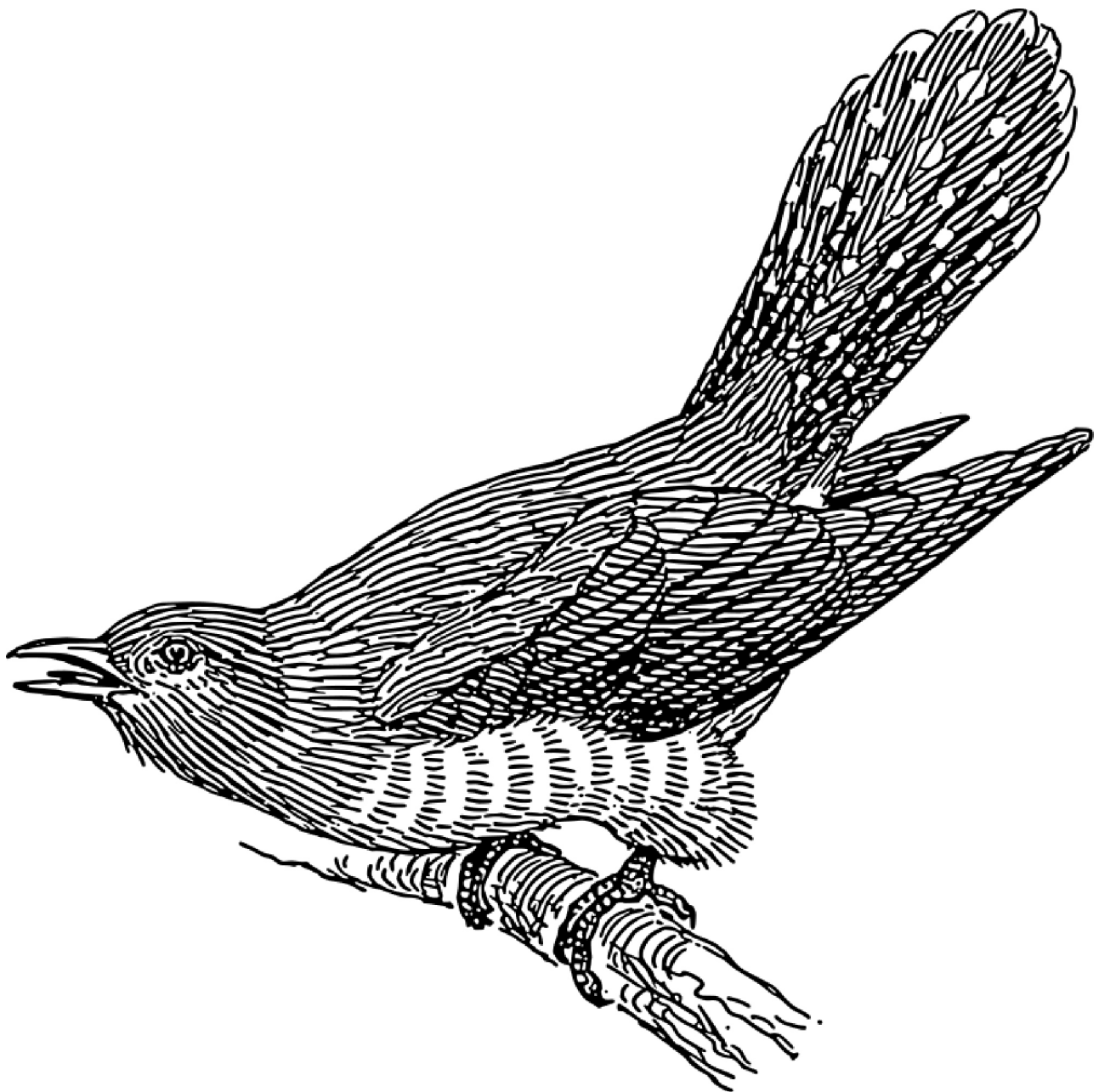


# MAXITWEET THE COCOA



DAVID HENRY WILSON

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# **MAXITWEET THE COCOA**

A play for children

**This play was written for and dedicated to Tony Wood and the children of Taunton Junior School.**

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## **CAUTION**

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**List of characters:**

Mrs Tweet  
Mr Tweet  
Mrs Cook  
Worm  
Doctor Jay  
Minitweet I  
Minitweet II  
Minitweet III  
Maxitweet  
Butterfly  
Fly  
Dragonfly  
Grasshopper  
Ladybird

**The set:**

Centre stage is the nest, situated amid branches, bushes, foliage etc. It should be constructed in such a way that we cannot see inside it or behind it.

## ACT ONE

*The stage is in darkness. MRS TWEET ah-ahs her Dawn Song. The lights slowly go up to reveal MR and MRS TWEET sitting on the nest, watched from a distance by MRS COOK. MRS TWEET continues to sing, and MR TWEET sleeps.*

MRS T. (*singing:*) Good morning to the world,  
                             Good morning to the sun,  
                             Good morning tree, good morning me,  
                             Good morning everyone.

                            Good morning wings and feet,  
                             Good morning Mr Tweet,  
                             Good morning legs, good morning eggs,  
                             Good morning...

MR T.: Oh shut up! What a row!

MRS T.: I'm only singing good morning.

MR T.: I'm trying to sleep.

MRS T.: But you can't sleep now.

MR T.: Of course I can't sleep, with all that twittering going on!

MRS T.: It's the Dawn Chorus.

MR T.: Well can't it wait till I've woken up?

MRS T.: You have woken up.

MR T.: I know I've woken up. You woke me up!

MRS T.: If I waited for you, we wouldn't have a Dawn Chorus till midday.

MR T.: Just because you can't sleep... (*Imitating her:*) "Good morning to the world, lalala" slap in the middle of the night.

MRS T.: It's not the middle of the night, Tweetie, it's dawn.

MR T.: Well it feels like the middle of the night. And if you close your eyes, it looks like the middle of the night.

MRS T.: Such a beautiful morning too. Bright sun, blue sky...

MR T.: No morning is beautiful. Mornings are for sleeping, not cheeping. If I had my way, mornings would be abolished.

MRS T. (*standing and stretching:*) You don't know what you're missing.

MR T.: Oh yes I do. A good night's sleep, that's what I'm missing.

MRS T. (*looking down at the eggs:*) Aren't they lovely!

MR T.: Aren't what lovely?

MRS T.: Our eggs.

MR T.: Eggs is eggs.

*She picks one up and strokes it. A slight movement from MRS COOK, who is intensely interested.*

MRS T.: Beautiful eggs. So smooth and round.

MR T.: Eggs are always smooth and round. You don't get rough eggs, square eggs, oblong eggs, or parallelogram eggs. Our eggs are no different from anyone else's eggs.

MRS T.: Yes they are.

MR T.: No they're not.

MRS T.: They are. They're special. (*She lays the egg down again.*) There, there, darling, back to beddies.

MR T.: Wish I could go back to beddies.

*He closes his eyes. MRS TWEET spots MRS COOK.*

MRS T.: Oh! (*Whispering:*) Tweetie!

MR T.: What?

MRS T.: She's there again!

MR T.: Who's where again?

MRS T.: That strange bird.

MR T.: What strange bird?

MRS T.: The one that was there yesterday.

MR T.: I can't see any strange bird.

MRS T.: You would if you opened your eyes.

*He opens his eyes.*

MR T.: I give up! I'd get more sleep on the back of a fox in the middle of a henhouse.

MRS T.: She's over there.

*He looks.*

Well?

MR T.: Well what?

MRS T.: She was here yesterday.

MR T.: So were we.

MRS T.: I know we were here. We live here! She doesn't live here.

MR T.: Maybe she's on holiday.

MRS T.: I don't like the way she keeps staring at us.

MR T.: I sometimes have that effect on females.

MRS T.: She's planning something. I think you should go and find out what she wants. And chase her off.

MR T.: She's twice my size!

MRS T.: Then just ask her politely to leave.

MR T.: You ask her to leave.

MRS T.: I'm looking after the eggs.

MR T.: Well I'm looking after me.

MRS T.: You're supposed to be the big strong male, protecting his family.

MR T.: Exactly. And how I can I protect you if I get myself killed?

