

ACTING PLAYS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

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PATTEN BEARD



Class PN 6120

Book A 5 B 355

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DO YOU BELIEVE IN FAIRIES?

EDUCATIONAL PLAY-BOOK SERIES

ACTING PLAYS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

BY
PATTEN BEARD



BECKLEY-CARDY COMPANY
CHICAGO

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FOREWORD

WHY USE PLAYS:

Primarily, because they entertain.

Girls and boys enjoy the fun of "dressing up" and "making believe." This taste shows itself even before kindergarten age in the self-expression of such amusements as House, Store, School, Indian and Circus games.

Play-acting is a social interest. It gives scope for school entertainment, club, camp and home amusement.

It is an educational factor in child training.

WHAT PLAY-ACTING TEACHES:

Training of memory.

Training of speech.

Bodily discipline.

Teamwork.

Imaginative creativeness.

Elementary costume-designing and stage-setting and the decorative value of color.

WHERE PLAYS MAY BE GIVEN:

Indoors, outdoors—on stage or platform or in rooms or halls wherever there is a play to give. Simple scenery is desirable and preferably such as boys and girls can make with help themselves.

TRAINING:

A double cast gives every child a chance. From it may be made final selections for the acting after rehearsals.

MUSIC :

Phonograph records for dances and musical interludes are helpful. Simplicity, harmony, natural self-expression are the perfection of the play for girls and boys.

BIBLIOGRAPHY :

A word of thanks is due Mrs. Helen Weil, whose valued experience as an instructor in voice culture and play-acting has given to this book its helpful bibliography.

PATTEN BEARD

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THE CHILD'S PLAY

For social entertainment, for special drill in schools, for camp amusement, for children's club work, or for mere home fun, the acting play offers expression to the child's natural love of "dressing up" and "make-believe." It is a game that fits the mould of the child's mind. In his own self-made drama of play, he acts impromptu the everyday scenes of *House* or *Store*, *Indians* or *Circus*, and he needs no audience and few properties to make vivid his self-suggested fun.

So the acting play, adapted to school use, becomes a natural medium for teaching many things. From the mere reading of the story to the final event of production, it holds opportunity for coöperative discipline and teamwork, beside training in speech, action, memorizing and creative interpretation. In the assembling of properties and the actual staging, there is always something new to be learned.

In choice of play for acting purposes, subject and action for juniors should be simple and should touch the quick imagination and common interests of the child.

A good way to begin is to read the play in class group. Those who do best in the reading may be assigned leading parts with understudies. This double cast gives a chance to select the best work for the final event of production. The whole aim is discipline in teamwork; for though the child may freely express himself, he must be directed and guided and must learn how to sink his personality in the blending of the parts in an artistic whole.

Dates of rehearsals should be made known to all who are taking part, so there may be no excuses and few absences. Unless school time is used, some common

time that suits everybody should be decided upon. As few rehearsals as possible should be given, since children grow tired of repeated training and respond less well when their interest is dulled by too frequent repetition. For small children, very brief rehearsals are best. The gilded joy of spontaneity is quickly lost.

After three rehearsals, the child should be responsible for his part and certain chosen groups, given full responsibility, should have definitely assumed the assembling of properties, stage-settings, the making and arranging of curtain and its drawing. When everyone knows what is expected of him and acts his part in coöperative teamwork, the play has started toward success. Reliable children should be chosen to do the executive work.

As soon as the cast is letter-perfect, rehearsal should take place upon the stage where the play is to be given. This holds true of outdoor plays as well as those given indoors. In this way the cast becomes accustomed to space used, to grouping, to exits as well as action.

Simple scenery is as effective as "real stage scenery," but it must be arranged with artistic understanding. For background, a soft, neutral-toned curtain may be hung at the rear of the stage. And the scene, with this, easily becomes an indoor or outdoor one. To make a quick change from indoors to outdoors, without drawing front curtain, pages, well drilled, may bring in tree boughs that have been nailed to wooden supports and place these quickly where they should go. These wooden frames are quite light to carry. It is easy also to make scenery from beaverboard. The children themselves can paint it.

Where there can be no front curtain, large screens may be made on light wooden frames, using tapestry wall paper for their covering. In sections, pages may handle these easily and quickly covering the stage opening.

As to costumes, each child will probably have his made at home. It is therefore necessary to make very clear to each one exactly what he should wear. Sometimes it may be advisable to have costumes made under supervision subject to a uniformity of materials that permits of economy as well as harmony. Effective fairy dresses can be made with crepe paper that are sewed to white slips.

Elves and dwarfs may wear green tights made from dyed underwear to which stockings are sewed. Slipper soles may be sewed to the flat of the foot of stockings and tied with tapes to make ballet slippers. Bunting that drapes in soft lines is always effective for costumes and comes in bright colors that adapt themselves well to stage use.

With children small jealousies crop up in the matter of elaborate costumes; simplicity is always best, and it tends to make a child less self-conscious.

In costuming a fairy play, obtain some well illustrated book of fairy tales from the library and follow its suggestions. In like manner, a historical play may be dressed. Accuracy in detail makes for harmony.

While changing scenes, the interval of music may be used to give some gifted child a chance to play before the audience; but where this is done, the selection should carry out the spirit of the acted play. Of course, too, the phonograph with loud needle offers help during intermissions.

Woodland or garden voices may be simulated by the use of bird whistles. Accompaniment of bird whistles to fairy dance music may be drilled and will be charming in woodland or outdoor play.

In garden scenes, artificial flowers such as one may buy at ten-cent stores are better than real flowers that fade. Moreover, these can be arranged long beforehand and set aside and they are more effective than the real thing.

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Every child should have his part in the play's production and should hold himself absolutely responsible to perform this definite duty. Thus the class artist will draw programs or posters; the class carpenters will make the standards for trees and frames for movable curtain that pages carry. Those who have no special talents can see to stage properties. The boy who has a printing press may make tickets. At roll call for the play, each should answer concerning his special duty.

The fact that outsiders and relatives are to be invited to the play adds incentive to excel in conforming to the best rendering and efficiency. Where the play is given by a class, performance to parents and friends may often be followed by a benefit open to the public. The children will enjoy both and the money earned for worthy cause adds to the importance of the social game.

Simplicity is the keynote of the little children's play. In subject, in action, in teaching, its charm lies in the naïve art of the child's own interpretation of Everyday and of fairylike Make-believe.

STORIES OF THE PLAYS

THE BUTTERFLY

This is a nature play. It offers a chance for tableaux and dancing. Briefly, it tells the story of the butterfly and as such it suggests springtime or Easter use in school or church, home or club.

LITTLE GEORGE WASHINGTON

The famous cherry tree legend worked into a child's play. It may be used for Valentine's Day as well as Washington's Birthday. Omitting the jingle of the *Prologue*, it may be used on any day desired. It offers a good chance to stage a pretty costume play.

WHEN JACK'S BEANSTALK GREW AGAIN

This play takes up the story of Jack and his beanstalk some ten years after it was cut down and when Jack has grown to be a young man. It may be used by school or club as a fairy play to produce at any special season. It should have a "real stage" for its presentation, though the little play may be given even on a small platform with curtain.

THE EASTER BONNET

May be used by a class for Easter entertainment in which an entire school takes part through some special contribution. It is merely the story of the springtime "new bonnet" and as such its appeal is to springtime interest.

WE BELIEVE IN FAIRIES

A pageant that is particularly adapted to outdoor presentation by school or camp. It may be used by the younger grades as an end-of-the-year entertainment. It offers a chance to various classes of interpretative dancing, folk dancing and gymnastic drill, as well as a place to every child to take some special, costumed part in its presentation.

MAKING THE FLAG

A patriotic children's pageant in which an entire school may take part. It may be used in camp or home as a celebration of any patriotic day—Flag Day, Fourth of July or Washington's Birthday. It tells through its dialogue the story of the flag and its meaning. It offers through its groups of characters opportunity for many to take part in its presentation.

THE MOTHER GOOSE SCHOOL

This little play may be used for school entertainment where some dialogue for younger children is needed at the close of school year. It requires no large platform or stage and its setting is simple. A number of children—an entire grade—may take part. Its appeal is to the child who will enjoy the fun of “playing a part” about school—a play that is suited to First-, Second-, Third- or Fourth-Grade children.

THE GOBLINS

A Hallowe'en play for school or home use. It defines Hallowe'en fun for the children and teaches the lesson of real fun and happy frolic, rather than practical joking. It offers a chance for folk dances by goblins and children.

THE CHILDREN'S BOOKSHELF

This children's dialogue requires little action and may be used in a hall where the platform is small. It is suited to any season of the year. Its special stress of good reading makes it particularly suitable to Book Week celebration for school, library, club or home use.

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Makes a good Christmas entertainment for a child audience where, later, there may be a Christmas party with a tree. It is suited to home presentation or use in school.

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

Adapted for Sunday School presentation or in schools where gifts may later be distributed through the audience by Santa Claus and the children.

It serves to emphasize the Christmas spirit of giving rather than receiving, a lesson that children should be taught. It is a good thing to visualize this in a little acted play, in which the contrast is made between two children, one who is selfishly thinking only of his own gifts, while the other is absorbed wholly in thoughts of others.

THE THREE DWARF BROTHERS

A play that requires only four actors. It may therefore easily be given by children who have the required ability and used for the benefit of some charity in which a children's class, club or organization is specially interested. Its staging is simple. It requires no large platform and little action. Where it is desirable to introduce a larger cast, the Good Fairy may, at the close, call in Good Wishes, represented by many children bringing gifts, and these may dance a New Year's Dance about Stingy, Selfish and Generous.

