

# Toad of Toad Had

A Play from. Kenneth Grahame's Book *The Wind in the Willows* A.A. Milne

First produced at the Liverpool Playhouse in 1929, it is based around the adventures of the foolish Toad and his friends: the kindly Rat, the wise Badger and the gentle, but very nervous, MOLE.

This scene takes place at night in the middle of the Wild Wood -a frightening place in the moonlight - with the snow thick on the ground. MOLE comes limping in through the trees, looking over his shoulder as he hears the mocking laughter of the creatures who inhabit the wood. His friends had warned him not to toe here and now he is hopelessly lost.

MOLE

*{Hopefully}* Ratty! *(In sudden panic as a bal crosses the stage)* What's that? Pooh! It's nothing! *I'm not frightened!...* I do wish Ratty was here. He's so comforting, is Ratty. Or the brave Mr Toad. *He'd frighten them all away. (He seems to hear the sound of mocking laughter)* What's that? *(He looks round anxiously)* Ratty always said, 'Don't go into the Wild Wood.' That's what he always said. 'Not by yourself,' he said. 'It isn't safe,' he said. 'We never do/ he said. That's what Ratty said. But I thought I knew better. There he was, dear old Rat, dozing in front of the fire, and I thought if I just slipped out, just to see what the Wild Wood was like - what's that - ? *(He breaks off suddenly and turns up stage, fearing an attack from behind. There is nothing)* I should be safer up against a tree. Why didn't I think of that before? *(He settles himself at the foot of a tree)* Ratty would have thought of it, he's so wise. Oh, Ratty, I wish you were here! It's so much more friendly with two! *(His head droops on his chest)* . . . *(waking up suddenly)* What's that? . . . *(frightened)* Who is it? ... *(Rat enters and crosses to Mole. He has a lantern in his hand and a cudgel over his shoulder, MOLE is crawling around distraught, almost in tears)* Oh, Rat! .. Oh, Ratty, I've been so frightened, you can't think . . . *(sitting)* Oh, Ratty. I don't know how to tell you, but I'm afraid you'll never want me for a companion again, but I can't, I simply *can't* go all that way back home now . . . I'm aching all over. Oh, Ratty, do forgive me. I feel as if I must just sit here for ever and ever and ever, and I'm not a bit frightened now you're with me - and -and I think I want to go to sleep.