MRS T.: Tweetie, if you don't go and ask her, I shall sing my Dawn Chorus at the top of my voice until you do. (*Singing:*) Good morning to the world...

MR T.: All right, all right! (*Reluctantly he starts to move.*) You'll be sorry when I don't come back. Leave the little ones without a father. You'll earn a living with your singing, I suppose. Charming the worms into the trees.

MRS T.: Just ask her what she wants. You don't have to start World War Three.

*He walks across, with a desperately casual whistle, and stops well short of MRS COOK.*

MR T.: Um...good morning.

MRS COOK (*very pleasant:*) Good morning.

MR T.: Lovely day.

MRS COOK: Yes it is – a lovely day.

MR T.: Bright sun, blue sky. Worth waking up to, eh?

MRS COOK: It is indeed.

*Short pause.*

MR T.: Well, I'll be getting along then. Nice to have met you.

MRS COOK: And you.

*He scoots back to the nest, but slows down on arrival.*

MRS T.: Well?  
 MR T.: No problem. Had quite a pleasant conversation actually.  
 MRS T.: What did she say?  
 MR T.: I kept it pretty simple – wished her good morning – put her at her ease –  
 chatted a bit about the weather...  
 MRS T.: What's she doing here?  
 MR T.: Pardon?  
 MRS T.: What is she doing here?  
 MR T.: Doing? Here?  
 MRS T.: Did you ask her what she was doing here?  
 MR T.: Well, not exactly – not in so many words, but...look out! She's coming!

*MRS COOK arrives. MR TWEET stays behind his wife.*

MRS COOK (*very pleasant:*) Good morning.  
 MRS T. (*suspicious:*) Morning.  
 MRS COOK: I do hope you don't mind my saying so, but I was listening to you  
 singing just now, and it was delightful. I just felt I must come and say  
 hello.  
 MRS T. (*warming a little:*) Oh, well...that's nice.  
 MRS COOK: Are you trained?  
 MRS T.: Trained?  
 MRS COOK: Your voice.  
 MRS T.: No, no, it's just...as it comes.  
 MRS COOK: Remarkable. You're very talented.  
 MRS T.: Do you think so? (*Simpering:*) Thank you.  
 MRS COOK: And isn't it a beautiful morning! Your husband and I were just saying  
 what a beautiful morning it is. And with your lovely voice ushering it  
 in, what more could one ask for?  
 MRS T. (*glancing at MR T.:*) See?  
 MR T.: She must be tone deaf!  
 MRS COOK: Are these your eggs?  
 MRS T.: Yes.  
 MRS COOK: Aren't they gorgeous! Oh, what wonderful eggs!  
 MRS T.: You think so?  
 MRS COOK: Beautiful – so smooth and round!  
*MRS T. gives MR T. another "I-told-you-so" look.*  
 Oh, I do admire you, producing eggs like these. You must be very  
 proud.  
 MRS T.: Well, I am rather pleased, yes. Do you have eggs of your own,  
 Mrs...um...?  
 MRS COOK: Oh, I'm sorry. Cook. Mrs Cook.  
 MRS T.: I'm Mrs Tweet.  
 MRS COOK: How do you do? No, I haven't any eggs of my own, I'm sorry to say.  
 I had a bit of...trouble...you know. With the tubes.  
 MRS T.: Oh, I am sorry.  
 MRS COOK: One of those things.  
 MRS T. (*sympathetically:*) Ts ts.  
 MR T.: Well, don't mind me, I only live here, just part of the scenery really.  
 MRS COOK: I'm sorry?  
 MR T.: Mr Tweet. Nest-owner.

MRS COOK: Yes, we met a few minutes ago.  
 MR T.: Oh, nice of you to remember. I trust you're not staying very long in these parts.  
 MRS COOK: No, just passing through.  
 MR T.: Good.  
 MRS T.: Have you got far to travel?  
 MRS COOK: Quite a way, yes. Asia.  
 MRS T.: That is a long way.  
 MR T.: No it's not. I've been to Asia. It's in Surrey.  
 MRS T.: That's Esher, dear. She's going to Asia. (*To MRS COOK:*) We've never been outside England. My husband's not a great one for travel.  
 MR T.: I don't mind travelling. I just happen to like England.  
 MRS T.: Have you been to Asia before?  
 MRS COOK: Oh yes, we go every year. I don't like the winters here.  
 MRS T.: Ooh, nor do I. I'd much rather go abroad.  
 MR T.: You've never been abroad!  
 MRS T.: Only because you won't go!  
 MRS COOK: It's lovely and warm in Asia.  
 MR T.: Well I've heard the food's awful and they don't speak the same language. I'm going to look for breakfast. A good healthy English breakfast.  
*He goes. His hunt for breakfast takes him round the stage.*  
 MRS T.: I do apologize for my husband's bad manners. He's not at his best in the mornings. He's not at his best any time, really.  
 MRS COOK: I hope he's a good provider. I mean, you're going to have some little beaks to feed, aren't you?  
 MRS T.: Oh he's quite good at that. Likes working off his aggressions on smaller creatures – though they're pretty mangled by the time they get here. He likes to pretend he's a golden eagle. There's not much left of an ant when it's been pecked to pieces by a golden eagle.  
 MRS COOK: If you want to go and help him, Mrs Tweet, I'll look after your eggs for you.  
 MRS T.: That's very kind of you, Mrs Cook, but I'll let him do it on his own. He finds it hard to be a golden eagle when I'm around. Ts, look at him!  
*MR TWEET has found an earthworm.*  
 MR T.: Come on out, you coward! Come out and fight!  
 MRS COOK: What's he found?  
 MRS T.: It's a worm, I think.  
 MR T.: Come on, come on!  
 WORM: Leave us alone!  
*MR TWEET is pulling hard.*  
 MR T.: Come out of there, you stringy thingy!  
 WORM: Let go! You're hurting!  
 MR T. (*straining*): Will...you...come...out!  
 WORM: No I won't!  
 MR T.: Out!  
 WORM: No!  
*MR TWEET stops tugging and mops his brow.*

MR T.: Oofff!

MRS T.: Having trouble, are you, dear?

MR T.: What?

MRS T.: Trouble with the worm?

MR T.: No, no. Working out the strategy.  
*He resumes the struggle, with loud grunts and oofs.*  
 Come out, you spineless wiggle.

WORM: Go and pick on somebody else.

MR T.: I can't now. They're watching me.

MRS COOK: I think he is having trouble. Are you sure you don't want to help him?

MRS T.: Do you need any help, dear?

MR T.: No! Just getting into position...Ugh..ugh...(To WORM:) Look, please come out. I'll look such a fool if you don't.

WORM: That's nothing to what I'll look if I do.

MR T.: If you come out, I promise I'll let you go.

WORM: I might be blind, but I'm not stupid.

MR T.: Ugh...ugh...UGH!

MRS T.: The way things are going, that worm'll soon have him underground.

MRS COOK: You go and help him, Mrs Tweet. I'll look after your eggs.

MRS T.: Thanks ever so much.  
*She goes to help the increasingly frantic MR TWEET. As soon as she leaves, MRS COOK goes to the nest, takes out an egg, holds it up, and eats it. Then she takes an egg out of her pocket, holds it up, gives it a kiss and carefully places it in the nest. Her egg is virtually the same colour as the one she has eaten.*  
 Who's winning, dear?

MR T.: Oof! He's almost out. Tough one this, but I've got him groggy.

MRS T.: He doesn't look very groggy to me. Not half as groggy as you.  
 Come on, we'll pull him out together.  
*She grabs hold.*

WORM: Hey, that's not fair!

MRS T.: Out you come!

WORM: Ow! Let go!  
*Together they haul WORM out.*

MR T.: Got you! Now let's see if you're as juicy as you look.

WORM: You're not going to eat me, are you?

MR T.: Well I haven't pulled you out to serenade you.

WORM: But you can't eat me.

MR T.: Wanner bet?

MRS T.: Why shouldn't we eat you?

WORM: Cos I'm not well.

MRS T.: What's the matter with you?

WORM: What's the matter with me? What isn't the matter with me?

(singing:) I've got no wings and I've got no feet,  
 And my throat's so sore that I cannot even tweet.  
 I've got no eyes, so I can't see,  
 Oh just about everything's the matter with me.



