

# The Reluctant Dragon

*Based on the short story  
By Kenneth Grahame*

*Adapted by Elliott B. Baker  
Music and Lyrics by Elliott B. Baker*

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## STORY

"The Reluctant Dragon" is what happens when a gentle, Shakespeare-loving dragon meets a town badly in need of some diversion. In this wonderful musical, Nigel, a wannabe mayoral candidate, invites St. George, a semi-retired dragon slayer, to rid the town of a terrible threat. Of course neither the villagers, who are willing to do anything for a work holiday, or Nigel, with his faux French accent, have actually seen the fearsome beast! Only Jack, a sensible, bookish young man, has met the timid, peace-loving dragon.

Join the merry villagers as they sing "There's a Dragon Loose!" Jack's stepmother, who needs to bump him off before his eighteenth birthday in order to inherit the farm, sings the sly number, "I've Always Cared for You," while Nigel and his easily-distracted assistant sing "Inside Track." There's not a situation riper for laughter than when the village men swagger about singing "We Are a Manly Group of Men," or when the Dragon and St. George hurl Shakespearean slurs at each other in "There's Art Form to the Insult."

The many levels of Grahame's satire will satisfy every age while the music carries all to a satisfying ending.

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**CAST LIST**

*Cast of 12+*

*In the order of their appearance*

**JAMES:** A young man.

**ST. GEORGE:** An elderly knight past his prime.

**STEPMOTHER:** A middle-aged woman.

**JACK:** A bookish young man with glasses.

**NIGEL:** The Assistant Mayor (*He pronounces it Nizhelle.*)

**THOMAS:** A young assistant to Nigel, not much help.

**DRAGON:** A peaceful dragon.

**BAKER:** A tall woman.

**BUTCHER:** (*Fred*) A middle-aged man.

**MARIE:** A middle-aged woman.

**LOREENA:** A middle-aged woman.

**SADIE:** A middle-aged woman.

**VILLAGERS:** Male and female, as many as desired. Note:

There are a number of one or two-line speaking roles for the Villagers. Ideally one or more children can be cast as well.

**PLACE / TIME**

Somewhere in Britain. Sometime in the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century.

**SETTING and PROPS**

**The village square:** Front of the town hall building and several benches.

**In front of cave:** Several stumps and rocks large enough on which to sit near the cave entrance.

**Jack's home:** Kitchen area with wooden table, two stools or chairs, and a sideboard.

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**SCENES ACT I**

Scene 1: Village Square -- St. George arrives  
Scene 2: Jack's home -- a few days earlier  
Scene 3: Village Square -- Nigel, Thomas plan an "event"  
Scene 4: Dragon's cave -- Jack meets the Dragon  
Scene 5: Village Square -- Villagers learn of the Dragon  
Scene 6: Dragon's Cave -- Jack warns the Dragon  
Scene 7: Village Square/Laundry - Villagers fearful, angry  
Scene 8: Dragon's Cave -- Jack and Dragon talk  
Scene 9: Village Square -- Stepmother, Nigel conspire  
Scene 10: Jack's Home -- Stepmother convinces Jack  
Scene 11: Village Square -- Jack, Nigel discuss game plan

**SCENES ACT II**

Scene 1: Village Square - "Militia" forms, date set for bout  
Scene 2: Dragon's Cave -- Dragon, St. George strategize  
Scene 3: Dragon's Cave -- The battle!  
Scene 4: Village Square -- The happy ending

**PROPS**

2 mugs (pre-set)	book
poison bottle	cauldron/pot
wooden ladle	teapot
cup	spoon
sugar bowl	creamer
"rock" to throw	"potato"
megaphone	3 wash tubs/washboards
laundry (shirts)	soup bowl
basket for Nigel's head	tables to sell food
long scroll of rules	tray of teriyaki steak sticks
tray of pies	playing cards
bag of "prunes"	scorched cake
fright wig	
large banner reading "Welcome St. George"	
bunches of balloons, flags, programs, pom-poms	
pan with a spoon for Nigel to beat at rounds	

**Special Costume:** St. George will need a suit of armor with a helmet visor which falls closed easily. His sword should break easily into two pieces. He carries a handkerchief up his sleeve.

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**MUSIC ACT I**

- Music # 1 – “There’s a Dragon Loose” (*Villagers*)
- Music # 4 – “I’ve Always Cared for You” (*Stepmother*)
- Music # 6 – “Inside Track” (*Nigel and Thomas*)
- Music # 8 – “In My Dreams” (*Jack*)
- Music # 11 – “Catastrophic Moment” (*Villagers and Nigel*)
- Music # 13 – “You Never Can Tell” (*Jack and Dragon*)
- Music # 15 – “Kill Him” (*Stepmother and Village Women*)
- Music # 21 – “Rules” (*Nigel, Jack and Villagers*)
- Music # 22 – “There’s a Dragon Loose – Reprise” (*Villagers*)

**MUSIC ACT II**

- Music # 24 – “We Are a Manly Group of Men” (*Village Men*)
- Music # 25 – “In My Day” (*St. George*)
- Music # 28 – “There’s an Art Form to the Insult”  
(*St. George and Dragon*)
- Music # 31 – “There’s a Dragon Here – Finale”

*(Please contact Eldridge Publishing for a rehearsal/performance CD which includes sound effects.)*

**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: MUSIC underscore. The village square where we see a large banner reading "Welcome St. George." VILLAGERS are frozen in various attitudes of fright and concern. JAMES runs on stage out of breath.)*

**JAMES:** He's here!

*(ST. GEORGE enters and the VILLAGERS crowd around him all speaking at once.)*

**VILLAGERS:** Thank goodness! It's about time! We're saved.  
What took you so long? Is it really him?

**ST. GEORGE:** One at a time, one at a time. *(The VILLAGERS step back.)* Now what's the problem?

**MUSIC No. 1 – "THERE'S A DRAGON LOOSE"**

*(VILLAGERS speak to ST. GEORGE. Can be more than one on each.)*

**VILLAGER #1:** He's vicious.

**VILLAGER #2:** Ferocious.

**VILLAGER #3:** Atrocious.

**VILLAGER #4:** Precocious.

**VILLAGER #5:** He's planning

**VILLAGER #6:** To kill us.

**VILLAGER #7:** To eat us.

**VILLAGER #8:** Defeat us.

**ALL VILLAGERS:** *(Sing.)*

THERE'S A DRAGON LOOSE  
AND HE'LL COOK OUR GOOSE  
HE'LL FILLET US,  
SAUTÉ US,  
FLAMBÉ US,  
UNTIL WE'RE DONE, WELL DONE.

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