

The Panto Murder Mystery

Oh No He Didn't!

Written by Eleanor Rose Vaughan

2026 Edition

Rose
Scripts
.....UK.....

CHARACTERS:

JACK HOFF/PETER PAN - THE KILLED - Egotistical, trains at drama school, recently married to the actress who plays Wendy. Very full of himself and rich, opinionated and talks over everyone.

HOLLY WOOD/WENDY - Jack's wife, she, knows he cheats but is loyal because he's rich. Cunning and sometimes jumps to conclusions but kind and confides in her close friends. .

WAYNE KERR/DAME MUMMY HOOK - Very camp, close to Holly and is upset about her relationship with Jack because of his cheating. Open book always makes his feelings known.

CHRIS PEACOCK/CAPTAIN HOOK - Tries to be professional but it backfires and tries to keep the show running perfectly in the director's absence, wants to direct the next show. Chairman of the committee, upset that Jack's family has stopped funding the group.

MIKE OXBIG/SMEE - Reliable member of the troupe, friendly and acts as a secondary mediator. Doesn't have an acting background but still a valued member, Jack doesn't like him because of this though.

STACY RECT/STAGE MANAGER - Annoyed constantly, trying to get everything in place, not used to the shows being so low budget since Jack's family pulled the funding out. Tried to get a job in the west end stage managing but Jack sabotaged her reference so she would stay with the group.

OPHELIA COX/TINKERBELLE - Wants the part of Wendy, one of Jack's ex lovers. Knows Holly is with him for the money, obsessed over Jack, thinks she's smart and always quick to throw others under the bus.

DICK BURNS/LOST BOY - Wanted to be Peter, has the smallest part as he isn't really as good, but tries to improve. It is later revealed that he's an alcoholic.

ORDER OF EVENTS:

ACT 1: Run Time – 20 Minutes

INTERVAL: First Course (If Production is serving food) & first set of clues handed out.

ACT 2: Run Time – 15-20 Minutes

INTERVAL: Second Course (If Production is serving food) & second set of clues handed out, end of interval Audience are allowed to ask the cast questions regarding their character and the scene of events before the final accusation sheet is handed out and the audience fill in who they think is the killer.

ACT 3: Run Time 5 minutes – Killer is revealed.

PROPS & SCENERY:

SCENERY: All takes place in one scene, no changes required, minimal staging.

PROPS: Peter Pan Script (All), Mobile Phone (Jack, Ophelia, Holly), Small box/package (Ophelia), Modified Hook (Ophelia & All), Swords (Jack & Chris), First Aid Kit (Wayne), Coroners Report (Chris), Microphone/walkie talkie headset (Stacey), Peter Pan Cardboard cutout (Stacey).

ACT 1

(CHRIS comes out and takes centre stage, people are racing round trying to get ready behind him)

CHRIS: Welcome everyone, we are the professional drama troupe - no sorry, was the professional drama troupe...no, let me start again - Welcome Everyone, we are CUNTS... Central Unified National Theatre Society. One of the previous leading professional drama troupes in the country, we've had members from all over the country, some of which you may have heard of, Idris Elbow, Benedict Cumberbatch, Tom Hard-on and the founders Colin Girth and Judi Wench. All have gone on to have successful careers, and I am Chris Peacock, and I am honoured to be speaking to you all today as the Chairman of this group. Now, as we've changed our status from Professional to Amateur, we've sadly had to face some major budget cuts and cast member shortages as of late and we are still adjusting to this new challenge, but we were professionals, we know what we're doing! - Which is why we are performing for you all tonight, for this is one of our final rehearsals for our current panto, due to start its run next week, Peter Pan-to! Now sit tightly and drink – I mean think some happy thoughts! And enjoy this exclusive rehearsal!