I cannot run or walk or sit,  
 I can only crawl, cos I'm feeling so unfit.  
 I'm all confused, my mind is in a whirl,  
 I don't even know if I'm a boy or I'm a girl.

I'm a worm,  
 Squiggle squirm,  
 I'm crippled and I'm sick and I'm infirm.  
 No harm I ever did,  
 So please don't put the lid  
 On a legless, armless, headless, harmless phylum annelid.

I've got a disease, I'm covered in bristles,  
 And if you swallow me, you'll ruin your whistles.  
 I'm all slime and earth, so for your own sake,  
 Don't eat me or you'll get a tummy ache.  
 Don't eat me or you'll get a tummy ache.

- MR T.: I'll risk it.  
*He launches a ferocious attack on WORM, who howls.*  
 I'll show you! I'll tear you to pieces!
- MRS T.: Wait a moment, Tweetie. Tweetie!
- MR T.: What?
- MRS T.: Don't forget we've got a guest.  
*He breaks off the attack.*
- WORM: Ooooh, I wish you'd cut your nails.
- MRS T.: Let's take him back to the nest and we'll all have breakfast together.
- MR T.: Hasn't she gone yet?
- MRS T.: No, she's been looking after our eggs.
- MR T.: Well there's not enough to go round. Let her get something else for breakfast.
- WORM: I agree. And you two can get something else as well.
- MRS T.: We're taking him back to the nest.  
*She picks up one end.*  
 Pick up your end, Tweetie.  
*Reluctantly he does.*
- MR T.: All that effort for a third of a worm.
- WORM: It's not worth it. Not even for starters. Go and get something bigger.
- MR T.: Shut up, will you!
- WORM: Hope you die of food poisoning.
- MRS T.: Cooee, Mrs Cook! We're back!
- MRS COOK: Hello again.
- MRS T.: We've brought you some worm.
- MRS COOK: That's very kind of you.
- WORM: Kind of her! Who's paying?
- MRS T.: So nice for us all to have breakfast together.
- WORM: Might be nice for you.
- MRS COOK: I'm quite partial to worm.
- MR T.: And partial's all you're going to get. Anyway, I thought you were going to Asia.
- MRS COOK: I am.

MR T.: Well, you shouldn't fly on a full stomach. You might get airsick.  
MRS COOK: I'm sure I'll manage.  
MRS T.: My apologies again, Mrs Cook. Don't be so rude, Tweetie.  
MR T.: I've sweated feathers pulling this thing out of the ground.  
MRS T.: Just divide it up into three and stop moaning. Come on, Tweetie.  
*Together they deposit WORM in the nest, out of sight.*  
WORM: Oooow!  
MRS T.: And mind the eggs! ((To MRS COOK:)) He goes wild, you know.  
MR T.: All right, you piece of rubber. Prepare to become three pieces of rubber.  
*He dives into the nest. Cries from WORM, roars from MR TWEET, and clouds of pink material flying up and down.*  
MRS T.: You're supposed to divide him, not shred him!  
*Another couple of roars and lunges from MR TWEET, then he emerges with a tiny shred of pink, which he holds out to MRS COOK.*  
MR T.: There you are. Enjoy your meal.  
MRS T.: Tweetie!  
*He disappears again.*  
MRS COOK: It's all right, Mrs Tweet. I've had my breakfast anyway, and I really ought to be going. But before I do, I must congratulate you on that special egg of yours.  
MRS T.: Special egg?  
MRS COOK: You know, the one that's slightly different.  
MRS T.: Different?  
MRS COOK: Hadn't you noticed?  
MRS T.: No.  
MRS COOK: Oh, Mrs Tweet! Fancy having your luck and not knowing it! There, look!  
MRS T.: Oh yes. It is a bit different. What does it mean, then?  
MRS COOK: That bird'll be a marvel. Birds that come out of those eggs are superbirds. Very rare. Very rare indeed.  
MRS T.: Really?  
MRS COOK: I noticed it as soon as I looked. You're going to be the mother of something extraspecial.  
MRS T.: Here, Tweetie!  
MR T.: I'm busy.  
MRS T.: Well just look over here at this egg.  
MR T.: What about it?  
MRS T.: It's special.  
MR T.: According to you, all our eggs are special.  
MRS T.: This one's specially special. It's going to be a superbird.  
MR T.: Oh yeah? Going to take after me then, is it? Come here, you!  
*He dives back into the attack. More pink clouds.*  
WORM: Get off! You're tickling!  
MRS COOK: You take good care of that egg, Mrs Tweet, and you'll be the proudest mother there ever was. Now I must be on my way.  
MRS T.: Well, it's very nice to have met you, Mrs Cook. And thank you for pointing out the special egg.  
MRS COOK: My pleasure.

MRS T.: Tweetie.  
 MR T.: Now what is it?  
 MRS T.: Mrs Cook's leaving.  
 MR T.: Good riddance.  
 MRS T.: (to MRS COOK:) I'm so sorry.  
 MRS COOK: No problem. Just you look after the little genius in there. Goodbye, Mrs Tweet.  
 MRS T.: Goodbye, Mrs Cook.  
*As MRS COOK goes out, they wave and call to each other.*  
 MRS COOK: Bye!  
 MRS T.: Byeeee!  
*MRS COOK has gone.*  
 Well fancy that! A little genius! Haven't you finished cutting that worm up, Tweetie?  
*MR TWEET emerges, looking rather the worse for wear.*  
 MR T. (puffing and blowing:) It's blooming hard work, that is.  
 MRS T.: Looks more like the worm's been having you for breakfast. Now listen, Tweetie, the bird in that egg is going to be a genius, so we've got to take extra care, right? I think we should have it checked over.  
 MR T.: Checked over?  
 MRS T.: I want Doctor Jay to have a look at it.  
 MR T.: Doctor Jay's useless. All he ever says is: "B'dair, b'dair, b'dair, what do you fancy, cut it out, next please."  
 MRS T.: Go and get him anyway. I want to hear his opinion.  
 MR T.: Nag, nag, wake up, talk to the stranger, fetch us a worm, cut up the worm, go and fetch the doctor...I'm a slave in my own nest.  
 MRS T.: Go and fetch Doctor Jay.  
*MR TWEET climbs out of the nest and crosses the stage.*  
 MR T.: Doctor Jay! Doctor Jay!  
 DR J. (off:) B'dair, b'dair, b'dair.  
 MR T.: My wife wants you.  
 DR J. (off:) B'dair, b'dair, I'm coming.  
*MR TWEET returns to the nest.*  
 B'dair, b'dair, I'm on my way.  
 MR T.: B'dair, b'dair, he's on his way.  
*DOCTOR JAY comes in.*  
 DR J.: B'dair, b'dair, help is at wing. Good morning.  
 MRS T.: Morning, doctor.  
 DR J.: Oh yes, you do look a bit b'dair b'dair b'dair b'peaky. Been eating worms, eh? B'dair b'dair b'dair b'cut 'em out no good for you come and see me in a fortnight.  
 MRS T.: It's not for me, doctor. I'm all right.  
 WORM: Then come and have a look at me! I'm all cut up!  
 MRS T.: I wish you'd keep that worm quiet, Tweetie. Doctor, I want you to look at this.  
*Carefully she holds up the special egg. DOCTOR JAY looks at it, takes it, holds it close to his eyes and thinks about it for quite a while.*  
 DR J.: B'dair b'dair b'dair. B'dair b'dair b'dair. It's b'dair b'dair b'dair b'dair an egg.

MR T.: Brilliant!

MRS T.: We know it's an egg, doctor. But it's a special egg.

DR J.: Special? (*Another examination.*) B'dair b'dair b'where did this egg come from?

MR T.: A doctor, and he doesn't even know where eggs come from.

MRS T.: It's mine, doctor.

MR T.: Ours, to be precise.

DR J. (*stalling:*) Ah, then it is special. Very special. Very very special. Extra special. And what are the b'dair b'dair b'symptoms?

MRS T.: There are no symptoms, doctor. I just want you to check that everything's in order.

DR J. (*with eager relief:*) A check-up! Oh thank heavens, I thought you wanted me to do a diagnosis. Well now, b'dair b'dair b'dair...

