

The Gingerbread Man Gets Schooled

by Patrick Rainville Dorn

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DEDICATION

To Abby, who for 30 years has kept this
Gingerbread Man from going stale.

STORY OF THE PLAY

The dashing, fleet-footed Gingerbread Man has gotten loose at Baker Street School, proud home of the Spatula Flippers. Now it's up to a comical assortment of nerds and cheerleaders to put the bite on him. Principal Linzer Macaroon, cafeteria lady Muffin Topp and janitor Roland Butter enlist science teacher Newton Figg's Mad Science Club and Lorna Doone's pom squad to use their skills, talents and knowledge to capture the slick-sneakered cookie. This fast-paced show is filled with jokes, gags, slapstick humor, chases, and a riotous climax that will have audiences cheering. About 30 minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 m, 7 w, additional cast possible)

Gingerbread Man (m): a dashing cookie

The Faculty and Staff

Linzer Macaroon (f): principal

Muffin Topp (f): cafeteria lady

Roland Butter (m): janitor

Newton Figg (m): science teacher

Lorna Doone (f): cheerleading coach

The Mad Science Club

Oatie Stroopwafel (m)

Graham Scone (m)

Berner Haselnusslebkuchen (m)

The “Spatula Flippers” Cheerleading Squad

Poppy Hamantash (f)

Blondie Biscotti (f)

Toffee Snickerdoodle (f)

Little Debbie (f)

Additional Mad Science Club members and cheerleaders may be added. Simply redistribute the dialogue so everyone gets to speak. Suggested additional or alternative student names: Kifli Kolache, Pastel Samosa, Crusty Croquembouche, Dulce Empanada, Strawberry Shortbread, Butterscotch Brownie, Rosette Speculoos.

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TIME

Right now! Oops, you just missed it. Too slow.

SETTING

Baker Street School cafeteria. (An empty stage.) Entrances left and right. Additional entrances optional, but desirable. A sign reads "Welcome to Baker Street School, Proud Home of the Spatula Flippers!" The cartoon mascot of a happy or fierce spatula (yes, the kitchen utensil), complete with arms and a smiling or grimacing face also appears on the sign. Another sign reads "No running in hallways." A third sign reads "No Teasing Zone." Additional school decorations as desired, including student art work, posters, notices, menu, etc.

See end of script for costumes, props and additional notes.

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(AT RISE: An empty stage. GINGERBREAD MAN enters, bounds across the stage, stops, smiles at audience, waves and exits. A few moments later, FACULTY, STAFF and STUDENTS enter, hurry and scurry, bump and bumble across the stage. They are in a tight clump, each moving distinctively according to their character, but none very fast.)

FACULTY, STAFF and STUDENTS: *(Shouting.)* Hold on there! Stop him! Don't let that cookie get away! I'll get him! He's mine, all mine. Seize him, etc.

(THEY exit. GINGERBREAD MAN enters from somewhere other than where he exited.)

GINGERBREAD MAN: *(To audience.)* Hello. I'll bet you're wondering what a dashing Gingerbread Man like me is doing here at Baker Street School. And why everyone is trying to put the bite on me. It all started here in the cafeteria, not long after school let out.

(GINGERBREAD MAN exits. PRINCIPAL MACARON enters. MUFFIN TOPP, carrying a large spatula, enters and rushes to Principal.)

MUFFIN: Principal Macaroon! Did you see him? Did he come this way?

PRINCIPAL: No running in the hallways, Miss Topp. Safety first. That rule applies to everyone, even the cafeteria lady.

MUFFIN: *(Catches breath.)* I turned my back for just a minute, and he got away. Fast and fresh, right out of the oven. I've never seen such a quick cookie!

PRINCIPAL: A cookie, you say?

(ROLAND BUTTER enters, carrying a mop.)

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ROLAND: Hello, Principal Macaroon. *(Smiles shyly.)* Hello, Miss Topp. *(To PRINCIPAL.)* Excuse me for interrupting, but I just saw a Gingerbread Man running through the halls without a visitor's pass. He was yelling *(Imitates GINGERBREAD MAN.)* "Run, run, as fast as you can. You can't catch me; I'm the Gingerbread Man!" *(Pause.)* I thought you might like to know.

PRINCIPAL: A Gingerbread Man! Running loose at Baker Street School?

MUFFIN: *(Nods.)* Fresh baked, straight from the oven.

ROLAND: You work miracles in the cafeteria kitchen, Miss Topp. Everyone says so.

MUFFIN: *(Smiles.)* You can call me Muffin, Mr. Butter.

ROLAND: Roland.

MUFFIN: Roland.

(THEY smile, sigh.)

PRINCIPAL: We can't have rogue baked goods shouting nursery rhymes and roaming through the school after hours. And certainly not without a visitor's pass! I'll put a stop to these shenanigans. *(Pulls walkie-talkie from pocket or purse. Speaks into it.)* Attention all faculty. Attention all faculty. Initiate lockdown protocol Fahrenheit 375 for the next twenty minutes. Escort all after-school clubs to the cafeteria immediately. That is all.

(SFX: Bell ringing. LORNA DOONE and CHEERLEADERS enter from one side. NEWTON FIGG and MAD SCIENCE CLUB enter from the other. GINGERBREAD MAN enters too, sneaking in to join the group unnoticed.)

NEWTON: What's all this about protocol Fahrenheit 375?

LORNA: You interrupted our cheerleading practice.

CHEERLEADERS: *(Strike a peppy pose.)* Yeah!

OATIE: We were cooking up baking riddles for the joke trivia tournament. *(Grins.)* Why did the students eat their homework?

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GRAHAM: *(Answers.)* Because the teacher said it was a piece of cake. *(OATIE, GRAHAM and BERNER laugh uproariously. No one else does.)* Why do we put candles on top of a birthday cake?

BERNER: *(Answers.)* Because it's too hard to put them on the bottom. *(OATIE, GRAHAM and BERNER laugh themselves silly, but no one else does.)* Why did the birthday cake go to the doctor? *(Looks around.)* Anyone? Anyone? *(No one answers.)*

OATIE, GRAHAM and BERNER: Because it was feeling crummy!

(OATIE, GRAHAM and BERNER laugh, snorting and braying. No one else does. Pause.)

POPPY: So, what IS protocol Fahrenheit 375, anyway?

BLONDIE: It sounds serious.

TOFFEE: Yeah, WAY more serious than 373 or 374.

PRINCIPAL: I don't want anyone to be alarmed, but there is a Gingerbread Man running loose somewhere in the school, shouting a silly nursery rhyme.

STUDENTS: A Gingerbread Man? *(Scream.)* Aaagh!

MUFFIN: He's not dangerous. I promise. He's just a sweet, mildly spicy cookie.

PRINCIPAL: Anyone running through the hallways without a pass must be considered a hazard, Miss Topp.

ROLAND: Even a cookie?

PRINCIPAL: ESPECIALLY a cookie.

GINGERBREAD MAN: *(Steps out from the crowd.)* Aw. I didn't know you cared.

(GINGERBREAD MAN hugs PRINCIPAL. OPTIONAL: mimes loud, squeaky-pop kiss on her cheek or hand.)

PRINCIPAL: *(Screams.)* Aaagh!

ALL: *(Scream.)* Aaagh!

GINGERBREAD MAN: Gotta run. Toodles! *(Runs off.)*

NEWTON: A walking, talking Gingerbread Man. Fascinating.

MUFFIN: And affectionate.

End of Freeview

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