(STACEY cautiously sets the scene watching the audience, glaring at them all, when she finishes, she speaks into her microphone headset)

STACEY: Scene 1, the darling's nursery, set, Act 1 beginners in place. Standby. *(Rushes offstage)*

(OPHELIA enters gracefully as Tinkerbell and takes centre stage)

OPHELIA: *(As Tinkerbell)* Welcome! I am Tinkerbell, are you all sitting comfortably? - Then I shall begin, now all children eventually grow up, all but one. Peter Pan, he was a boy who lived in a magical place, Neverland! With all his friends, but one day his shadow escaped into your world, and he had to get it back, so he searched for many months, but awaiting his return was the evil, mean, nasty, Captain Hook, Captain of the Jolly Roger, and a fearsome pirate! His goal was to get revenge on our hero Peter, as Peter was the one who chopped off his and gave it to the hungry crocodile, but since then that same croc has been following Hook around, hungry for more of him! *(Pauses)* Um. Line!

STACEY: So, here we are...

OPHELIA: So, here we are...LINE!

STACEY: In the Darling nursery...

OPHELIA: In the Darling nursery... LI-

STACEY: Where our adventure begins.

OPHELIA: Where our adventure begins.... L-

STACEY: *(Speaking quickly)* Here lives Wendy Darling, a kind-hearted girl who doesn't want to grow up, but has to, she longs for one last night of adventure. Let's see what it will bring her...

OPHELIA: What...

STACEY: Just get off.

OPHELIA: You just finished my line. You spoke way too quick Stacey.

STACEY: Yeah, well you weren't going to finish it. Off, now. *(To Jack and Holly)* Stop cuddling each other, Holly you're meant to be on. Get onstage now!

HOLLY: Sorry! - *(Gets onstage, following said as Wendy)* Oh no, if only father wasn't so harsh to me! Telling me to grow up! Telling me it's my last night in the nursery! Oh, how I wish I didn't have to. *(Yawns)* I'm so tired, I think I'll go to bed.

(JACK enters onstage heroically and slaps his leg)

JACK: *(As Peter)* Shadow? Where are you? Hark! What was that?

(STACEY enters stage carrying a large cardboard cutout of a shadow behind JACK)

JACK: *(As Peter)* Can any of you see my shadow boys and girls, mums and dads? Where is it?

(BEHIND HIM... JACK turns around)

JACK: *(As Peter)* Ha! Got you now shadow *(thigh slaps again)* you won't get away from the Peter Pan!

(Jumps on Wendy's bed and kisses HOLLY, STACEY pulls them away from behind the shadow cutout)

HOLLY: *(As Wendy)* You!? Who are you? How did you get in here?

JACK: *(As Peter Pan)* I'm Peter Pan *(Slaps thigh)*, and I live in a place where children like us never grow up, would you like to come with me? *(Offers hand)*

CHRIS: *(From offstage)* You've skipped some lines, Jack. Half a page's worth!

JACK: So why does it matter? The audience doesn't have a script. Besides I think I'm improving the scene.

CHRIS: Really? How?

JACK: It's too long for starters, it's boring. Whoever wrote this script needs to have seen a Panto!

CHRIS: *(Dejectedly)* I wrote the script.

HOLLY: *(Laughs)* Oh Chris. You're only joking, right Jack? *(Stops laughing)* Jack...

JACK: Tsch No! Come on, I have to spend half the scene chasing a piece of bloody cardboard round the stage, in tights! Who would want to see that?

STACEY: We've done this scene so many times anyway, if we keep running it, I don't think the cutout would last.

CHRIS: Okay, fine, I'll think about the next scene to do... I'm thinking Hook and Dame?

MIKE: I've barely had a rehearsal onstage mate.

CHRIS: Mike, you are word perfect, never miss a beat. You'll be fine. Just keep practicing with Richard offstage for now, he could use some advice from you!

MIKE: *(Not too impressed)* Sure, thing boss.

STACEY: Right, everybody off, if we're doing another scene we need a clear stage.

(STACEY starts clearing the stage JACK struts over to HOLLY)

JACK: Holly, I've never asked if you enjoyed the wedding last week? My vows were a promise, you know. *(Holds her hand and points to her ring)*

HOLLY: *(Playfully)* What, that you'll never have a wandering eye again?

MIKE: Careful Holls I don't think that was the only thing that was wondering *(winks)*.

JACK: *(Ignoring Mike)* I wouldn't have married you if you weren't the one. *(Goes in for a kiss)*

HOLLY: *(Avoiding the kiss and stepping aside)* You have told Ophelia to leave us alone, right? She keeps giving me dirty looks.