THE BUTTERFLY

CHARACTERS

PAPILLON	AUTUMN
SPRING	WINTER
SUMMER	MOTHER NATURE

STAGING

Place at back of stage a dark green curtain and against this arrange a screen of fir boughs to hide the green curtain as tall as the height of a grown person. There should be a narrow exit through these branches at the rear, also exits at right and left. The setting represents an outdoor scene.

COSTUMES

MOTHER NATURE, a tall girl dressed in a dark green dress. Leaves are woven into a girdle at her waist and arranged in a flat crown about her head. Her hair is worn high on her head in a coil.

SPRING, a younger girl, slim and small. She wears a loose white dress of gauzy stuff and over this a cape of light green. There are small flowers sewed on her dress and her hair is long and flowing, bound by a green ribbon on which are sewed small pink and blue buds of flowers. She carries a long garland of pink flowers, which she uses in her dance.

SUMMER, a small boy dressed in overalls. He wears a sun hat and sneakers. He trundles a wheelbarrow in which are garden tools. In the barrow is a strip of green cloth to be used as soft, dark silk mantle, large enough to cover a child who is lying down.

AUTUMN, a girl in a long, red dress, with yellow leaves sewed upon it. She wears a wide brown cape. Her hair is braided and bound with a ribbon with yellow leaves sewed to it.

WINTER, a boy dressed in a brown suit, brown stockings and shoes. He wears a fur cap on his head and over his shoulder is a white cape of soft, woolly texture. In the pocket of his suit is a bag of Christmas snow-sparkle.

BUTTERFLY, OR PAPILLON, a small child who has short hair. Under one dress, which may be quickly removed, he wears

another. The first dress is a gauzy yellow one with long winglike sleeves which can be made to flutter. Over this dress are tightly wrapped several strips of soft brown stuff. This goes about each arm, about each leg and foot, and about the child's body. The strips may be pinned with safety pins and unwound quickly when the grub becomes a butterfly.

TIME: Represents the change of the seasons.

The Curtain Rises to Disclose: MOTHER NATURE, at right center, bending over the LITTLE BROWN GRUB, who lies curled up at her feet. PAPILLON is in his dress of brown windings. When he moves he keeps his feet together, using very short steps.

MOTHER NATURE. Awake, Little Brown Grub! It is springtime! Awake! The red buds on the maple have burst into leaf! [*She touches PAPILLON and rouses him from his sleep.*]

PAPILLON [*stirring*]. What—what is it? [*Stretching in a sleepy way.*] What is it?

MOTHER NATURE. Awake! You must be ready to do my bidding!

PAPILLON [*slowly waking and sitting up*]. Yes! I am awake! [*Rising.*] I am ready!

MOTHER NATURE. I have given you a wonderful gift, bestowed with my waking touch: It is the power to grow and to change even as the flowers bloom, and then ripen into fruit.

PAPILLON [*moving and looking about*]. Oh! Oh! [*In a wondering manner.*] See! I can crawl! What fun! [*He moves very slowly about, going around MOTHER NATURE.*] How do I grow?

MOTHER NATURE. That is what you must learn.

PAPILLON. What are the directions?

MOTHER NATURE. My bidding is that you go forth to meet the seasons.

PAPILLON. Yes! Yes! I am ready. See, I move! [*He continues to move about slowly, looking at the ground.*]

MOTHER NATURE. Yes! That is it, Little Brown Grub!

PAPILLON. I feel very brisk! [*Looking at himself.*]
See my nice brown dress! Oh, I am happy, very happy.

MOTHER NATURE. I have awakened you with a purpose. You are to go abroad over the earth and find the very, very precious gifts that the seasons will give you, and you are to use their gifts to help you grow.

PAPILLON. To help me grow?

MOTHER NATURE. The seasons will teach you—and you must grow beautiful! Grow and grow beautiful!

PAPILLON. But surely nothing is lovelier than I am now! Such a nice dress! And see how I can creep about!

MOTHER NATURE. You are a good little grub, but you must learn! You will learn as you grow. I can't explain it now. You are too young. Ask the Seasons as they pass. When you have learned what you can from them, come to me again! You have but to call. Just now I have other creatures of spring to awaken and I must open the blossoms, too. I must see that Spring does her work as she should. She wants to do nothing but dance!

Exit MOTHER NATURE, *disappearing between the trees and shrubbery which she bends and touches as she passes.*

PAPILLON [*bending down to the earth to feel it.*] Oh, how good it feels! I wonder if this was something I was to learn about? I must speak to Spring about the gift and learn how to grow! [*Calls.*] Spring! Spring!

Enter SPRING. *She dances on, swinging her garland of flowers. She does a lovely little dance, posing with the garland, all around PAPILLON, who tries in vain to touch her.*

SPRING. See! I am here! Catch me before I am gone!

PAPILLON. Not yet! Wait a bit! Tell me—teach me—how shall I grow? What is the gift Mother Nature gave me? How can I grow—grow beautiful? [*Looking at himself.*] Am I not beautiful *now*?

SPRING [*dancing in wider and wider circles away from him*]. Look at the sky. See the sunlight! Doesn't it tell you something lovely? Learn about it, Little Brown Grub.

PAPILLON [*looking from the earth up to the sky.*] Ah, I had not noticed the sky. Yes, the sky is beautiful and the sun golden; I feel its warmth. I must be growing.

SPRING [*dancing in a wide circle that carries her off the stage, left.*] I can't stay longer. I must go.

Exit SPRING.

Enter SUMMER *wheeling his barrow. He comes on from the right, with a fine air of bustle and activity.*

SUMMER. Hello! Hello!

PAPILLON. Hello! You are—who are you?

SUMMER. I'm Summer! Don't you see my gardening things? I've got a lot of work to do! [*He takes a hoe and begins to hoe a row.*] Look out! Don't get in my way!

PAPILLON [*moving slowly out of the way*]. But there was something I had to ask you. I want to know how to grow. [*He picks up a blossom SPRING has let fall and begins to nibble at it.*]

SUMMER [*working away*]. Time goes so fast! I have so much to do! I have to help every bit of green to grow!

PAPILLON [*eagerly*]. That's just it! I want to know how to grow. I want to learn.

SUMMER [*putting the hoe back in the barrow*]. Here, take this. [*Tossing him the green mantle.*] Some of my greenery. Work upon it, Little Brown Grub, learn about it. You will grow best through *work*!

PAPILLON [*picking up the green mantle SUMMER has tossed to him.*] What shall I do with it?

SUMMER. I am in a hurry. You must find out for yourself. Work! Work! [*Trundling the barrow off the stage, left.*] I am gone. [*Exit.*]

PAPILLON [*looking over the green mantle SUMMER has given him.*] What shall I do with this? I shall work over this as Summer bid me. [*He sits down upon the earth and makes weaving motions over the cloth of green. He is so busy working that he fails to see AUTUMN, who comes from right of the stage, slowly approaching him from behind and then pinching his shoulder so that he starts.*]

Enter AUTUMN, right.

AUTUMN [*pinching PAPILLON's shoulder*]. Didn't you know Autumn had come, Little Brown Grub, ugly Little Brown Grub?

PAPILLON. I am busy with this mantle. Oh, you hurt me! Don't do that again, please!

AUTUMN. Hurry, then, and finish your work.

PAPILLON. Have I grown any?

AUTUMN. A little! Hurry! Finish your work!

PAPILLON [*working hurriedly*]. I think I *am* larger than I was. But you didn't see me at first, so maybe you can't judge. Anyhow, I've learned about the earth, and the sky, and I know how to work.

AUTUMN. But you must finish your work, now that I have come!

PAPILLON. I don't know what Mother Nature wanted me to find out. I don't know what it is yet.

AUTUMN. Never mind! There's no time left!

PAPILLON [*anxiously*]. But I must!

AUTUMN. That's what all say. Everything says that to me.

PAPILLON [*laying down the work*]. How shall I finish my work?

AUTUMN. I change green leaves to leaves of red and gold. You must change, too. You may turn into something very lovely. Here, take this. [*She gives him her brown mantle and wraps it around him.*] and lie down to dream about it. A beautiful dream will come to you. It will show you what to do.

PAPILLON [*as he lies down sleepily*]. I see the sky and the sunlight—the sky and the sunlight——

AUTUMN. Close your eyes tight. Dream! Dream!

PAPILLON [*drowsily*]. I am very tired. I worked hard! [*He sleeps.*]

AUTUMN passes from the stage, left.

Enter MOTHER NATURE *from between the shrubs, where she left at* SPRING'S coming.

MOTHER NATURE. He has done well! [*Looking at the LITTLE BROWN GRUB.*] He has done well! He has grown. He has worked.

Enter WINTER, right.

WINTER. Look out! Here's snow for you! Here are storms! [*Throwing about the snow-glitter and puffing out his cheeks.*] I'll catch you! I'll nip you! [*He runs about the stage, touching the evergreens and shrubs and throwing the snow-glitter on them.*] Look out! Hello! I say. [*As he stumbles against the sleeping LITTLE GRUB covered with the brown mantle of AUTUMN.*] Look out!

MOTHER NATURE [*warningly*]. Take care, Winter! Here is a chrysalis! See you do no harm to it!

WINTER. A chrysalis! I will cover it with my warm white blanket so that it will be safe from storms and cold. See! [*Very gently he lays his white mantle*

over the LITTLE BROWN GRUB and then passes out slowly, looking back.]

