. Are you going to come up here and join us?

TWANKEY. Righto. Come along, Wishee. What a lot of people. You'd think the desert would be less populated.

**(TWANKEY and WISHEE gain the stage.)**

WISHEE. So now we're in Egypt.

TWANKEY. Oh, no we're not.

WISHEE. Yes we are.

TWANKEY. No we're not.

WISHEE. **(to AUDIENCE)** She's in de – Nile.

EMP. Of course we're in Egypt, but do either of you have any idea where this palace has been spirited away to?

TWANKEY. Well, do you know, by an amazing coincidence, we do. We just ballooned over it.

WISHEE. **(pointing)** It's a mile or so, that way.

PONG. A mile? Did you say a mile?

WISHEE. Yes. Just past the third sphinx on the left.

EMP. Very well. Let's set off then.

PONG. I can't.

EMP. I beg your pardon?

PING. He said, 'I can't'.

PONG. I just can't. Not a whole mile. I'm as tired as a hibernating hedgehog and twice as thirsty!

EMP. I wish you'd stop that talk, Constable. We're all thirsty.

PING. Oh, what I wouldn't give for something long and cold!

WISHEE. And fizzy!

TWANKEY. In a frosted glass!

PONG. With a curly-wurly straw!

**(NUMBER. At the end of which, NOBBY enters breezily L, wearing a local no-frills airline eye shade and carrying a suitcase.)**

WISHEE. Oh, look it's my panda.

TWANKEY. Hello dear. They go everywhere now, those (local airline, e.g. Flybe.) people, don't they?

EMP. It's all very well your panda jetting in, in complete comfort - but how are we going to get into the palace to save the Princess?

**(NOBBY whispers in TWANKEY'S ear and points to his suitcase.)**

TWANKEY. He has a cunning disguise.

ALL. Oooh!

**(BLACKOUT.)**