JACK: Holls Bolls, you're overthinking, I messaged Ophelia and told her, harshly that I'm not interested in being even near her – She freaks me out!

OPHELIA: *(Storming on)* I 'freak' you out? Holly, Earlier this month you told me you'd call it off with him, I thought you were my best friend, then you marry him and don't even invite me to the wedding!

STACEY: Bugger off, will ya?

(JACK, HOLLY and OPHELIA go offstage and exit)

DICK: Chris, if anything happens, I'm ready to go on for Jack if you want to do a Peter scene, he seems a little pre-occupied.

CHRIS: No, no. Is Wayne ready? I want to run Dame and Hook. You focus on your lines.

DICK: I've done my lines. I know them.

CHRIS: Fine. Prove it, do them now.

DICK: Can I go onstage?

STACEY: It's clear, go for it.

DICK: *(Standing on the stage, completely monotone)* Peter something bad has happened.

CHRIS: What's happened Lost Boy?

DICK: *(Monotone and fast, even speaking the stage directions)* I can't tell you, see for yourself, shows Peter a lifeless Tinkerbelle and cries, she drank the poison Hook planted for you. We must do something to help her! Lost Boy hugs Peter, she was the best fairy in the world. Lost Boy stands beside lifeless Tinkerbelle, what about we get the boys and girls to help us?

CHRIS: *(Unsure but trying to be supportive)* Well...you sure know your lines. That's something. Well done, keep practicing.

(WAYNE enters in dame make up but no wig)

CHRIS: Wayne? Where's the Wig?

WAYNE: It's too itchy, think it's got lice or something.

CHRIS: But we've -

WAYNE: Let's just crack on, I can't cope with the wicked witches screaming! My entrance, yeah?

CHRIS: Come on Wayne.

(CHRIS and WAYNE take the stage, STACEY goes off, MIKE and DICK are practicing lines)

WAYNE: *(In dame persona)* Oh! Would you look at this merry band of people! Lovely to meet you all I'm Mother Hook, and if you all behave yourself, I'll let you all off the hook! Now, Welcome aboard the Jolly Roger, run by my lovely, kind son, Captain Hook. He is just a little misunderstood as everyone thinks he's bad, but he's my little angel! Oh yes, he **is**! Anyway, my job on this ship is to take care of the crew and keep them all well fed. I'm the best chef in the business. I was taught by someone who was on a show with Gordon Ramsey, yes, it was Kitchen Nightmares! - I've always worked on ships. On my last one we always had to write down if we had done a wee or a poo, we had to do it in a logbook! I've always tended to stick to the kitchen though, I'm not a very handywoman, so you'd be shocked to find out what a bad electrician I am! But I am learning to bake too, I did a private course with Paul Hollywood once, but it ended with a soggy bottom! - anyway enough chitchat have any of you seen the captain?

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Mother! What are you doing?

WAYNE: *(As Dame)* Greeting our latest crew members! You know I can't wait to get all these people in uniform! Especially that man over there! - Bet you know how to tie a good secure knot don't you?

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Peter Pan has returned. He might've escaped me again this time, but next time I'll get him!

WAYNE: *(As Dame)* Yes, yes, my dear, you said that last night as well. You know, I think you should quit this little fantasy all this stress is no good for your blood pressure! Calm down, listen to the calm waves, the peace and quiet of the open sea!

STACEY: *(Yelling from offstage)* THANKS TO YOU JACK! I'M STUCK HERE! YOU'VE RUINED EVERYTHING!

OPHELIA: GO AWAY STACEY, THIS DOESN'T INVOLVE YOU! WHATEVER YOU'VE GOT AGAINST HIM, ISN'T AS BAD AS WHAT HOLLY DID TO ME! AND NOW SHE'S STARTING RUMOURS THAT I'M A CREEP!

WAYNE: *(In normal voice)* Oh for god's sake! Chris?

MIKE: God this show is cursed with the drama! - We'll get them.

CHRIS: Just bring them out here, we'll all take a break for now. *(To audience)* Apologies everyone this doesn't usually happen at rehearsals and *(to cast)* shouldn't be happening this close to open!