MOTHER NATURE [*bending over the GRUB*]. Dream! Dream! Dream of waking as the flowers! Dream of the sunlight of spring and of the blue of the sky. [*To WINTER.*] Go! Go! Go on your way.

WINTER. I go! I go! [*He passes from the stage, left.*]

Reënter SPRING. *She comes on carrying tall potted plants, running back for more with little dancing steps. She arranges the plants so that they hide PAPILLON from the audience. When he is screened completely, he carefully unpins his wrappings of brown and throws aside AUTUMN'S cloak and WINTER'S mantle, unseen by the audience.*

SPRING [*coming back with new and lovely plants*]. See! Here I come, bringing new and more beautiful flowers! Lovelier! Lovelier! See! Here are more—and more—and more! They were never more lovely.

MOTHER NATURE. Never more lovely—yet always blooming anew! Always when you bring them, they seem more lovely than ever before.

SPRING. And more of them! [*She puts plants down.*]

MOTHER NATURE [*bending over the LITTLE BROWN GRUB, back of the flower screen*]. Listen! He stirs in his sleep! There is a chrysalis here, Spring!

SPRING [*bending over the flowers on the other side of them*]. He is still dreaming.

MOTHER NATURE [*to the LITTLE BROWN GRUB.*] Awake! Awake, Little Brown Grub. You have grown! You have worked! You *have* grown! You are a grub no longer! You have indeed, become beautiful, as beautiful as the flowers and the sunlight! You have found my most precious gift!

PAPILLON [*rising quickly and flinging wide his arms so that the golden winglike sleeves float wide*]. I have

found the gift! The gift! See! See, Mother Nature, wings, wings, wings! [*Waving his wings and dancing around the flowers with SPRING.*] I no longer crawl about upon the earth! I have found your gift of new life! New life! See! Wings! Wings! Wings! *Wings.* [*He dances a beautiful butterfly dance with NATURE and SPRING.*]

CURTAIN

LITTLE GEORGE WASHINGTON'S VALENTINE

CHARACTERS

LITTLE GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOTHER *in Colonial dress*

LITTLE GEORGE WASHINGTON'S FATHER *in Colonial dress*

THREE LITTLE BOYS, *playmates of LITTLE GEORGE*

LITTLE MARTHA, *a playmate*

LITTLE GEORGE WASHINGTON *himself*

PAGE, *a little girl or boy in modern dress*

All costumes are made after Colonial models. The children are dressed like their elders. Older boys or girls take the parents' parts in the play.

SCENE: *A garden. The stage is arranged to represent an enclosed garden. To right and left are shrubs, a wheelbarrow and some potted plants.*

TIME: *When George Washington was small.*

The play opens with the Prologue recited by THE PAGE, who enters from right and stands in front of Curtain.

PAGE [*recites Prologue*].

It's February now, you know,
And Winter's here, with ice and snow.
To celebrate its holiday,
We're giving you this little play!

PAGE *bows. Exit.*

The Curtain Rises to Show: LITTLE GEORGE playing with a ball, tossing it up high and catching it. At left is his FATHER near the wheelbarrow, taking plants from it. He has a trowel in his hand. At right is a row of straight tree limbs so arranged as to stand like little

trees. These may be tree-twigs on which are fastened green paper leaves that are pointed like the leaves of the cherry tree.

LITTLE GEORGE [*coming over toward his FATHER*]. What art thou busy about now, father?

FATHER. I have these to set out, little George. Do not hinder me.

LITTLE GEORGE [*lingering*]. Will they bloom soon, father?

FATHER [*taking plants toward front*]. If thou art a good boy and doest thy share of caring for them, no doubt!

LITTLE GEORGE. May I help thee carry them?

FATHER. Nay, not now. When I have done, thou shalt get thy watering pot and sprinkle them for me.

LITTLE GEORGE. Now?

FATHER. I would not have thee about my heels, little son. Run thou and play.

LITTLE GEORGE [*fingering the plants in the barrow*]. Aye! I go. [*Starting to play with the ball again, stopping and coming back to his FATHER'S side.*] Father!

FATHER [*on his knees with the trowel in one hand and a plant in the other.*] Hast thou not been taught to obey?

LITTLE GEORGE [*going away and looking back at his FATHER*]. Aye, father. Yet I am no longer little. Soon I shall have another birthday.

FATHER [*smiling up at him and putting down the plant*]. Even so, George. Thou art going to grow up a good boy, art thou not? No longer little! [*Laughs.*] I had forgot thou wast so big!

LITTLE GEORGE [*playing with the ball*]. 'Tis nearing St. Valentine's Day, and my birthday is not far off!

FATHER [*absently*]. Aye! [*Busy over the plant.*]

LITTLE GEORGE [*ball is tossed over toward the cherry trees and drops by them*]. Oh! Oh! [*Runs over to*

the cherry trees to find ball in the shrubbery back of them.]

FATHER [*standing up*]. What are thou about there? Take care! Those are my young cherry trees, George! [*Severely.*] Come away!

LITTLE GEORGE. My ball! [*Going in among the bushes and coming out with the ball.*] See!

FATHER [*putting his hand on LITTLE GEORGE'S shoulder*]. Have I not told thee that thou shouldst not go near these? They are growing well. With one thoughtless moment of play, thou mightst injure them. They are young, easily broken. [*He looks over the cherry trees.*] They grow apace. Be more careful, Little George, in thy ball play!

LITTLE GEORGE [*being very good*]. Aye, father! I will be good. [*Goes over to the wheelbarrow and looks at the plants, taking from the barrow a hatchet.*] May I play with this?

FATHER [*looking around to see what it is*]. Nay, that is mine. It is sharp!

LITTLE GEORGE. Nevertheless I could take care. I do but want it to play at an Indian game.

FATHER. Nay, nay! Now, put it down.

LITTLE GEORGE [*puts it back*]. Might I not have one like it for my birthday?

FATHER [*coming over to the barrow*]. If thou wilt be a good lad, there is a little one that I will give thee. Only thou must be careful.

LITTLE GEORGE. Truly, I will be careful! [*Hopping about his FATHER.*] May I have it now? Do let me have it now!

FATHER [*laughing*]. Canst thou not wait for thy birthday?

LITTLE GEORGE. Oh, my birthday is so far off! 'Tis not yet St. Valentine's Day, father!

Enter GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOTHER, *right*. *She carries a bag on her arm.*

MOTHER. Father, art thou not coming with me?

FATHER [*turning and coming toward her*]. I come! I come! Yet is not the work here done. Look, see how well my cherry trees grow, dear!

MOTHER [*looking about the garden and going over to the cherry trees*]. They have grown well, surely!

FATHER. Fine!

LITTLE GEORGE [*following*]. The little hatchet, father? May I have it?

FATHER. Thou wilt find it upon the shelf in the woodhouse. Remember, 'tis a birthday gift, even if thou dost get it before the day.

Exit LITTLE GEORGE, *left, running.*

MOTHER. What was it, father? What did George want?

FATHER. The little hatchet we bought for the lad. Dost thou not remember?

MOTHER. 'Twas a birthday gift and 'tis not yet the day.

FATHER [*laughingly*]. Let the lad have his fun. We will find another birthday toy later.

MOTHER. I trust he will be careful with the hatchet. He is but small yet.

FATHER. Nay, not too small. He should know how to use a hatchet. 'Tis a useful thing as a toy. He grows fast and is a large lad for his age.

Reënter LITTLE GEORGE, *left, carrying a small hatchet.*

LITTLE GEORGE [*running to his MOTHER*]. See! Mother, see! Is this not fine! It will cut as well as the larger one of father's! I have tried it in the woodhouse! [*To FATHER.*] May I chop wood with it here?

FATHER. Touch nothing that thou mightest injure, lad!

MOTHER. Do no harm, George! Hurt thyself in no way! Do not cut thy fingers! Remember, thou art a big lad!

LITTLE GEORGE *goes toward left, feeling of the hatchet blade.*

LITTLE GEORGE. I will show it to the boys. May I have them here to play while you are away?

MOTHER. Go get little Martha. She is a good child. She is gentle in her play. Thy boy friends are too rough, George!

FATHER. Nay! I will not have those boys playing about among my shrubs and plants. They would likely injure them.

LITTLE GEORGE. I like little Martha, yet I know she would not play with the hatchet with me. A maid ever wants to play simple games.

MOTHER [*going right*]. As we pass by her home I will ask that she come to play with thee. Be a good lad while we are away.

FATHER. Do no mischief. [*Going away with MOTHER.*]

MOTHER and FATHER *go off, right.*

LITTLE GEORGE [*aloud to himself*]. 'Tis a fine hatchet! I will take it in the wood and cut down trees. Aye, I know how to fell timber! I can do it! 'Tis a fine, sharp hatchet—a fine hatchet! [*He goes toward the wheelbarrow and takes from it a garden stick, which he places on the ground and hacks at. It breaks.*] Oh! So! That's good! It works right well! Now will I try something else. Let me see! [*Looks about.*] What can I cut? [*Sees cherry trees.*] Aye, I could cut those. [*Thoughtfully.*] I could—I could, if I would!

Enter from right, the little playmate, MARTHA, an old-fashioned little girl.

LITTLE MARTHA. My mother let me come to play with thee.

LITTLE GEORGE [*coming toward her with the hatchet in his hand*]. See! A birthday gift!

LITTLE MARTHA. Thy birthday is yet a *long* way off!

LITTLE GEORGE. Aye! Yet was this given me.

