

The Magic Fishbone
Adapted from the story by Charles Dickens
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CAST FOR SCENE: 5 (2 female, 2 any gender, 1 male)

Bluegill (male or female; any age) a wily fishmonger

Finny (male or female, any age) a not-so-wil fishmonger

Alicia (female) a child who is coming-of-age and the eldest of eighteen children

Mr. Watkins (male, adult) Alicia's father who has fallen on hard times

Peggoty (female, any age) Alicia's magical godmother that she had no idea she had until this moment

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A street scene in London where they are selling fish.

MR. WATKINS

Have you thought about dinner?

ALICIA

Indeed, Papa. Mother rather fancied fish.

MR. WATKINS

Fish? That is very dear, is it not?

ALICIA

I can try and stretch it so it's a proper meal.

MR. WATKINS

I may be able to purchase a small piece.

ALICIA

We are ever so poor, aren't we?

MR. WATKINS

It is true that until quarter day, we have little to sustain us.

ALICIA

We shall have to try our very best to work with what we have.

MR. WATKINS

Yes, there is no choice.

(BLUEGILL and FINNY enter with their fish.)

BLUEGILL

Fresh fish here! *I say, fresh fish!*

FINNY

Fresh fish!

BLUEGILL

I already said that!

FINNY

And you said it so well.

BLUEGILL

Fresh fish here!

(ALICIA and MR. Watkins enter.)

MR. WATKINS

Yes, I hear perfectly well, thank-you. No need to yell.

BLUEGILL

O! 'Allo! Want some cod?

MR. WATKINS

I don't rightly know.

FINNY

The cod's fresh today, it is!

(PEGGOTY enters and watches above MR. WATKINS.)

PEGGOTY

Psst... the salmon.

MR. WATKINS

The whitefish looks fair, don't you think, Alicia?

ALICIA

The whitefish looks yellow.

BLUEGILL

A little lemon water and he'll be a whitewashed whitefish fresh from the sea.

FINNY

Fresh from the sea!

PEGGOTY

The salmon.

ALICIA

Salmon.

MR. WATKINS

Expensive.

BLUEGILL

But tasty. Salmon it is. Finny here will wrap it up –

But I didn't/

MR. WATKINS

/But you did/

PEGGOTY

/I'm wrapping up.

FINNY

I say, the salmon's too dear.

MR. WATKINS

But the salmon it is.

PEGGOTY

I don't know you/

MR. WATKINS

/But I know you. And the Princess Alicia.

PEGGOTY

Who?

MR. WATKINS

For I am the Princess Alicia's godparent.

PEGGOTY

Say, what?

MR. WATKINS

Say, who?

BLUEGILL

Say salmon!

FINNY

I always wished for a magical godparent!

ALICIA

And I heard. From as faraway as ... Magical Godparent Land. I have come to your assistance.

PEGGOTY

Here! Here! There will be no interfering in my daughter's life or my fish order.

MR. WATKINS

PEGGOTY (To Alicia)

Ignore this man who does nothing but utter complaints and lend me your ear/

MR. WATKINS

/Alicia!

PEGGOTY (To Alicia)

Tonight in Alicia-Land, make sure everyone gets a taste of the salmon –

MR. WATKINS

Everyone? It may not agree with everyone.

PEGGOTY

Are you quite finished? We hear a great deal too much about this thing disagreeing and that thing disagreeing! Don't be greedy. I think you want it all to yourself! (*To ALICIA.*) When all is consumed, wash and dry the fishbone. Rub it and polish it until shines like a mother-of-pearl. Take good care of it, for it is a present from me.

MR. WATKINS

Are you mad?

PEGGOTY (To Alicia)

Keep it in your pocket.

MR. WATKINS

Oh the odor!

PEGGOTY

Are you done remarking and complaining? Don't catch people short before they have done speaking. Just the way with you grown-up persons. (*To Alicia*) To finish my instructions, when it is time you may make a wish on it and it will be granted... provided you wish your wish at precisely the right time.

MR. WATKINS

What is the reasoning behind this?

PEGGOTY

Will you be good, sir? The reason for this and the reason for that indeed! You grown-ups are always wanting the reason! No reason! There! Hoity toity me! I am sick of your grown-up reasons.

MR. WATKINS

Nonsense. Spreading druft and drues about a magical wish.

PEGGOTY

If you doubt my magical abilities, you short-sighted grown-up, behold!

(PEGGOTY lifts up a piece of fish and MR. WATKINS is instantly mute.
HE tries to make sounds.)

BLUEGILL

Oh! I know some people I'd like to do that to, I do!

FINNY

Why do you look at me?

PEGGOTY

Splendiferous I love it when I get to use my magic.

ALICIA

Turn him back! Turn him back, Magical Godparent!

PEGGOTY

It's Peggoty, dear. Just plain Peggoty.

ALICIA

Dear Peggoty, please turn my father back to his natural talking state, please.

PEGGOTY

As you wish. I rather fancied his silence.

(PEGGOTY release WATKINS from the spell.)

MR. WATKINS

Well, I never. That was fascinating. Disconcerting yes interesting. You truly are magical.

PEGGOTY

That I am and I am what I said. *(To Alicia)* Now, do you remember your instructions?

ALICIA

Yes but I am confused. How will I know when it is time to wish?

PEGGOTY

When all else fails, it will be time. Now off with you! There are others in need. I can't be doing a layabout with you all day, even if you are a royal princess. Be good.

(PEGGOTY exits.)

END OF SCENE