(DICK and MIKE bring STACEY, HOLLY, OPHELIA and JACK out front. JACK and HOLLY talk together privately, OPHELIA brings out package and starts inspecting it, she hides it in her coat and grabs something in her pocket and puts it in the package. STACEY walks over to CHRIS)

CHRIS: Stacey! What is going on? Why does everybody hate Jack?

STACEY: You know that stage manager job I applied for in the West End, right? Well, they liked me, I was so close to getting my dream job, but they wanted another reference, so I asked Jack to do it, but he wrote a bunch of lies and said how poorly organised I was and how I was better off here! He sabotaged me! - Thought it was a bit funny how he never let me read it!

MIKE: Stace! That's awful! Since his family pulled the funding on the group last year, he knows none of us are getting paid to do this anymore! *(Sits and sighs)* What's he going to get out of this?

DICK: He doesn't care about that! He's got enough money from mummy and daddy to never to have to worry about anything! Hey, Chris, why did his family pull the funding?

CHRIS: Because for the last professional show we did, I didn't cast Jack as the lead role. Ridiculous and petty I know. So, he wanted to embarrass the group for it. I got the whole thing from Jack "Oh I went to the most prestigious drama school in the country, "I can act anything", so? He must learn that he can't get a lead role all the time! That isn't how the industry works!

MIKE: He can't act as well as he thinks! Even a corpse has more life in its acting.

WAYNE: *(Laughs)* Yeah! And a corpse won't go for every person that breathes! Tea anyone? ..

(WAYNE, CHRIS and MIKE exit OPEHLIA goes over to HOLLY and JACK)

OPHELIA: Both of you are going to get karma thrust upon you! Just you wait.

HOLLY: We'll be waiting. Now, why don't you hurry off now and practice your lines? Seems like you need to be focusing more on that.

(CHRIS enters tea in hand reading the script, OPHELIA crosses over and stops CHRIS. HOLLY exits on her phone talking about purchasing something expensive, JACK goes on his phone)

OPHELIA: Chris I was thinking, do you know why I am struggling with my lines?

CHRIS: Er...cause they're long paragraphs?

OPHELIA: No.

CHRIS: Because you're incompetent?

OPHELIA: What?! No, it's because I know all of Wendy's lines instead. I think I'm a better fit for the role.

CHRIS: *(In encouraging disbelief)* What makes you say that?

OPHELIA: Well, don't you think their relationship is a distraction to the panto? If they suddenly divorce during the run, it will ruin the chemistry, right? And Holly no doubt will be so distraught and stubborn about it that she would quit! So, I want to save the show and take over as Wendy before that happens.

CHRIS: Pretty extreme don't you think? We're Ex- professionals, we put our relationships behind us on a stage.

OPHELIA: You're making us sound like retired footballers!

CHRIS: Besides, it's too late to change anything now, opening night is next week. So, don't worry.

(WAYNE and STACEY come through with TEA and scripts, MIKE and DICK follow)

JACK: *(Answering phone)* Lisa listen, after rehearsal I'll drop the missus off and come straight over...you want me to wear that? Again? But it's ti-? Fine, just for you kitten...oh don't worry I'll tell her it's 'Family Business' the gullible tart will believe anything! Okay, ciao!

DICK: Is he still cheating on her? The bastard!

MIKE: Looks like it! Doesn't it Kitten?

DICK: God the way he talks like that makes me feel sick!

MIKE: Glad I'm not the only one!

STACEY: Chris? I can't find your hook anywhere. You left it on the prop table, didn't you?

CHRIS: Of course, isn't it your responsibility to make sure everything's in place?

WAYNE: Well, when I last went by it was on the table. It must've been moved at some point tonight.

OPHELIA: I'll go and look for it.

STACEY: Chris, go and have a look in your dressing room. Make sure you didn't take it back with you at any point? I haven't got time to order another one, I haven't got Amazon Prime.

(STACEY and CHRIS exit followed by OPHELIA who sneaks off in a different direction holding the package, she places her phone next to the group before leaving, HOLLY re-enters)

HOLLY: Jack! I've made us a lovely romantic dinner for after rehearsal. It's your favourite... Beef short rib with crispy sliced potatoes, peas and carrots, no asparagus!