LITTLE MARTHA. St. Valentine's is to-morrow.

LITTLE GEORGE [*absently*]. So? Yes, I remember. With this hatchet will I cut down a *big* tree and make thee a doll cradle from its timber. Wouldst like a cradle for thy doll?

LITTLE MARTHA. Have a care! Do not cut thyself!

LITTLE GEORGE [*hacking at the barrow*]. See how sharp it is!

LITTLE MARTHA. Have a care! Thy father would not like thee to do that! Come, let us play!

LITTLE GEORGE. I would rather try my hatchet. See!

Enter THREE SMALL BOYS in Colonial dress.

FIRST BOY. Georgie!

SECOND BOY. Come, play with us!

THIRD BOY [*seeing hatchet*]. What hast thou? Let's see!

THE BOYS *cluster about* LITTLE GEORGE.

LITTLE GEORGE. My father did give it me.

FIRST BOY. Let me try it!

ALL BOYS [*together*]. Let me!

FIRST BOY [*taking the hatchet*]. I could cut down a tree!

SECOND BOY. And I!

THIRD BOY. And I!

LITTLE GEORGE. There are none in our garden here, only little trees.

BOYS. Those!

LITTLE GEORGE. Nay, you must not touch *them*!

BOYS. Oh, the little cherry trees! One of them is *quite* tall!

LITTLE GEORGE. Give me my hatchet! I fear my father's anger if you but touch any tree! Nay! Nay! [*He takes the hatchet from the Boy.*]

FIRST BOY. Coward!

SECOND BOY. Afraid to cut a little tree down.

THIRD BOY. Georgie is a 'fraid cat!

FIRST BOY. I dare you!

SECOND BOY. Cut it an' you are no coward!

THIRD BOY. Aye! Cut down the tallest of the trees!
Let's see thee do it!

They look at him tauntingly.

LITTLE MARTHA. Nay, do not, Georgie!

LITTLE GEORGE. I am no coward! [*To LITTLE MARTHA.*]
Let go my sleeve! [*To the Boys.*] I am no coward!
I will show you! [*He gives the tree a blow and it falls over.*]

LITTLE MARTHA. Oh, oh, Georgie! Alas!

BOYS [*laughing at him*]. Now you'll get it! [*Exit THE THREE BOYS, calling in turn, "Thy father told thee not to!"*]

LITTLE GEORGE. Alas! [*Crying.*]

LITTLE MARTHA [*putting her arm about him*]. It was thy father's tree!

LITTLE GEORGE. It will never grow again.

LITTLE MARTHA. Do not grieve. I will give thee my valentine! [*Takes valentine from her pocket and gives it.*]

LITTLE GEORGE. I cannot help but think of that little tree! What will my father say? [*Absently.*] I thank thee!

Enter GEORGE'S FATHER and MOTHER from right.

MOTHER [*coming forward*]. A valentine for thee, my little son! See, I have brought thee one to give to thy little friend. Hast been a good boy?

LITTLE GEORGE [*looking at his FATHER and hanging his head.*] Father! O Father!

FATHER. What is it? What is it, son? [*Seeing the*

fallen tree.] Didst *thou* do *that*? My little tree!
Alas, my fine little tree!

LITTLE GEORGE. Father! Father! [*Crying.*] I cannot tell a lie. I did it with my little hatchet.

FATHER. My son, thou art no coward! Thou hast told the truth: Thou couldst not tell a lie! I do forgive thee! [*He puts his arms around LITTLE GEORGE.*]

MOTHER. My brave lad!

LITTLE MARTHA. Only cowards lie!

LITTLE GEORGE. I never shall play with that hatchet more!

FATHER. Mayhap that will be thy punishment, son!

LITTLE GEORGE. Alas, thy little tree!

MOTHER. But thou wilt never do the like again!

LITTLE GEORGE. Never!

MOTHER. Then run and play with thy little friend. Give her the valentine I gave thee!

LITTLE GEORGE [*to LITTLE MARTHA*]. Aye! [*Taking the valentine to her.*] 'Tis for thee because I love thee: I cannot tell thee a lie—I love thee!

[*Hand in hand they dance a minuet before the curtain is drawn.*]

CURTAIN

WHEN THE BEANSTALK GREW AGAIN

CHARACTERS

JACK-OF-THE-BEANSTALK, *now a goodly youth*

JACK'S MOTHER, *a well-to-do woman*

JACK'S SERVANT, TIM, *a slow-witted boy*

THE LITTLE BROWN MAN, *who was once enchanted by
THE OGRE*

JACK'S MOTHER'S SERVING MAID, *a peasant girl*

THE BEANSTALK FAIRY

PEASANTS

TIME: *Ten years after JACK went up The Beanstalk*

PLACE: *JACK'S MOTHER'S fine home*

The Curtain rises to Show: A living room in JACK'S MOTHER'S Fine House. There are two curtained windows at the rear of the stage. Between them stands a high, closed cupboard. There are easy chairs and a table. To right is a door leading into the house, while to the left is a door that goes out into the garden.

As the curtain rises, it shows JACK, his head in his arms upon the table, sitting close to it. TIM, JACK'S servant, comes in through the garden door with a basket of fruit and vegetables. As he comes in, he looks at JACK, who does not lift his head and remains motionless. The clock on the cupboard shelf ticks. TIM crosses toward his master and puts a hand upon his shoulder.

TIM. Master!

JACK [*listlessly, without moving*]. Yes.

TIM. Oh, Master, are you grieving again?

JACK. I—I was thinking. I cannot help thinking about it, Tim! Why, why did I ever cut down my beanstalk! I don't see why I ever did a thing so foolish!

TIM. But, Master, you were forced to do it: The Giant was after you; you had tried to steal his harp, you know!

JACK. Yes, and I had stolen other things besides. Yet there I had the hatchet. Could I not have spared the beanstalk and yet killed the Giant when he climbed down? I could! But there is no adventuring up there again, now! It is a dull life to live in plenty. I would rather be poor and go adventuring!

TIM. Say not so! To be downcast because of wealth! Would I might have wealth, I would not be as you are!

JACK [*sighing loudly*]. Tim, I wish I might find more beans that were magic!

TIM. A price for a cow! There are three cows in your fine dairy! A sale is a sale. Happen there might be other magic beans, if you sold another cow [*eagerly*]. Let me try, Master! I will take the red cow.

JACK [*jumping to his feet*]. Aye, the red cow. Sell her for a hatful of beans. See what comes of it! Oh, Tim, would I could do it! But you know my mother!

TIM [*running to the door*]. I will seek the beans that are magic! [*Exit at garden door. JACK, holding it open, looks after him longingly.*]

Enter JACK'S MOTHER from house door at right.

JACK'S MOTHER. No, Jack, you promised not to go abroad! Why always wishing to go adventuring?

JACK. I was only looking out of the door, Mother!

JACK'S MOTHER. That is right. But come, the little serving maid has gone to market. Help me put away the things Tim has brought in this basket!

JACK [*goes over to the basket and begins to put the vegetables on cupboard shelves*]. Beans! Beans! [*He seizes a handful and holds them ecstatically.*] Beans, Oh! These might be magic!

JACK'S MOTHER [*in a matter-of-fact voice*]. Not at all magic, my son! They were picked in our own kitchen garden! We will have them for supper!

JACK. I must try planting them! No knowing! They might have been seeds on my beanstalk. Who knows?

JACK'S MOTHER. Jack! I have asked you never to mention the unhappy beanstalk again.

JACK. Yes— yes! You are afraid I'll go adventuring to the strange land again and meet with misadventure. Alas! And so I stay, wasting my youth in this house. Did not my adventuring give us this home and our wealth?

JACK'S MOTHER. Oh, have done, Jack, my lad! Now, were you indeed to have a beanstalk again, what would you gain by it? Why quest up it again? What would there be?

JACK [*sitting down to the table again, head in hands*]. I know not. Everything!

JACK'S MOTHER. Then don't talk any more about it! [*She puts dishes on a tray and carries them away.*]

Enter TIM, through garden door, dancing, waving his cap.

TIM. Master! The butcher bought the red cow for three beans! Here they are!

JACK [*jumping up*]. Let me have them! Are they colored? My beanstalk beans were of varied colors!

TIM [*disappointed*]. Why did you not tell me to sell only for colored beans? I will sell the black cow. Let me try! I will try again!

Exit TIM.

JACK [*alone, puts hand into his pocket and takes out the beans he has kept from the basket*]. They might be right. I will try them. [*Starts toward garden door.*]

Enter JACK'S MOTHER *from right*.

JACK'S MOTHER. Carry the basket into the kitchen for me, son. There!

JACK [*obediently*]. Yes, Mother! [*Goes out, right, followed by MOTHER.*]

Enter from garden LITTLE MAID.

LITTLE MAID. The silly boy! And I saw him myself sell our good red cow for three everyday beans! I must tell my mistress as soon as she comes. [*Excitedly.*] And now, again, I have met him with the black cow! I suppose he will be striking a bargain for *her*. [*Runs toward right and into JACK.*] Oh dear! Oh dear! Excuse me, Sir! I was just going to tell my mistress what Tim has been doing!

JACK. But I told him he might! Are they not *my* cows?

LITTLE MAID. Yes, Sir! Excuse me, Sir!

JACK [*meaningly*]. The less said the better!

LITTLE MAID [*hastening out of the door, right*]. Yes, Sir!

Exit LITTLE MAID.

JACK [*takes beans from pocket again and looks at them*].