*He holds up the egg.*

Yes, quite uniformitarianous.

*He smells it.*

Fragrantibly odiferous.

*He licks it.*

Extremely b'dair b'Budleigh Salterton.

*He holds it to his ear.*

And I think b'dair b'dair...I think...b'dair...

MRS T.: What is it, doctor?

DR J.: I think I can hear the sea.

MRS T.: Doctor, what's your verdict?

DR J.: Well, Mrs Tweet, this egg is b'dair b'dair unusual.

MRS T.: In what way is it unusual?

DR J.: It's ovarianly unusual.

*She waits for more.*

It's b'dair unusually ovarian.

MRS T.: But what sort of bird is it going to be?

DR J.: You mean b'dair when it hatches?

MRS T.: Yes, doctor.

*Long pause, punctuated by b'dairs, as he searches for an answer.*

DR J.: B'dair...very young.

MRS T.: Doctor, I've got reason to believe that the bird in that egg is a genius.

DR J.: A genius! Just the word I was looking for. A very young b'dair b'dair b'genius.

MRS T.: Do I need to make any special preparations?

DR J.: Special preparations...b'dair...like what?

MRS T.: Should I sit on it in a special way?

DR J.: Oh yes. Keep it as close as possible to your b'dair b'dair b'bottom. But the moment it starts to hatch, get your b'dair b'dair b'bottom out of the way. You don't want a b'dair b'dair b'beak in the b'dair b'dair b'bottom.

MRS T.: Thank you, doctor.

*She takes the egg, places it gently in the nest, then proudly settles down. MR TWEET takes DOCTOR JAY on one side.*

MR T.: While you're here, doctor, I wonder if you'd take a look at my chest.

DR J.: Certainly. (*He looks at MR TWEET'S chest.*) That was easy. Good b'dair b'bye.

MR T.: Wait a minute! Aren't you going to give me an examination?

DR J.: If you like. One and one?

MR T.: Two.

DR J.: Two and one?

MR T.: Three.

DR J.: Three and one?

MR T.: Four.

DR J.: You've passed. Goodbye, Mrs Tweet.

MRS T.: Goodbye, doctor. Thank you.

DR J.: Give me a call b'dair so long as everything's all right.

MRS T.: I will, doctor.

*DOCTOR JAY is on his way out.*

MR T.: Doctor, doctor, I've got this terrible insomnia.

DR J.: Well, b'dair you shouldn't lose any sleep over that.

*He goes.*

MRS T.: I wish you'd do something about this worm, Tweetie. It's very cramped in here.

WORM: It certainly is. I've gone all numb.

MRS T.: Besides, it's a health hazard.

WORM: Specially for my health.

MR T.: I'll see to it in a minute.

MRS T.: Oh this is exciting, isn't it, Tweetie? Us having a genius for a son.

MR T.: (*gloomily*.) Thrilling.

MRS T.: I wonder what he'll be like. Handsome, intelligent, modest. He'll fly like an eagle, sing like a nightingale...

MR T.: And eat like an elephant.

MRS T. (*singing*.) My son, my son,  
He'll be the greatest one,  
So gifted, clever, brave and strong,  
So swift in flight, so sweet in song,  
He'll rule the skies his whole life long,  
My son, my son, my son.

MR T.: (*singing*.) My son, my son,  
When all is said and done,  
To our poor species will belong,  
He won't be clever, won't be strong,  
And my silly little wife has got the whole thing wrong,  
My son, my son, my son.

*They repeat their verses, singing in unison.*

MRS T.: I don't know why you always have to be such a misery.

MR T.: What's there to be cheerful about?

MRS T.: Everything. It's a nice sunny day.

MR T.: Probably rain tomorrow.

MRS T.: A family on the way.

MR T.: More mouths to feed.

MRS T.: We're in good health.

*MR TWEET coughs and holds his chest.*

We've got a lovely home in a nice neighbourhood.

MR T.: Maybe I should have been born bigger.  
MRS T.: What do you want to be bigger for?  
MR T.: Because I feel inferior. I should have been a lion, or an elephant.  
MRS T.: Lions and elephants can't fly.  
MR T.: When you're that big, you don't need to fly. When an elephant steps over the ground, everything shakes. When I step over the ground, it's me that shakes.  
MRS T.: Compared with some creatures, you're a giant. In a worm's eyes, I expect you're just as frightening as a lion.  
WORM: We haven't got eyes.  
MRS T.: But you're frightened of my husband, aren't you?  
WORM: I certainly am – the way he pulls me about. I hardly know whether I'm coming or going.  
MRS T. (to MR TWEET:) There you are. He thinks you're a giant.  
MR T.: It's no use being a giant if you don't feel like a giant.  
MRS T.: Oh!  
MR T.: What?  
MRS T.: Ooo!  
MR T.: What is it?  
MRS T. (giggling:) Hi hi hi!  
MR T.: What's the matter?  
MRS T.: It's tickling! Tweetie, I think they're hatching!  
*She moves and watches.*  
Oh look, one of them's breaking open! It's not the special one, though.  
*He joins her and they watch together as shrill tweety noises come from inside the nest.*  
MINITWEET I: Here I come! Here I come! I'm coming! I'm coming! Wheeee!  
*Up he pops, stark naked except for a nappy and a large safety pin.*  
Hello Mummy, hello Daddy! It's me! I'm here!  
MRS T.: Hello darling.  
MINITWEET I: Did you see me break out of the egg? Did you see?  
MRS T.: Yes, we saw.  
MINITWEET I: Didn't I do well, Mummy? Didn't I do well, Daddy?  
MR T.: Well, I...  
MINITWEET I: I did ever so well. I saw this shell over me and I cracked it with my beak. I went crack and cracked it crack so it broke right open and then I cracked another bit till I'd cracked it wide open then I forced my way out with my head and my shoulders and I kept cracking it and I...  
MR T.: Quiet!  
*Silence.*  
You are not the first bird that ever came out of an egg.  
MINITWEET I: But it's the first time I've ever come out of an egg, Daddy, and I did it brilliantly cos I...  
MR T.: Quiet! What have I let myself in for?  
*Silence. A faint cry of "Help" from within the nest.*  
MRS T.: What was that?  
MINITWEET I: It was a cry for help Mummy from inside that egg there and I heard it with my wonderful ears...  
MRS T.: Sh dear.

*More faint cries.*

MINITWEET I: There it is from inside that egg Mummy. That's the egg...

MRS T.: Let's listen, dear.

MINITWEET II: Let me out! Let me out!

MINITWEET I: He can't get out, he can't break the shell. I broke my shell, Mummy, didn't I? Daddy, I broke my shell!

MRS T.: Yes darling, but...

MINITWEET I: I broke mine, but he can't break his because he's not as strong as me. I'm strong I am.

*MRS TWEET helps MINITWEET II to get out.*

MRS T.: Come along, darling, out you come.

MINITWEET I: He can't get out on his own, can he, Daddy? He can't get out, but I did, didn't I, Daddy?

MINITWEET II: Mummy, I'm stuck, I'm stuck!

MINITWEET I: Listen to him crying. I didn't cry, did I, Daddy?

MRS T.: You're nearly out, dear. One more push and...that's it, well done!

*Up pops MINITWEET II, crying. He is also naked except for nappy and safety pin.*

There, there, you're all right now, darling.

MINITWEET I: What a wimp! Isn't he a wimp, Daddy!

MINITWEET II: I'm not a wimp.

MINITWEET I: Oh yes you are. You're the wimpiest wimp in Wimpland, you are, isn't he, Daddy?

MINITWEET II (*howling*): He called me a wimp!

MRS T.: Now children, don't quarrel.

MINITWEET I: Fancy having to be helped out of your shell. Aren't you ashamed of him, Daddy? Look at him blubbering away. Blubber, blubber, blubber!

*More howls from MINITWEET II.*

MRS T.: Leave him alone, darling. He's been through a difficult period.

MINITWEET I: I didn't go through a difficult period. I came through with flying colours, I did.

MINITWEET II: My shell was thicker than his, wasn't it, Mummy?

MRS T.: Maybe it was, dear.

MINITWEET I: No it wasn't. It wasn't, was it, Daddy? His shell wasn't thicker than mine, was it, Daddy? Daddy! His shell wasn't thicker than mine!