JACK: That's great darling! *(Condescending)* Unfortunately I've got some family business to attend to afterwards, so I'll be late back tonight. Okay?

HOLLY: That's fine, I guess. Just thought it would be a nice treat.

JACK: *(Looking at his phone)* Yeah very nice.

(JACK walks off hiding his phone leaving HOLLY, WAYNE, MIKE and DICK all go over to her)

HOLLY: *(In humoured disbelief)* He's cheating again, isn't he? And this time it only took him less than ten minutes after promising he wouldn't, oh and getting married!

WAYNE: Yup. You wouldn't have wanted to hear the conversation on the phone to his mystery lady.

MIKE: Why are you putting up with it? If he's constantly doing it, it will ruin your marriage, surely?

HOLLY: It won't, I'm not as gullible as I look.

DICK: Then why did you marry him?

HOLLY: Money, duh! I don't care if he cheats, besides we all know he's loaded!

MIKE: Why hasn't he broken up with you then?

WAYNE: He's the kinda guy who always wants someone to be there. Does the man really look like he can cook? Or know how to pay tax? Or do anything?

MIKE: Good point.

HOLLY: But he doesn't know I'm in it for the money, he's so full of himself he doesn't even think like that! -

WAYNE: I am worried about you though Holls, what if he gets suspicious? His last ex-girlfriend was in if for the same reason and Jack made her life hell! You know that!

HOLLY: I'll have to kill him then, then no one will ever know, besides I'm in his will so that'll all fall to me anyway *(Laughs)!*

DICK: You're brutal!

WAYNE: That's an insane way of looking at it. But I suppose it could work! Getting the rat out of the way isn't a bad idea! Afterall it's his fault we're no longer getting paid for any of this! *(Stops to think)*

(OPHELIA sneaks back in and takes her phone, she holds it to her ear and smiles before looking at them all she taps a few times on her phone gleefully before putting it back in her pocket)

MIKE: Exactly, do you want to know what he said to me earlier? Before we started, he came over and said, "Little Mikey, I'm surprised you got a main part this year, shame you won't be getting paid for it. But then, I was always reluctant to pay you fairly".

WAYNE: Why on earth did he say that?

DICK: Because he's a twat.

MIKE: Because I didn't go to drama school, didn't study drama and because I decided to do it later on in life, as I'm not a "born artiste".

DICK: That's bang out of order that! - I'm starting to get the feeling every single one of us hates him.

MIKE: We do! Apart from himself.

(JACK storms through and struts over to HOLLY)

JACK: Ophelia just sent me this. I can't believe it!

HOLLY: Don't worry about it love. It's probably fake -

JACK: Also, look, I've had £6,000 taken out of my bank account and sent over to you? *(Shows phone to her)*

HOLLY: Well-I-I-I I had to pay for the shopping.

JACK: Shopping? Where would a shop cost £6,000?

HOLLY: Waitrose...

JACK: Hmm, fair enough.

HOLLY: Why question it my love? *(Annoyed)* What did Ophelia say to you anyway?

JACK: She sent me a voice recording of you admitting that you married me for my wealth and that's why you're so calm about my 'habits'. I can't believe you married me to make yourself rich!

CHRIS: *(Entering)* Found a spare! If anyone's seen my original hook, please put it back on the prop table. Right, come on everyone we've had long enough. Let's do the fight scene. Give us some action! Everybody is needed.

JACK: I heard it come out of your mouth! She's too dumb to edit something like that. Tell you what, I want a divorce! You know, being in this show alongside you wasn't even that great, you have been a distraction to me this whole time. At least we're over with now, so for the run I can be the best actor in the group again.

HOLLY: Sure, took you long enough to find out and you're so big headed someone else had to tell you, so be like that. You won't be for long just you wait 'honey'!

STACEY: Uh, Jack, Holly, places, shift it please.

(EVERYBODY takes to the stage except STACEY)

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Wendy, this is your last chance, join us pirates or walk the plank!

HOLLY: *(As Wendy)* I would never become a pirate!