These look like my Beanstalk Beans! They *might* be! *Enter* TIM, *running*. He holds up an empty cap, and waves it at JACK.

TIM. Master! Master! The butcher said I was a fool to sell the black cow and he would not strike a bargain, so I tried the market man. While I was seeking him, I ran upon a Little Brown Man!

JACK. A Little Brown Man!

TIM. Here he is! Here he is, Master!

Enter LITTLE BROWN MAN from door, left, while TIM pushes JACK toward him, eagerly.

LITTLE BROWN MAN. I must have both white cow and black cow too, now! And hold the cap for the beans!

JACK. Are they magic beans?

TIM. Take them, Master! Try them!

JACK. Are they magic beans? Is it a fair bargain?

LITTLE BROWN MAN. No! No! It is not a fair bargain. I should ask for more. I ask that when your beanstalk comes you take me there with you—you let me go up it first!

JACK [*excitedly*]. No! No! I will do nothing of the sort!

TIM [*echoing*]. Nothing of the sort!

LITTLE BROWN MAN. Then you will not find the Princess! It was the Princess of the Beanstalk you were seeking, was it not?

JACK [*with interest*]. Is there a Princess indeed up there? I never met her, it was only the Fairy I knew.

LITTLE BROWN MAN [*sadly*]. Then you will not make the bargain and get the Princess. She was enchanted long ago. You might have the adventure of delivering her!

JACK [*thinking*]. Well, well! A bargain is a bargain. Give me your capful of beans, my man, and you shall go first up the new beanstalk, if you will!

LITTLE BROWN MAN. And we shake hands upon it and seal the bargain!

TIM [*standing by*]. And I for witness!

JACK [*giving TIM the hatful of beans*]. Plant them! We will watch you from the window. The Little Brown Man will wait. [*To himself.*] Yes, these must be the right magic beans! They look as mine did long ago! [*He takes the basket beans from his pocket and*

puts them in the cupboard.] No need of everyday good-for-nothing garden beans now! *I know the difference! Wait!*

LITTLE BROWN MAN. Tim has planted them. Watch!

JACK [*leaning out of the window*]. Oh, oh! Do you not see a green shoot coming from the ground?

LITTLE BROWN MAN. Yes, yes! [*Leans out of the window so that his back shows only his long brown cape.*]

JACK. Tim! Tim! See!

LITTLE BROWN MAN [*getting down from the chair so that his long brown cloak falls in folds around him to the floor*]. Your beanstalk, Sir! Now, I go up it first, *according to the bargain!*

JACK [*dancing about joyously*]. Oh! Oh! But I promised my mother! Alas!

Enter JACK'S MOTHER, followed by LITTLE MAID.

JACK'S MOTHER. Now, now! And what is this! [*Looking out at window, astonished.*] Another beanstalk! Jack! Jack!

JACK [*pleads*]. Oh, Mother, let me go! Let me go!

JACK'S MOTHER. Then I go too.

JACK. First goes the Little Brown Man. It was our bargain!

LITTLE BROWN MAN [*eagerly*]. Yes! Yes! I go first! I go first! [*Dancing about.*]

JACK. Go then! I wait here!

LITTLE BROWN MAN [*catches JACK'S hand and his cape falls from him to reveal a beautiful Princess*]. You have broken the enchantment, Jack. I was only a Little Brown Man till you came—till some one should plant a new beanstalk with my magic beans and break the spell by letting me go up it ahead of him! [*She laughs.*]

JACK. Oh, my Princess! Now we will go adventuring together to the Beanstalk Land!

JACK'S MOTHER [*laughing*]. And since you do not go alone, Jack, and have so good a companion, I will stay here to wait your home-coming!

LITTLE MAID. And I will marry Tim. We will be married before we go. I will go with Tim, too!

TIM [*coming in*]. A fine beanstalk, Master! Better than the first. And no ugly giant to come down it!

Enter BEANSTALK FAIRY from garden door, holding out her wand.

BEANSTALK FAIRY. I was waiting to come down! I waited a long time for Jack to find new beans. But at last! And now, if you will all but mount the magic beanstalk, there is a wedding feast waiting, and a palace and happiness and adventure, for you all!

JACK takes the hand of his PRINCESS, who takes JACK'S MOTHER'S hands. The LITTLE MAID joins hers to that of her MISTRESS upon one side. TIM takes her arm on the other and the BEANSTALK FAIRY waves her wand. There is music to which they dance, then, leading the way, as the curtain falls, they dance out of the door toward the garden singing.

ALL [*sing*]. The magic, magic beanstalk
Grows in our garden now.
The magic, magic beanstalk,
It has come back, somehow!
Up, up the beanstalk
All of us will go,
And live forever happy
In the land that's there, you know!

THE EASTER BONNET

CHARACTERS

TOMTY	}	<i>Little boys</i>	NICKY	}	<i>Little girls</i>
TOODLES			BOBBET		
			NICKY'S MOTHER	}	<i>Older girls</i>
			NICKY'S AUNT		

SCENE: *The action takes place in a backyard where there is a strip of fence and a wheelbarrow, a pile of sand and some potted plants.*

The Curtain Rises to Show: TOMTY, in overalls, trowel in hand. He is whistling a tune. He stoops and arranges the potted plants in a row as if to make a garden bed.

Enter, left, NICKY. She stands, handkerchief to nose, dejectedly looking at TOMTY. He goes on with his work, but finally stops and looks around at her.

TOMTY. Hello!

NICKY [*without spirit*]. Hello!

TOMTY [*happily*]. See what my garden's going to be!

NICKY. Not much! [*Crossly*].

TOMTY. Not much of a garden!

NICKY. No.

TOMTY [*going over to where NICKY stands*]. Say, what's the matter with you?

NICKY [*crossly*]. Nothing!

TOMTY. What're you holding that handkerchief so for? Got a toothache?

NICKY [*kicking the dirt with her toe*]. No. No! It isn't a toothache!

TOMTY. What is it?

NICKY. A *bonnet!*

TOMTY. A *bonnet?*

NICKY. Yes, it's a bonnet—a bonnet that's got strings hanging on it. Only old ladies an' little babies wear strings! Auntie gave it to me and Mother says I've got to wear it *for best* all spring!

TOMTY. A fine *new bonnet!* Why, I thought girls liked to have'm! *Don't* you?

NICKY [*going into the yard where TOMTY is*]. No. Not *with strings!*

TOMTY. *Strings?*

NICKY. I mean ribbons.

TOMTY. I should think it would be pretty with ribbons! Let's see it?

NICKY. It's upstairs. I'm afraid I can't get it without being seen.

TOMTY. Oh, go along. I want to see it. Maybe it is pretty and you don't know enough to *know* it!

NICKY [*hesitating*]. Well, I'll get it. I suppose I can get it.

Exit NICKY left.

TOMTY [*returning to his plants*]. Boys can't wear Easter hats—just girls and ladies. Funny she doesn't like it! [*He whistles.*]

Enter right, TOODLES, running.

TOODLES. Oh, I say! Got your garden started? I just got some seeds for mine.

TOMTY. Would you put this plant here, or here? [*He holds the plant toward TOODLES.*]

TOODLES. There—that's best. That's fine!

Reënter NICKY, left. She carries a big paper bag such as hats come in.

NICKY. Tomty! I've got it!

TOODLES. Got what?

TOMTY. Her Easter hat she's going to show me. Let's see it! Come in here.

NICKY. Here! [*Contemptuously.*] Look at it! [*She opens the bag.*]

TOMTY and TODDLES [*peeping inside*]. Oh! Oh!

NICKY. Isn't it dreadful!

TOMTY. Why—why—I like it! It's pretty!

TODDLES. It's great! Awfully stylish!

NICKY [*stamping her foot*]. That's all boys know about it! It is horrid! Whoever heard of wearing a bonnet with *strings*? They tie under your chin like an old lady's!

TOMTY [*taking up trowel and going to the sandpile*]. Well, I like it. [*To TODDLES.*] We'll have to cart this sand away.

TODDLES [*putting hand into the bag and taking out a hat with ribbon ties*]. Put it on. Let's see it on you!

NICKY. No! No! No! I'll never wear it!

TOMTY [*turning*]. But you've got to! It's your Easter bonnet! [*Laughs.*] And it's a nice one, too.

NICKY [*begins to cry*]. I wish—I wish—I wish I *didn't*.

TODDLES. Well, if you don't want to wear it, I tell you what.

NICKY [*quickly*]. What?

TODDLES [*laughing*]. Bury it!

NICKY. Bury it? How?

TODDLES. Right here in the sandpile! Then you won't have to wear it!

TOMTY. Here, I'll do it for you.

NICKY. All right. [*Looking about.*] They won't find it!

TOMTY [*covering the bonnet*]. Nobody'll know it's here. See!

NICKY [*standing before the sandpile*]. Weren't you going to cart the sand away?

TOMTY. We won't do that now. We'll leave it. The bonnet is all buried deep, anyhow. It'll stay.

Enter, right, BOBBET, a fashionably dressed little girl. She wears a bonnet similar to NICKY's discarded one and carries a doll in her arms.

BOBBET. Oh, Nicky, I've come to play with you. See my beautiful new Easter hat that Mother bought in the city! She let me wear it to show you! Isn't it lovely? [*She poses before NICKY, wagging her head in attitudes.*]

NICKY [*astonished*]. Why— why— why!

BOBBET. What's the matter?

TOMTY and TOODLES. Oh! Oh! [*Looking at NICKY.*]
Shall we tell?

NICKY [*to BOBBET*]. You really think it's stylish?