MR T.: I'm going hunting.

*He wanders off to the side of the stage.*

What a life!

*He stands there, a picture of misery.*

MINITWEET I: If anything, my shell was thicker than his, wasn't it, Mummy?

MINITWEET II (*sticking close to MRS TWEET*): No it wasn't.

MINITWEET I: Was. I could have knocked yours down with a feather....

*A tuneful lala comes from the nest, punctuated by tapping noises.*

MRS T.: Sh, children, what's that singing?

MINITWEET I: It's coming from that shell there. It's another one trying to break out, only he's nowhere near as quick as I was cos...

MRS T.: Hush, dear, let's listen.

MINITWEET III (*singing:*) Out of my eggshell here I come,  
 Tararara, rumtum, rumtum,  
 And with a shrill  
 Perfect trill, ahahahah,  
 I fill the world with song.  
*Up she pops, naked except for nappy, safety pin and pink ribbon.*

MRS T.: Oh what a beautiful voice. Just like Mummy.  
 MR T.: Not another Dawn Chorus!  
 MINITWEET I: It's a girl! Eugh! It's a girl! Look! Eugh!  
 MINITWEET III (*trilling:*) Ahahahahaha!  
 MRS T.: Gorgeous!  
 MINITWEET II: I can sing too, Mummy. (*Feebly:*) Ughughugh!  
 MRS T.: Very nice, dear. But your sister's got a beautiful voice.  
 MINITWEET III: Ahahahahaha!  
 MR T.: I wonder how far it is to Asia.  
 MINITWEET II: My voice is beautiful, Mummy. Ughughugh!  
 MRS T.: Yes, dear.  
 MINITWEET I: Who wants to sing? Singing's for wimps. Real birds crack eggshells with a cracking crack...  
*This speech is accompanied by MINITWEET II's "ughughugh" and MINITWEET III's "ahahahahaha".*

MRS T.: Children, children, shush now! Quiet please!  
*She obtains silence.*  
 I want you all to listen now, children. You've done very well all of you, breaking out of your shells...

MINITWEET I: He had to be helped out of his.  
 MINITWEET II: I didn't.  
 MINITWEET I: Oh yes you did.  
 MRS T.: Please, darlings! (*Silence.*) Thank you. Now as you can see, there's one more egg in the nest, and I want you to know before it hatches that it's a very special egg.

MINITWEET I: Mine was a special egg. It had me in it.  
 MINITWEET II: Mine was special too, Mummy, wasn't it?  
 MINITWEET III: (*singing:*) Mine too-oo-oo-oo. Mine too-oo-oo-oo.  
 MRS T.: They were all special, darlings, all the eggs were special.  
 MR T.: Doesn't it make you want to puke?  
 MRS T.: But this egg is special in a special way. Because it contains a genius.  
*Pause.*

MINITWEET I: What's a genius?  
 MRS T.: A genius is...well...a bird that's extraordinarily clever and handsome and strong...

MINITWEET I: It's me! I'm a genius!  
 MRS T.: No, dear, you're not...  
 MINITWEET I: Yes I am! It's me! Daddy...where's Daddy? Daddy...  
 MRS T.: Your father's gone hunting.  
 MINITWEET I: I'm a genius.  
 MINITWEET II: Am I a genius, Mummy?  
 MINITWEET III (*singing:*) Geni-us...geni-us...



MRS T.: Well you're all geniuses in a way, but that egg there is...it's moving! (*Pause.*) Look! It's moving! It's cracking! The genius is coming!

*Even MR TWEET peers from his hiding-place. There is a tremendous roar as MAXITWEET explodes from his shell and towers high above everyone else. He is huge, but like the Minitweets quite naked except for a very large nappy and safety pin.*

MAXITWEET: Foo-oo-oo-ood! Arrrrrrr!

*He stoops, then straightens up with WORM in his arms.*

WORM: Oooooow! Put me down!

MAXITWEET: Down you will go!

*He begins to devour WORM, eventually finishing the job below the level of the nest, so that the feasting is out of sight. Each noisy bite is followed by a cry from WORM, so that there is an alternation of yum-help-yum-help-yum-help. The cry from WORM becomes progressively fainter. MAXITWEET re-emerges, licking his lips.*

That's better. Now then, who are you?

MINITWEET I: I'm M...M...Minitweet the First. I'm your elder b...b...brother.

MAXITWEET: Who needs an elder brother?

*He picks MINITWEET I up bodily.*

MINITWEET I: Put me down! P...p...put me down! If you don't p...p...put me down, I'll...I'll...

MAXITWEET: You'll what?

MINITWEET I: Mummy! Daddy! He-e-e-lp!

MRS T.: Now then, dear, do put your brother down...

MAXITWEET: There's no room for Minitweets in my nest. Out you go!

*He hurls him out of the nest. MINITWEET I gives a piercing cry, lands with a thud on the stage, and lies still.*

MRS T.: Oh!

MAXITWEET: Now, who are you?

MINITWEET II: (*crying;*) Mummy, Mummy!

MAXITWEET: You're not Mummy. That's Mummy! You're another Minitweet, aren't you? Minitweet the Second, I suppose. Come here!

*He picks him up bodily.*

MINITWEET II: I want my Mummy! Mummy! I'm frightened!

MAXITWEET: This place is for Maxitweets, not miserable little Minitweets.

MINITWEET II: Put me down!

MRS T.: Wait a moment, dear!

MAXITWEET: Out you go!

*Out goes MINITWEET II. Another cry. Another thud. Another still and silent Minitweet.*

Place is looking a bit tidier now. Except for you.

*MINITWEET III opens her mouth to sing, but only a hoarse and tuneless trill emerges. MAXITWEET picks her up.*

Minitweet the Third, I presume.

MINITWEET III (*feebly;*) Aheughahaeugh.

MAXITWEET: Can you fly yet?

*She shakes her head, with a weak woo-woo noise,*  
Well now's your chance to learn.

MRS T.: No, that's naughty, dear, that's very...

*MINITWEET III follows her brothers.*

You are a naughty boy. Fancy doing that to your little...

MAXITWEET: Now then, you're Mummy, so where's Daddy? Daddy! Come here at once! Come on!

*MR TWEET emerges rather sheepishly from his hiding-place.*  
Come here. I want to talk to you. Stand there, next to Mummy.

*MR TWEET stands next to MRS TWEET, and MAXITWEET addresses them from the nest.*

I am Maxitweet. And now that I've arrived in the world, I intend to stay in the world.

*(singing:)* I don't need a sister or a brother,  
But I do need a father and a mother,  
And I need them just to bring  
One very simple thing:  
Food, food, food.

You're lucky, cos you really don't deserve me,  
But now I'm here your one task is to serve me.  
I shall spend the whole day munchin'  
My breakfast and my luncheon  
And my dinner and my supper  
And elevenses and fourses  
With occasional short pauses  
Just to gather up my forces  
Before feeding off my sources  
Whose one aim in life of course is  
To be:  
Devoted to me,  
To little old me,  
To genius me  
At the top of the tree,  
And I'm sure you'll agree  
You're lucky to be  
The parents of me,  
Oh wonderful me,  
Miraculous me,  
Incredible me,  
Remarkable me me me me me me me me MEEEEEEEE!

*Curtain*

*End of Act One*

## ACT TWO

*Three weeks later. MAXITWEET, now fully feathered and fledged, is fast asleep in the nest. MR and MRS TWEET are asleep as well, half in and half out of the nest, where there is no longer room for them. MRS TWEET wakes up, blinks, looks round. The half light of dawn will gradually brighten.*

MRS T. (*quietly*;) Tweetie! Tweetie, wake up!

*A groan from MR TWEET.*

Wake up, Tweetie!

MR T.: Can't.

MRS T.: He'll be wanting his breakfast soon.

MR T.: I'm dying.

MRS T.: Come on.

*She gets out of the nest and starts pulling him. More groans from MR TWEET. Eventually he falls right out of the nest, but merely twitches and settles down to continue his sleep.*

Tweetie, don't be silly. Wake up! You know how bad-tempered he is if he doesn't get his breakfast on time. Tweetie!

MR T.: Let me lie here and die.

MRS T.: We've got to feed our son.