MIKE: *(As Smee)* Er, Captain...Who's walking the plank first?

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Didn't you listen to anything! Smee...

MIKE: *(As Smee)* You?

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* No, Smee!

MIKE: *(As Smee)* Me?

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Wendy shall walk first, bring her forwards Smee.

MIKE: *(As Smee)* Aren't you scared Miss?

HOLLY: *(As Wendy)* No. Of course not. For Peter Pan shall save me!

(CHRIS and MIKE laugh in character. DICK is trying to act with no dialogue)

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Oh, how sweet! Peter Pan is gone! Thanks to the special poison I gave him!

HOLLY: *(As Wendy)* That can't be true!

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Oh yes, it is!

HOLLY: *(As Wendy)* Oh no it isn't!

CHRIS + MIKE: *(As Hook & Smee)* Oh yes, it is!

HOLLY + DICK: *(As Wendy & Lost Boy)* Oh no it isn't!

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Enough! We can't waste any time! *(With an evil smile)* The crocodile is hungry!

WAYNE: *(Bursting through onstage as Dame)* Who's Hungry?? I've made your favourite soup for all of you! Gosh, which little pirate game are you playing now my boy?

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Mother! Get the woman out of here!

JACK: *(As Peter)* I'm not gone, you old codfish! *(Slaps thigh)* Wendy fear not for I shall save you!

OPHELIA: *(As Tinkerbelle)* And Tink too!

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* KILL THE BOY!

(Fighting ensues, CHRIS is fighting JACK, MIKE is standing close by behind CHRIS DICK is fighting the air, OPHELIA is behind JACK, WAYNE is standing by 'serving the soup' HOLLY sneaks offstage, eventually CHRIS'S hook is flung of by JACK)

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* My hook!

JACK: *(As Peter)* What a shame Captain, looks like you need a hand!

WAYNE: *(Laughs as Dame)* Oh do you get it son? Oh, this one's a little comedian!

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Shut up mother! - No, I don't need a hand, I still have one left, one with the sword that will seal your fate!

OPHELIA: *(As Tinkerbelle)* Peter look out!

JACK: *(As Peter)* Thanks, Tink! -

MIKE: *(As Smee)* Captain...the crocodile...it's back!

WAYNE: *(As Dame)* Crocodile! The crocodile! OH NO! Close everything, this is an emergency, this has gone from code red to brown!

MIKE: *(As Smee)* That's funny, so have my pants! *(Runs offstage)*

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Don't worry everyone, for I will feed Peter to the crocodile!

JACK: *(As Peter)* I'd like to see you try! Now Tink!

(OPHELIA sprinkles fairy dust over Hook and pushes him down then exits, JACK stands over him sword at his head)

JACK: *(As Peter)* Shall I throw him to the crocodile boys and girls? Shall I?

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Mercy! Mercy!

WAYNE: *(As Dame)* Oh please, this play fighting has gone on long enough!

JACK: *(As Hook)* This isn't play fighting old lady!

WAYNE: *(As Dame)* Who are you calling old? Hmph! *(Exits)*

CHRIS: *(As Hook)* Peter Pan it's just you and me now!

JACK: *(As Peter)* Prepare to meet thy doom, Captain Hook!

(Suddenly the lights start to go off and on)

STACEY: HOLD! Lights are on the blink!

(EVERYBODY stops the lights go off again)

STACEY: I can't get them back on!

CHRIS: Shitting electrics! That's what happens when we have no funding anymore! Hang on Stacey! Just you wait Jack! Wait, my hook? *(Goes off)*.

STACEY: I've got it! - HOLD!

(The lights turn back on, and JACK is the only one onstage, audience can see he's been impaired by a hook, but he is oblivious)

JACK: Hey, where is everyone? - Huh *(notices wound)* What's this? Ketchup? *(Licks it off his hand)* Oh god! That's not ketchup. Oh, I'm feeling a bit faint! Wait no! I'm fine, tis but a scratch! Nothing can ever harm me! I'm Peter Fucking Pan! *(Drops Dead)*

END OF EXTRACT

If you enjoyed this sample and would like to purchase the full script for your group/company, then please don't hesitate to get in touch!

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