TOMTY and TOODLES. Can we tell? Let us tell!

NICKY. You think it's not the sort old ladies wear? It ties under one's chin. Is it really *nice*?

BOBBET. Nice! Of course it's nice! Would I wear an Easter bonnet that wasn't *nice*? Don't you like it?

NICKY [*gazing hard at it*]. Why— why— why—

TOMTY and TOODLES. Let's tell her!

NICKY. Well—

TOODLES. It's exactly like one Nicky's Aunt gave her and she wouldn't wear it.

TOMTY. An' we buried it for her so she wouldn't have to wear it!

BOBBET [*horror-stricken*]. You buried a beautiful hat just like this! Oh, Nicky! Where is it?

NICKY [*pointing to the sandpile*]. There!

TOMTY [*digging*]. I'll get it back.

TOODLES. There! There it is! See!

TOMTY [*unearthing the bonnet*]. I call it lovely!

TOODLES. So do I!

BOBBET. It isn't hurt, is it? I'll put it on Nicky's head!

[*She puts on the bonnet and ties the strings.*] So becoming! So stylish!

NICKY. Funny!

BOBBET. What's funny?

NICKY. Why, I've changed. I like the Easter er—er—hat! I guess it's because you've got one just like it. Maybe it *is* the style!

BOBBET. Of course it is!

Voices, left, calling, "Nicky! Nicky!"

Enter MOTHER AND AUNTIE.

MOTHER. Oh, here you are!

AUNTIE. Showing your new Easter hat? [*She smiles and then laughs.*] It is lovely, isn't it children? And just like Bobbet's! How odd!

NICKY. Well, I didn't like it at first—but I do now!

BOBBET. You *do* now!

NICKY. Um-hum! [*Contentedly.*]

MOTHER. Isn't there a speck of *dirt* on the bonnet?

TOODLES [*quickly*]. Oh no! No, I'm sure not! I don't think so!

NICKY. Oh, I think it's *all right*.

Exit MOTHER and AUNTIE, followed by BOBBET and NICKY.

TOMTY [*to TOODLES*]. There! The plants go this way! Who ever said girls didn't like Easter hats?

WE BELIEVE IN FAIRIES

AN OUTDOOR PAGEANT

TIME: *Nowadays* SCENE: *A Fairy Ring*

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

FAIRY QUEEN, gauzy dress, scepter, crown, wings.

DRYAD and NAIAD, nature sprites in green.

SCANDINAVIAN ELVES, spirits of mirth and good nature.

FEES and LUTINS, spirits of loveliness and beauty.

TEUTONIC FAIRY FOLK.

THE DWARF, THE TROLL, THE WEE MAN, expressing friendship, helpfulness, kindness.

THE FAIRY GODMOTHER, a dear old lady like Mother Goose, with cape and staff, who takes an affectionate interest in children's welfare.

BILLY, a boy; BETTY, a girl—two modern children.

Other groups of fairies are seated about the Fairy Ring as the action begins. It should be centered against a background of foliage.

MUSIC: Phonograph records of "*Midsummer Night's Dream*" and special music for the dances.

The pageant starts with soft music. The FAIRIES gather for a convention. The FAIRY GODMOTHER, heading the Reception Committee, greets them softly in pantomime. From the shrubbery come the voices of A BOY and A GIRL, high and clear.

GIRL. Why shouldn't there be fairies?

BOY. Because there aren't any. They aren't real!

GIRL. But I like to think they are real! Sometimes I almost think I see them, in lovely places in woods or by streams. The Greeks used to think the woods and fields were full of nymphs and naiads. They lived in the trees and by brooks. Don't you think the woods seem to be full of them?

BOY. That was a myth. We had those Greek stories in school.

GIRL. And the Northern fairies, you know. What do they call them?—elves and goblins. They lived in rocky places in mountains! When I see lovely wild mountain places, I almost *think I see elves!*

BOY. Me too; but it's just folk lore!

GIRL. Then there are the French fairies—fees and lutins. The stories about them are beautiful. I like beautiful things. Don't you *want* to believe in fairies?

BOY. Yes. I like the dwarfs, the trolls, the wee folk of Teutonic fairy stories. They are always doing nice things for everybody.

GIRL [*coming suddenly into view of the Fairy Ring*]. Oh! Oh! Look! I told you! Sh-h! Be careful! Don't frighten them! Don't frighten them away by not believing! [*She draws BILLY back.*]

BOY. No! Let's see them!

FAIRY GODMOTHER [*catches sight of the two and advances*]. Oh, Billy! Why, Betty! Won't you come to our convention? It's just starting. The Fairies from Everywhere have gathered to show that they are really true! We have met to show what we stand for. Do come! You believe in fairies, don't you!

BOY. Why—Why—I always thought fairies were myth and folk lore.

FAIRY GODMOTHER. But they are more, they are *real*. You see what they stand for every day. Come! You will see. Sit here. [*She seats them.*]

QUEEN [*rising*]. We are met here today to show what fairies *stand for*. They stand for many things that are really true. They stand first for nature lore and express the charm of woodland and brook and pool. Let me call a wood nymph first to show how she does this. [*Beckons to a NYMPH.*]

NYMPH [*comes forward with branches of trees in her hands and dances a lovely interpretative dance*].

QUEEN. See! Is not this the real spirit of the woods? [*She looks to the BOY and GIRL, who nod. The rest agree.*] Now, I will call Naiad, spirit of streams and pools. [*Beckons with wand.*]

NAIAD [*comes forward with lovely, measured dance steps that suggests the laughter of brooks. Her drapery is long and flowing, soft, silvery. She dances. She retires.*]

QUEEN. Now, Elves!

ELVES [*romping forward in gay, tumbling mood*]. Here we come! Look at our fun! Eh! Look at this! And this! [*They turn somersaults. They play leapfrog. They cut capers and execute a merry folk dance.*] Wasn't that good? Did you like that? That's what we stand for—*Fun!* Eh! [*Exeunt.*]

QUEEN [*calls after them*]. Very good, Elves! [*Waves wand toward the FEES and LUTINS.*] Now! Fees! Show us your loveliness and the joy of beauty!

FEES and LUTINS [*coming forward*]. We are the symbols of Truth and Beauty. We are Happiness! We are Joy! We live in flowers! We work magic beauty! [*They dance an interpretative dance with golden balloons and rose-colored flowers. They retire.*]

QUEEN. Thank you, Fees! You might dance all night in my Fairy Ring! But we must have the next! Wee Folk, come here!

WEE FOLK. Here we come, bringing gifts! [*With armfuls of bags of gold, boxes labeled Treasure, Purses of Gold, Magic Boots, and other magic gifts, they come forward to slow music, place gifts before the QUEEN solemnly, execute a slow-measured folk dance and retire.*]

QUEEN. So we have seen some of the things that Fairies stand for in the world. I put it to the children: Are

Fairies true? Is nature lore true? Is Mirth and good nature real? Is Truth, is Beauty a living thing? Are Kindness, Helpfulness, Generosity *true*?

FAIRY GODMOTHER. Why, *of course* it is all true!

BOY. Why, of course!

GIRL. Of course, Fairies are true!

ALL FAIRIES

CHILDREN

QUEEN

FAIRY GODMOTHER

} [*together*].

F a i r i e s are real;

Nature lore is true;

Fairies are F u n;

Fairies are Loveli-

ness personified; Fairies are Kindness and Friendship in disguise! Fairies and what they stand for—
they *are real!*

All join hands in a lovely fairy dance with suitable music.

CURTAIN

THE MAKING OF A FLAG

A PATRIOTIC DIALOGUE

SCENE: *A small garden.*

TIME: *Summer time in the year 1776.*

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

BETSY ROSS, who made the American flag. She wears a Colonial dress with full gathered skirt, fitted bodice with kerchief. Her hair is done up upon her head and powdered.

THE LITTLE MAID, a girl who is also in Colonial dress.

THE LITTLE LAD, a boy in straight trousers, short jacket and frilled blouse of Colonial period.

COLUMBUS, INDIANS, PURITANS, BOYS and GIRLS (Puritan), BRITISH RED COATS, CIVIL WAR GROUP (Blue and Gray), COLORED CHILDREN, SPANISH WAR SOLDIERS, BOY SCOUTS, BOYS, in modern soldier dress. The other characters of the pantomime should be dressed in characteristic costumes which may be simplified copies of historic pictures.

LIBERTY and JUSTICE wear costumes suggested by pictures. LIBERTY bears a torch, and JUSTICE a pair of scales.

The Curtain is drawn showing BETSY ROSS seated upon the bench, sewing. On the garden table near her is red, white and blue bunting. There is a large work-basket filled with spools, scissors and other sewing necessities. LITTLE LAD is seated near a bush, front, with pebbles arranged in a square before him.

LITTLE LAD. See! There is the fortress! 'Tis not a very good one. I could make a better, no doubt, if I had wood and tools. [*Pushing aside the stones.*] Play with me, Friend Betsy! [*He rises and goes over to the bench, sits down at her feet and looks up at her, as she continues sewing.*]

BETSY ROSS. Nay, Little Lad, I cannot stop to play. If thou art good, thou canst stay here in my garden with me; I like to have thee.

LITTLE LAD. Aye, I know. Thou art all alone, too. My mother told me. 'Tis a pity that thy husband died and left thee. What was his trade?

BETSY ROSS. He did upholster work. War-time doth stop such work.

LITTLE LAD [*sympathetically*]. Art thou poor, then, Friend Betsy?

BETSY ROSS [*looking up*]. I do much needlework, as thou seest.