MR T.: Your son.

MRS T.: What's that supposed to mean?

MR T.: He's no son of mine.

MRS T.: Tweetie!

MR T.: I don't know what you've been up to behind my back, but you laid the egg.

MRS T.: You know I've never been with any other bird!

MR T.: Does that monster look like you?

MRS T.: No.

MR T.: Does he look like me?

MRS T.: No.

MR T.: Well, you're the Tweet, so who's the Maxi?

MRS T.: There's no Maxi.

MR T.: Though why any other bird would fancy you I don't know. Look at you – all skin and feather.

MRS T.: If I'm all skin and feather, it's because I have to wear myself out looking after my husband and my son. I might add you're no flight of fancy either. Every morning I have to wake up and see a dead bird breathing.

MR T.: I don't feel well in the mornings.

MRS T.: You don't feel well when there's work to do. It was a different story when we first got married. You were going to line the nest with goose feathers, weren't you? Showing off your worm-pulling muscles and your seed-cracking jaws.

MR T.: I was quite a catch in those days.

MRS T.: So was influenza.

MR T.: If it hadn't been for me, you'd have been left on the branch.

MRS T.: No I wouldn't. There were plenty on my tail till I made my big mistake.

MR T.: What mistake?  
MRS T.: Marrying you.  
MR T. (*indicating MAXITWEET*:) Well, it looks like you made another mistake after that.  
MRS T.: Whether you believe it or not, Tweetie, he's our son. And whether you like it or not, he's got to be fed.  
*By now it is broad daylight.*  
He'll wake up any minute now, and then there'll be trouble.  
*BUTTERFLY comes on stage, singing.*  
Look, there's our chance!

BUTTERFLY (*very affected*:) How beautiful am I.  
Such a gorgeous butterfly!  
As I flutter by I cause a true sensation,  
There are sighs and cries of love and admiration.  
I could watch myself all day  
As I flit upon my way.  
I spend hours and hours and hours  
Drinking nectar from the flowers,  
And the world's a brighter place for my display.

How beautiful am I...

*During the song, MRS TWEET has managed to rouse MR TWEET, and they have crept up behind BUTTERFLY. Now they pounce. At the same time, MAXITWEET wakes up.*

MAXITWEET: Where's my breakfast? Why isn't my breakfast ready? Bring me my breakfast at once!

BUTTERFLY: Oh!

MR T.: Got you!

BUTTERFLY: Oh dear!

MAXITWEET: Break-fast! Break-fast! Break-fast!  
*This continues until breakfast arrives.*

MRS T.: Coming, darling!

BUTTERFLY: I say, what are you doing? Where are you taking me?

MR T.: To breakfast.

BUTTERFLY: Oh, right, that's awfully good of you, but actually I've had my breakfast.

MR T.: Not yours. His.  
*BUTTERFLY sees MAXITWEET.*

BUTTERFLY: No, no, let me go! You can't do this! I'm beautiful! Help! Help! Let me go! You absolute riff-raff, let me go! Ah! Oh!  
*MAXITWEET takes hold of BUTTERFLY.*

MAXITWEET: Is this all? You call this breakfast?

MRS T.: We'll bring you some more in a moment, dear.

MAXITWEET: I should think so. And get a move on.

BUTTERFLY: Now look here, my good fellow, would you mind awfully if I...ow...ow...ow...  
*MAXITWEET begins breakfast, taking BUTTERFLY down below the level of the nest.*

MRS T.: Come on, Tweetie, we'll have to get him some more.

MR T.: What about my breakfast?

MRS T.: Not till he's had his.  
*FLY comes on stage, singing.*

FLY: Yer vulgar or'nary fly, that's me,  
 As dirty an' common as common can be.  
 I like things that rot, an' I like things that smell,  
 I spread muck aroun', an' diseases as well...  
*DRAGONFLY comes on stage.*  
 WERP! Dragonfly!  
*With a whirring noise, DRAGONFLY chases FLY.*  
 Gerrou of it! Leave us alone! He-e-elp! Gerroff!  
*He is caught.*  
 Ow!

DRAGONFLY (*singing*): We dragonflies always get our prey, prey, prey,  
 And there's no point in trying to get away, way, way.  
 We're a very vicious species,  
 And I'll chop you into pieces,  
 Cos mince fly's a tasty way to start the day, day, day...  
 Hey!  
*MR and MRS TWEET pounce from behind.*

MR T.: Got you!

DRAGONFLY: Get off!

FLY: Cor, am I glad ter see you! Tell 'im ter let go o' me, will yer?

DRAGONFLY: What's the meaning of this? Take your claws off me!

MR T.: This way, both of you.

DRAGONFLY: You're not supposed to catch me! I'm supposed to catch him!

FLY: Where we goin'?

MRS T.: You're going to meet a genius.

FLY: Look, missus, I ain't dressed fer the occasion.

MRS T.: I expect he'll enjoy you even without any dressing.

MAXITWEET: Break-fast! Break-fast! Break-fast! (*And so on.*)

DRAGONFLY: I demand to see my lawyer.

MR T.: We'll send him your case afterwards. If there's any of it left.

DRAGONFLY & FLY: Help, oh, ah, ugh, gerroff etc.

MAXITWEET: Come on, come on, come on. Keeping me waiting! Ugh, not much meat here, is there? This one's half chewed already.

MRS T.: We'll get you some more, dear.

MAXITWEET: A fine Mummy and Daddy you are, starving me to death.  
*He takes FLY and DRAGONFLY below the level of the nest.*

MR T.: I'm not bringing him any more.

MRS T.: Tweetie, he's a genius. Geniuses have to be fed.

MR T.: If he's such a genius, let him find his own food!

MRS T.: Just help me get him one more course. Look, over there!  
*GRASSHOPPER has come on stage.*

GRASSHOPPER: And now the great Graham Gregory Griffith Grasshopper is going to make his unique attempt on the world high jump and long jump records at the same time. It's never been done before in the history of athletics. He flexes the massive legs that have carried him such astonishing distances in the past, and the world watches, hushed in awed anticipation. Now, deliberately and carefully, he measures out his run. (*He does so.*) As always, meticulous attention to detail.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten strides. His face is furrowed with concentration as he summons up every ounce of explosive energy. (*He crouches, head down.*) Could this be the greatest moment in sporting history? He's about to begin his run. And here he goes!

*He runs straight into MR and MRS TWEET, who take a tight hold on him.*

Oops!

MR T.: Nice of you to jump by.

GRASSHOPPER: What's going on?

MR T.: You – on the menu.

GRASSHOPPER: Listen, I'm a world famous athlete.

MR T.: Well, we're looking for dope. And we've found one.

*MAXITWEET resumes his cry of "Break-fast!"*

GRASSHOPPER: If I can break the record here, I'll go down in history.

MR T.: You'll go down all right.

MRS T.: And you'll soon be history.

MAXITWEET: Get a move on, will you? I'm starving!

GRASSHOPPER (*seeing MAXITWEET:*) Help! Listen, I'm a star, I'm a champion, I'm the greatest, I'm the fastest...

*He is delivered to MAXITWEET, and duly disappears.*

MAXITWEET: And you're the tastiest.

GRASSHOPPER (*from below:*) No, not my leg! I'll never break the record now!

*LADYBIRD comes on stage and approaches MR TWEET, who is nearest to her.*

LADYBIRD: Morning, Mr Tweet.

MR T.: Morning, Ladybird.

LADYBIRD: Beautiful morning.

MR T.: Yes, indeed, a pleasure to wake up to.

LADYBIRD: Your son still eating you out of nest and home, I see.

MR T.: Never stops. Here, Ladybird...

*He glances round and sees that MAXITWEET is busy eating and MRS TWEET is tidying the nest. He takes LADYBIRD on one side.*

You wouldn't like to do me a little favour, would you?

LADYBIRD: Well, that depends, Mr Tweet.

MR T.: I can tell you where to find some nice juicy greenfly.

LADYBIRD: I'm all yours, Mr Tweet.

MR T.: Let me give you to my son as a special breakfast delicacy – if you see what I mean. (*He winks at her.*)

LADYBIRD: I do indeed.

MR T.: Better get the wife out of the way first. Hold on.

*He goes to the back of the nest, and breaks some bits off.*

Oh dear, there's some bits broken off here at the back here. If You see to those, I'll get some more breakfast for our darling son.

MRS T.: Are you feeling all right, Tweetie?

MR T.: A dad's gotta do what a dad's gotta do.

*MRS TWEET goes round the back, and MR TWEET returns to LADYBIRD.*

MR T.: (*contd.*) I'll have to pretend I've caught you, right? (*Loud:*) Ah, got you!

*MAXITWEET has begun his chant of "Break-fast!"*

*LADYBIRD lets out a few genteel cries for help.*

Coming, sonny, coming. Here we are. Look what I've brought you. Something succulent for our little Maxi.

MAXITWEET: What is it?

MR T.: Ladybird. Lovely juicy meaty ladybird.

MAXITWEET: Doesn't look very juicy meaty to me.

MR T.: My son, never judge by appearances. Sink your jaws into this, and prepare for a surprise.

*He passes LADYBIRD to MAXITWEET, who is about to take a bite when she makes an explosive plopping noise with her mouth.*

MAXITWEET: Eugh!

*He drops her.*

MR T.: What's wrong, sonny?

MAXITWEET: She spat at me! Eugh! Eu-eu-eu-eugh! Eu-eu-eu-eu-eugh!

MR T.: Oh dear, oh dear, what's the matter, my little angel?

MAXITWEET: Eugh, it's vile, horrible, yuk, eugh!

*MRS TWEET hurries back.*

MRS T.: What is it, darling? What's the matter?

*MR TWEET hurries away with LADYBIRD, both giggling.*

MAXITWEET: She spat at me, and it tastes...eu-eu-eugh...I feel sick! Eugh!

MR T.: That's made my day, that has.

LADYBIRD: Now what about those greenfly?

MR T.: You'll find thousands of them in Mrs Wilson's rose-garden.

LADYBIRD: Thank you, Mr Tweet.

MR T.: Thank you, Ladybird. Better go before she spots you.

LADYBIRD: I'm "spotted" already!

*More giggles. She goes off.*

MAXITWEET: Eugh! Eugh!

MRS T.: Who spat at you, darling? Hm? Tell Mummy.

MAXITWEET: A ladybird. Daddy brought me a ladybird, and she spat at me!

MRS T.: Daddy brought you a ladybird? Tweetie! Tweetie!

MR T.: Yes, my precious? Did you call?

MRS T.: Is it true?

MR T.: Is what true, sweetheart?

MRS T.: Did you give him a ladybird?

MR T.: Terrible mistake! I'll never forgive myself.

MRS T.: Go and fetch Doctor Jay. Now!

MR T.: Yes of course, dear.

MAXITWEET: Eugh!

*MR TWEET goes to the side of the stage.*

MR T.: Doctor Jay. Doctor Jay-ay-ay!

DR J. (*off:*) B'dair, b'dair, b'dair.

MR T.: Patient for you!

DR J.: (*off:*) B'dair I'm coming, I'm b'dair on my way.

MRS T. (*to MAXITWEET:*) The doctor'll soon put you right, darling.

MAXITWEET: Eugh! Eugh eugh!

*DOCTOR JAY arrives.*

- DR J.: B'dair, b'dair, here I come. B'dair b'dair, and here I am. (*Seeing MR TWEET:*) Oh, it's you. Cut down on this, give up that, and see me in a fortnight.
- MR T.: It's not for me, doctor. It's for him – the monster over there.
- DR J.: Ah!
- MRS T.: Morning, doctor. It's our son. He's not well.
- DR J.: He does look a bit b'dair b'dair b'bloated, doesn't he?
- MRS T.: No, that's his normal size. He's a genius.
- DR J.: Oh! So what seems to be the trouble?
- MRS T.: He tried to eat a ladybird.
- DR J.: Ah! Aha! Nobody's explained the b'dair b'dair b'facts of life to him then.
- MRS T.: Facts of life, doctor?
- DR J.: Now listen carefully, my boy. Gentlemen birds do not b'dair b'dair eat ladybirds. (*Whispering:*) They get together with them and make b'dair b'dair b'dair...
- MRS T.: A ladybird, doctor, not a lady bird.
- DR J.: Oh! Ah! I see. A ladybird. I've got you. Yes indeed. (*To MAXITWEET:*) You tried to eat a b'dair b'dair ladybird. That explains everything. (*To MRS TWEET:*) Um...what did you say was wrong with him?
- MRS T.: Well you know what happens when you try to eat a ladybird, doctor?
- DR J.: Do I? Yes of course I do. B'dair b'dair indigestion?
- MRS T.: No, doctor!
- DR J.: No, no, no, not with b'dair b'dair ladybirds. Bone stuck in the... (*She is about to speak.*) No, no, that's not his problem. Dear me no.
- MRS T.: It's that horrible tasting stuff they spit...
- DR J.: It must be that horrible tasting stuff they...what was that, dear lady? You were b'dair b'dair saying something?
- MRS T.: No, carry on, doctor.
- DR J.: I was about to say it must be the horrible tasting stuff that ladybirds b'dair b'dair extropify from the antipormones of the b'dair b'dair sophocles euripides.
- MRS T.: Will he live, doctor?
- DR J.: (*to MAXITWEET:*) How do you feel?
- MAXITWEET: I'm thirsty!
- DR J.: He'll live.
- MRS T.: Oh thank you, doctor.
- MAXITWEET: I want my elevenses.
- DR J.: Not at all, not at all. Call me any time so long as it's not b'dair b'dair b'serious.
- MR T.: One moment, doctor. I'd like to ask you something.
- DR J.: I hope it's not b'dair b'dair b'difficult.
- MR T.: Look at him.
- DR J.: Oh good, it's easy. (*He looks at MAXITWEET.*)
- MR T.: And now look at my wife.
- DR JAY looks at MRS TWEET.*
- And now look at me.



DR J. (*looking at MR TWEET:*) I'm b'dair quite good at this.

MR T.: Now tell me, doctor, bearing in mind his size, her size, and my size, is there any way he could be our son?

MAXITWEET: Give me my elevenses.

MRS T.: Tweetie!

DR J. (*looking at all of them:*) B'dair b'dair b'dair b'dair b'dair b'dair your son?

MRS T.: He is our son!

MR T.: Then why's he so big, and why doesn't he look like us?

MAXITWEET: Elevenses. Now!

MRS T.: In a minute, darling. We're talking to the doctor.

MAXITWEET: I want my elevenses!

MR T.: She may be his mother, but I'm not his father!

MRS T.: I have never been with another bird! He's a genius, doctor, that's why he's different!

DR J.: Ah!

MR T.: He's a big bastard, that's why he's different.

MAXITWEET: If I don't get my elevenses soon, there'll be trouble.

DR J.: I don't think he's a b'dair b'dair b'bustard. His legs aren't long enough.

MR T.: A bastard, not a bustard.

MRS T.: (*close to tears:*) He's not a bastard or a bustard. He's our son!

MAXITWEET: Elevenses!

DR J.: Wait! I know what it is! There's a simple explanation. Muta b'dair muta b'dair mutalution! It's the very latest theory.

MR T.: What's mutalution?

DR J.: What's mutalution? Allow me to explain.

(*singing:*) Every now and then you'll find upon our Mother Earth  
 A bird, a fish, a plant, a mammal suddenly gives birth  
 To a creature with a feature that its forebears never had,  
 And so it turns out different from its Mum and from its Dad.  
 It's only thanks to science now that we have understood  
 What gives the woody woodpecker power to peck on wood,  
 Why booby birds are silly and why foxes are so sly,  
 Why angler fish angle and why flying fish fly.  
 The answer? B'dair...mutalution.

What's the funny joke that makes a laughing jackass laugh?  
 Who put elastic in the neck of the giraffe?  
 What pulled the elephant's nose into a trunk?  
 And who put the terrible smell into a skunk?  
 The answer? B'dair...mutalution.

Now there's no doubt your son is really quite a size,  
 But the scientific brain won't find it a surprise.  
 There's no fiddle cos the riddle has a very clear solution.  
 The answer? B'dair...mutalution.  
 Mu...mu...mu...mu...talution.

MAXITWEET: Elevenses, elevenses, elevenses, elevenses etc.