LITTLE LAD. Thou art ever busy with thy needle! Makest another flag now? Tell me about it.

BETSY ROSS. 'Tis another such flag as General Washington did ask me to make.

LITTLE LAD. Oh, tell me about him! Would that I had seen him.

BETSY ROSS [*sewing with bent head*]. He came with George Ross, my husband's uncle. 'Twas some months ago that I made for them a flag like this one. [*Re-threading a needle.*] General Washington did come with mine uncle and Robert Morris to see if I would make them a flag such as they desired.

LITTLE LAD [*interrupting eagerly*]. Think of making a flag for General Washington! Would I could do needlework like thee! Yet lads do not do needlework! Thou art well known for thy fine sewing, art thou not, Friend Betsy?

BETSY ROSS [*nodding*]. I was telling thee. Dost care to hear the story? I thought I had told it to thee already.

LITTLE LAD. Nay! I have not heard it from thee. My mother did tell me when we moved here to Philadelphia thou madest a flag for the colonies. Tell me the story. [*He bends toward her and looks up at her earnestly.*]

BETSY ROSS [*looking for scissors*]. Where have I laid my scissors? Are they in my basket?

LITTLE LAD [*rises to bring her the basket, then stands with it beside her*]. So many bobbins as thou hast. [*Spilling the contents of the workbasket.*] Alas, what have I done! Here are thy scissors, Mistress Ross! [*Handing them and picking up the other things to put back into the basket.*]

BETSY ROSS [*snipping with scissors*]. Have a care! Loose not my bobbins!

LITTLE LAD. I have them all. Art thou not going to tell me the story?

Enter from right LITTLE MAID. *She comes shyly in and drops a curtsy.*

LITTLE MAID. I give thee greeting, Mistress Ross! May I come to visit thee, too? I have brought with me my stint, the sampler which I am working. I thought thou wouldst help me with the new stitch, mayhap. Would that I could sew as well as thou. What is it that thou hast in thy hands? Another flag?

BETSY ROSS. Another flag.

LITTLE MAID [*bending over the side of the bench*]. Canst thou show it to me? Is it like the one that General Washington asked thee to make?

BETSY ROSS. The very same. [*Holding up the work.*] See, there are thirteen red and white stripes and a blue field with thirteen stars.

LITTLE LAD [*bending over the bench on the other side*]. What means it?

LITTLE MAID. Has it a meaning? [*With fingers passing over the flag, as BETSY ROSS holds it.*] Aye, thirteen stars! Why *thirteen*?

BETSY ROSS. They are for our thirteen colonies. When first General Washington used a flag in Cambridge, it had in one corner, where are now the stars on the blue field, the British ensign in place of these.

LITTLE LAD. And now that we fight the British, we

have done with their emblem. So have we the thirteen stars.

BETSY ROSS. Aye, Little Lad!

LITTLE LAD. Would that I might fight like my father under General Washington!

LITTLE MAID [*sighing*]. And I!

BETSY ROSS [*sewing*]. The stripes mean much too, no doubt?

LITTLE LAD. The thirteen colonies.

BETSY ROSS. Nay, more than that, though indeed that is true. The color of them means much.

LITTLE MAID [*sitting down on one side of the bench beside BETSY*]. Red meaneth courage: my mother told me so. It is the color of the heart's blood.

LITTLE LAD [*fingering the white stripe that falls from the lap of BETSY ROSS*]. The white for purity and truth, perchance?

BETSY ROSS. Even so: the emblems of honor.

LITTLE LAD. Gladly would I give my heart's blood and mine honor to fight under General Washington for freedom! Would that I might fight under thy flag! [*Remembering.*] Thou wast going to tell me its story. [*Settling himself beside the table, where he places the work basket again.*]

BETSY ROSS [*pretending to think and tapping her thimble on her forehead*]. Let me see.

LITTLE MAID. Wouldst thou let me sew on thy flag? Just one stitch or two! I am so small, [*laughing*] I would yet like to say that I had sewed upon a flag. Will they use thy flag when they fight?

BETSY ROSS. Perchance!

LITTLE MAID. Then might I think that I had done a small thing to help.

BETSY ROSS. Some day I will help thee make thyself a flag when thou hast learned to master all thy stitches.

CHILDREN. But tell us the story! We will no longer interrupt thee!

BETSY ROSS [*sewing*]. It was one day in the spring this year that I was busy in my husband's upholstery shop. There came a knock at my door and there entered our Uncle George Ross, who was my husband's uncle. With him was General Washington himself and Robert Morris.

LITTLE LAD [*interrupting*]. What manner of man was General Washington?

BETSY ROSS [*reprovingly*]. A fine looking man, even as thou wilt be, when thou growest tall and dost no longer interrupt the telling of stories.

LITTLE LAD. I ask thy pardon.

BETSY ROSS. Thou didst not mean to be rude.

LITTLE MAID [*eagerly*]. The story, Mistress Ross! He shall not stop thee again!

BETSY ROSS. They brought with them a sketch of such a flag as they desired. [*Stopping a moment.*] Wait, let me see. If thou [*to LITTLE MAID*] wilt go into the house, thou wilt find a sketch in the oaken chest near the window. It lies there for safe keeping. Go get it.

LITTLE MAID *rises and goes off left.*

LITTLE LAD. Why asked they *thee* to make the flag? Because thou wast so well known for thy fine needlework—was it not so? Did not thine Uncle tell them?

BETSY ROSS. Little Lad, even so!

Reënter LITTLE MAID, left.

LITTLE MAID. Is this it? [*Unrolling a small scroll.*] It is like thy flag, yet the stars on this have six points.

BETSY ROSS. I did change this. They did think the five-pointed star would be too hard to make. [*Laughing softly.*] 'Tis no harder than the other. I showed them with my scissors how simple it would be to make the

stars thus and General Washington said that I was right when I said in heraldry there was the five-pointed star, never the six.

LITTLE LAD [*forgetting and interrupting again, wiggling as if to shake himself*]. Why? Oh, I had forgotten. I meant not to interrupt!

BETSY ROSS. I know not. Yet is it so: On General Washington's own coat-of-arms is it so, he said. The crest is one of three stripes and three five-pointed stars. Upon his coat-of-arms is the motto *Exitus Acta Probat*.

LITTLE LAD [*again interrupting, forgetting*]. Is it Latin?

LITTLE MAID [*learnedly*]. Aye, Latin.

BETSY ROSS. It meaneth, "The event justifieth the deed."

LITTLE LAD. Even so as we could break away from Britain, our mother country, because of unjust taxation.

BETSY ROSS. Even so.

LITTLE LAD [*interrupting*]. I would not be too young to be a drummer boy. Then might I be with those who fight under thy flag. I would give my life for it.

LITTLE MAID. I love thy flag.

BETSY ROSS. And I. I honor it as the emblem of all that it meaneth to us: Liberty, the emblem of our nation's honor, the unity of our colonies into one nation, one and indivisible, whose warfare is ever just and true for the defense of its ideals.

Here, to the music of "The Red, White and Blue," a pantomime passes across the stage from the entrance, left, around the back of the stage and out at the right, while BETSY ROSS holds her flag up and the children stand holding its lower corners.

First comes COLUMBUS. He is followed by his men, dressed in manner suggested by pictures in school histories. He holds in his hand a globe.

Following this company comes a group of INDIANS who look back at the PURITANS, a little band of girls and boys in Puritan costume, who move slowly across the stage.

Then follow a number of BRITISH RED COATS and a group of "MINUTE MEN" similar to that shown in "The Spirit of 1776."

LIBERTY and JUSTICE follow. They drop from the procession and place themselves on either side of the BETSY ROSS group.

The next to come is a Civil War group, the BLUE and the GRAY. Little colored children follow.

Then come SOLDIERS dressed like ours of the Spanish War, followed by BOY SCOUTS, GIRL SCOUTS and boys dressed in our modern soldier dress. Last comes our present flag with Standard Bearer.

These all pass off the stage and the music, which has been patriotic throughout the passing pageant, starts up with our National Air. BETSY ROSS holds the flag and, with the closing verse, LIBERTY comes forward to read from her scroll the Declaration of Independence, which JUSTICE holds for her.

THE MOTHER GOOSE SCHOOL

CHARACTERS

MOTHER GOOSE	POLLY FLINDERS
DR. FOSTER	LUCY LOCKET
SIMPLE SIMON	BO PEEP
GEORGIE PORGIE	MISS MUFFET
TOMMY TUCKER	MARY WHO HAD A LITTLE LAMB
JACK HORNER	MARY WHO HAD A GARDEN
BOY BLUE	THE TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR

TIME: *School time in MOTHER GOOSE Schoolhouse*

SCENE: *A schoolroom in MOTHER GOOSE Schoolhouse
There is a desk at right and there are benches to left of
the stage. Near the desk is a tall stool for the DUNCE.
There is also a low stool with a water bucket on it, at
right. A dipper is placed in this.*

COSTUMES

MOTHER GOOSE, the usual tight bodice and full skirt with white frilled cap.

DR. FOSTER, school visitor, long trousers and black coat with long tails. He carries a large bag.

SIMPLE SIMON, a dunce, a large boy, long trousers and short jacket, with frill about the neck. He wears a peaked cap on which is written "Dunce."

GEORGIE PORGIE, a naughty boy, a plump little fellow in a David Copperfield suit.

TOMMY TUCKER, JACK HORNER, BOY BLUE, boys in Mother Goose costumes.