MRS T.: So he is our son.

DR J.: Yes, yes, he's a b'dair mutalutant.

MRS T.: Thank you, doctor, thank you. All right, my darling, you shall have your drinkies now.

MR T.: Well I've never heard of mutalution.

MAXITWEET: You kept me waiting! Go and get it now!

MRS T.: Of course, dear, and what would you like? Lemonade? Coffee? Tea? Cocoa?

MAXITWEET: Cocoa. I want my cocoa.

DR J.: I'll be off then.

MRS T.: Thank you again, doctor. I'm ever so grateful.

MAXITWEET: Go and get my cocoa!

MR T.: I've heard of mutilation. That's what he could do with.

DR J.: Glad to have been of b'dair b'dair b'service.

MRS T.: Come on, Tweetie, we've got to find some cocoa for our son.

MAXITWEET: Co-coa, co-coa, co-coa, co-coa etc.

MR T.: Where do you think you'll get that? Cocoa doesn't grow on trees!

*On hearing MAXITWEET'S repeated cry of "Co-coa!"*

*DOCTOR JAY has stopped in his tracks.*

DR J.: Co-coa? Co-coa? Now where have I heard that sound before?

*(Imitating it:) Co-coa! Co-coa!*

*He returns to the nest, listening intently.*

MRS T.: What is it, doctor?

DR J.: Co-coa. Co-coa. *(It suddenly comes back to him.)* Of course! That's it! Cocoa!

*He beckons MR and MRS TWEET to one side of the stage.*

MR T.: Now what is it?

*They join him, and he sets himself to make the great revelation. Meanwhile, MAXITWEET continues to cry "Co-coa!"*

DR J.: I have a very important announcement to make. B'dair b'dair b'dair.

*Pause.*

MR T.: Then get on with it.

DR J.: That b'dair b'dair b'bird is not your son.

MR T.: Aha!

MRS T.: Of course he's our son!

DR J.: No he's not.

MR T.: I knew it! You've been having it off with some fly-by-night...

DR J.: No, no, no, no, no, you misunderstand me. He's not your son, Mr Tweet, and he's not b'dair b'dair b'Mrs Tweet's son either.

MRS T.: But he is, doctor. You said yourself he was our son. He's a mutalutant.

DR J.: A b'dair b'dair b'brilliant explanation, which even had me fooled for a while. But listen to his cry.

*They listen to the cry of "Co-coa!"*

He's not a tweet, he's a cocoa.

MRS T.: A cocoa?

DR J.: *(really enjoying himself.)* Now then, dear lady, shortly after you had given b'dair b'dair b'birth, did you or did you not receive a visitor?

MRS T.: A visitor? No.  
 MR T.: Yes you did. That swanky bird from the travel agency.  
 MRS T.: Oh yes, Mrs Cook.  
 DR J.: Ah! Cook. Cocoa Cook. You see! B'dair b'dair b'brilliant! How do I do it? Now pay attention. I want you to think b'dair b'dair b'back to the day in question. Did you or did you not at one time leave the nest unattended? *(To the audience:)* And this, members of the jury, is the b'dair b'dair b'vital question. Well, madam, the court is b'dair waiting for your answer.

MRS T.: Yes, we did. We went to catch a worm.  
 DR J.: Aha! Ahaaaa! And when you returned, one of your eggs had undergone a little b'dair b'dair mutalution?

MRS T.: Yes it had.  
 DR J.: Amazing! You see, madam, Mrs Cook removed one of your eggs and replaced it with b'dair b'dair one of her own! And then...correct me if I'm wrong...she told you she was b'dair b'dair b'going to Asia.  
*Gasps of astonishment from the TWEETS.*  
 Am I right?

MRS T.: Doctor, how did you know?  
 DR J.: Oh, it's all in a day's work. Besides, not so long ago, Mrs Jay and I got b'dair b'dair b'clobbered the same way.

MRS T.: So I've been slaving my feathers to the quill for Mrs Cook's son!  
 DR J.: Exactly.

MR T.: And I've been busting my beak bringing breakfast to a cocoa!  
 DR J.: Precisely.

MRS T.: What do you advise us to do?  
 DR J.: Send him off to Asia.

MRS T.: Come on, Tweetie. We've got work to do.  
 MR T.: Work? It'll be a pleasure. Doctor Jay, you're a b'dair b'dair b'genius.

DR J. *(modestly:)* I have my b'dair b'dair b'moments.  
*MR and MRS TWEET march towards the nest.*  
 What a diagnosis! *(He goes off.)*

MAXITWEET: And about time too! I'm sick and tired of waiting! What have you been doing? Where's my cocoa?

MRS T.: You're not getting your cocoa.

MAXITWEET: What do you mean I'm not getting my cocoa? I want my cocoa! I want my cocoa this minute! If I don't get my...

MRS T.: If you don't get your cocoa self out of this nest immediately, you'll feel a tweety beak taking a big bite out of your cocoa bottom.

MR T.: And this is for starters.  
*He has gone behind MAXITWEET and jerks a feather out of his behind.*

MAXITWEET: Ow!

MRS T.: Out!  
*She and MR TWEET give him a good hiding, and he struggles out of the nest.*

MAXITWEET: Wah! Wah! I want my Mummy!

MRS T.: That's for breakfast!

MR T.: That's for elevenses!

MRS T.: Lunch!

MR T.: Fourses!

MRS T.: Dinner!

MR T.: Supper!

MAXITWEET: Boo hoo! Where's my Mummy? Mummy! Mummy!

MRS T.: If you ever come near our nest again, we'll take your feathers out one by one till you're stark naked.

MR T.: And then we'll stick them all in again – in different places.

MAXITWEET: Where's my Mummy? I want my Mummy!

MRS T.: Your Mummy's gone to Asia.

MAXITWEET: Where's Asia?

MR T. (*pointing*): That way. And if you can't fly there, we'll kick you there.

MRS T.: That's right, we shall kick you!

*They chase MAXITWEET off stage, chanting "Kick you! Kick you! Kick you!" They watch him go, then turn to each other and embrace.*

He's gone!

MR T.: We're free!

*They go towards the nest.*

MRS T.: I'm sorry I made you do all that work, Tweetie.

MR T.: It's all right – you weren't to know. And I'm sorry I thought you'd been up to something behind my back.

MRS T.: Perfectly understandable. And it's nice to know you still care.

*They climb into the nest.*

What a treat to have it all to ourselves again.

MR T.: Ah, home!

*They settle down.*

MRS T.: There we are then.

MR T.: Yes, there we are.

MRS T.: Peace and quiet.

MR T.: Peace and quiet.

*Pause.*

MRS T.: Very quiet.

MR T.: Very peaceful.

MRS T.: I'd forgotten what it was like to have it all quiet. What am I going to do with myself all day?

MR T.: Enjoy the peace.

MRS T.: It's nice to have a bit of peace. But too much peace could make you go cuckoo.

*He looks at her.*

No, maybe not.

(*singing*): That Maxitweet has gone I'm glad.  
But the Minitweets are dead and that's sad.  
It was nice for us to be a Mum and Dad.  
But now we're alone.

MR T. (*singing*): Well I wouldn't want that Maxi back.  
Of chasing round I've had my whack.  
And I'd finish with a heart attack.  
It's better alone.

MR & MRS T. (*together:*) Your children make trouble night and day.  
 You work and worry while they eat and play.  
 But it's very quiet once they've gone away  
 And left you alone.

MRS T.: Your children are a sunshine ray.  
 MR T.: Or they drive you prematurely old and grey.  
 MR & MRS T. (*together:*) With children you at least can say  
 You're not alone.  
 You're not alone.

MRS T.: Oops! Hello!  
 MR T.: What's the matter?  
 MRS T.: Oops! No, it can't be.  
 MR T.: What can't be what?  
 MRS T.: Oops! I don't believe it. Fancy that!  
 MR T.: Fancy what?  
 MRS T.: Oops! You'd never have thought it was possible!  
 MR T.: What's not possible? What are you talking about?  
 MRS T.: Tweetie, I've got a surprise for you.  
*She gets up, stoops, and straightens.*  
 Look!  
*She holds up four eggs.*  
 We're going to have another family!

*Curtain*

*THE END*