POLLY FLINDERS, LUCY LOCKET, MARY WHO HAD A LITTLE LAMB, MARY WHO HAD A GARDEN, BO PEEP, MISS MUFFET, girls in Mother Goose dresses.

THE TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR, a small boy in ragged clothes with small fishing rod.

The Curtain Rises to Show: MOTHER GOOSE standing in front of the bench where the children, except TEN

O'CLOCK SCHOLAR, *are seated.* SIMPLE SIMON *on the dunce stool is yawning.*

MOTHER GOOSE [*looking over the class with care*]. Nobody absent today except our Ten O'Clock Scholar? [*In satirical tone.*] No doubt he will appear at the usual time, with a note from his mother asking me to excuse him. Now, today there is a fine surprise for you, children! I want you all to do your level best, remember! [*Pauses emphatically*]. Dr. Foster, our school visitor, is coming here to examine your scholarship!

SIMPLE SIMON [*in a long drawl*]. Will he ask me anything please?

MOTHER GOOSE [*turning upon him*]. Certainly! Certainly! And you ought to be ashamed to be sitting on the dunce-stool, Simple Simon, you ought!

Outside is heard a long "ba-a."

MARY WHO HAD A LAMB [*jumping up and waving her hand*]. Oh! Oh!

MOTHER GOOSE. Sit right down! Sit right down!

MARY WHO HAD A LAMB. Teacher!

MOTHER GOOSE. No, Mary! No! Let the lamb stay where it is!

A knock at the door, very loud and important.

MOTHER GOOSE. There! I do believe that must be Dr. Foster right now! [*She goes to the door and ushers in DR. FOSTER.*]

Enter DR. FOSTER, who beams upon the children and then turns and frowns hard at SIMPLE SIMON.

DR. FOSTER. Good morning! Good morning! Good morning! [*To MOTHER GOOSE, glancing down at his big rubbers that are muddy.*] I hope I haven't tracked in any mud. I'm on my way to Gloucester, you know. It's very, very muddy on the road to Gloucester!

[Looks at the DUNCE and walks over to him, walking all around him.] What! A dunce! You don't mean to say—a dunce! In Mother Goose's School, a *dunce!*
SIMPLE SIMON. I do know lots of things, I do! I caught a—a *whale* once!

DR. FOSTER. What! What! Oh no! No, you never did! A *whaling*, maybe.

MOTHER GOOSE. I'm sure I do my best with him! [*Sighs.*] I dare say he will learn—sometime!

DR. FOSTER. Let us hope so. A whale! A *whale!* Of course not! No, *never!* Whaling—I—I *hope!*

A loud "ba-a" is heard off stage again.

MARY WHO HAD A LAMB [*waving her hand*]. Oh! Teacher!

MOTHER GOOSE [*ignoring MARY's hand*]. Dr. Foster will now give you a review. [*Another louder "ba-a" off stage.*] Oh, that lamb! Mary! Mary! I told you not to let it come to school for you again!

MARY WHO HAD A LAMB [*exclaims*]. Please!

MOTHER GOOSE. *What!* Must you go after it? Well, hurry! Tie it up when you get home! And *don't* let this happen again, Mary!

Commotion among the children as MARY goes out.

MOTHER GOOSE. Order! Order! *Order!* [*To DR. FOSTER.*] You see, Doctor, the child has a pet lamb that follows her to school.

DR. FOSTER [*absently*]. You don't say! Such intelligence in an animal! [*He walks over to the desk, turning his back to the benches.*] Now!

Great excitement on the benches and a suppressed scream from MISS MUFFET.

MOTHER GOOSE [*rushing over toward GEORGIE PORGIE*]. Now! Georgie Porgie, what were you doing?

GEORGIE PORGIE. Me? [*Innocently.*] I was doin' nothin' at *all!*

MOTHER GOOSE. What *were* you doing Georgie Porgie?

GEORGIE PORGIE. Me?

MOTHER GOOSE. Yes, *you!* Were you kissing the girls to make them cry?

MISS MUFFET [*jumping up*]. Oh, teacher, it was the spider—the spider! *Again!*

MOTHER GOOSE. Georgie Porgie! I knew it was one of your tricks! Kill it at once!

GEORGIE PORGIE. I—I don't know where it *went!*

ALL THE CHILDREN [*jumping about*]. There it is! Catch it! Oh, it's gone! [*MISS MUFFET jumps up on the bench, holding her skirts around her.*]

MOTHER GOOSE. Order! Order! Never mind the spider! Sit down, everybody. I'm sure I wouldn't want Dr. Foster to report this sort of behavior to the School Board. Would *you*, children?

DR. FOSTER [*reprovingly*]. Boys and girls should not scream over spiders!

MOTHER GOOSE. Certainly not! Our school learns to be loving toward all creatures, even though it cannot let Mary's little lamb come *into* the schoolroom.

GEORGIE PORGIE [*to TOMMY TUCKER, as MOTHER GOOSE goes back to her desk and DR. FOSTER places the chair for her*]. I've got it! [*In stage whisper.*] I've got the spider!

MOTHER GOOSE [*seeing the whispering*]. What were you whispering about, Tommy Tucker? No whispering! Tell all the scholars aloud what you were saying to Tommy Tucker! Loud, now!

GEORGIE PORGIE. I—I— [*Standing and giggling with his hand held to his chest as if something were in it.*] I said, "I've got the spider!"

MOTHER GOOSE [*severely*]. Go put it out of the door! We are kind to all creatures, so we will have this little lesson in kindness right here, Dr. Foster, you see! Put the spider outdoors, Georgie!

TOMMY TUCKER [*waving his fist*]. Teacher!

MOTHER GOOSE. Well, Tommy?

TOMMY TUCKER. Teacher, may I get a drink?

MOTHER GOOSE. If you are very thirsty.

TOMMY TUCKER. I ate such a lot of bread without any butter! [*He runs to the pail and takes the dipper up while GEORGIE PORGIE goes toward him.*]

MOTHER GOOSE. Georgie Porgie!

GEORGIE PORGIE. I'm thirsty, too!

MOTHER GOOSE. Order, children! [*Going toward the benches.*] Order! Miss Muffet, seat yourself properly.

There is a pantomime over the water bucket between the two boys. GEORGIE PORGIE indicates DR. FOSTER and drops a big toy spider upon the coat of DR. FOSTER.

GEORGIE PORGIE. I let go the spider, Teacher! It's got away again!

TOMMY TUCKER. It's on Dr. Foster!

DR. FOSTER [*jumping up and brushing himself excitedly.*] Step on it! Step on it!

MOTHER GOOSE. Order! Order! There! The spider is gone! Be quiet, children! It is killed.

GEORGIE PORGIE [*waving his hand*]. Teacher!

MOTHER GOOSE. Well? What is it *now*?

GEORGIE PORGIE [*innocently*]. I thought you didn't want to kill it. I was goin' to put it outdoors!

MOTHER GOOSE, DR. FOSTER [*together, severely*]. Enough!

GEORGIE PORGIE. I thought you said—

MOTHER GOOSE. Quiet! I don't want to hear another word! Take your seats! [*To TOMMY TUCKER, who keeps on drinking.*] Enough water, Tommy! [*The boys go to their seats.*] Now, what's the matter, Polly Flinders! What are you crying about?

POLLY FLINDERS [*with handkerchief to eyes.*] I've got a cinder in my eye!

MOTHER GOOSE. Well, you do get so many things in your eyes.

POLLY FLINDERS [*winking very hard.*] It's out, now!

MOTHER GOOSE. Let it *stay* out! Now we will begin with Dr. Foster's examination. Dr. Foster!

DR. FOSTER [*engagingly*]. Now, children let me see how much you know. I am the important person who goes about asking little children questions in schools and I'm on my way to Gloucester. I'm sure you must have heard of Gloucester? Where is Gloucester? Can anybody tell me where Gloucester *is*? Well, now children! I have a prize in my bag and I'm sure you will all like to have it. Prizes, in fact, for everybody who answers correctly!

Much excitement among the children.

DR. FOSTER. Let us begin! Some nice little boy may rise and answer.

All little boys jump up at once.

DR. FOSTER. I said *one*!

All little boys sit down and SIMPLE SIMON jumps up.

SIMPLE SIMON. Sir?

DR. FOSTER. What! What! Is a dunce a nice little boy?

MOTHER GOOSE. Sit right down, Simple Simon!

SIMPLE SIMON: But they whale there! I know it!

DR. FOSTER [*ignoring him*]. There, there! Some nice little *girl* may answer!

All little girls jump to their feet.

DR. FOSTER. Oh, I meant *one* only. Be seated, children!

All little girls look disappointed and sit down.

MARY WHO HAS A GARDEN [*waving her hand*]. Please—

DR. FOSTER. Yes, little girl, you may rise and answer.

BO PEEP [*to LUCY LOCKET in stage whisper*]. She *isn't* the nicest.

DR. FOSTER [*reprovingly*]. Now, now! Little girl!

Reënter MARY WHO HAD A LAMB

MOTHER GOOSE. Make up for lost time, Mary!

MARY WHO HAD A LAMB *seats herself primly.*

DR. FOSTER. You may tell what you know about King Cole!

MARY WHO HAD A LAMB [*rising hurriedly*]. Old King Cole was a merry old soul—he stole some tarts—the merry—

DR. FOSTER. No! No! The other little girl!

BO PEEP. He called for his pipe— and— and— [*Looks wildly about everywhere and pauses looking about still.*]

DR. FOSTER [*encouragingly*]. Well?

BO PEEP. I— I— I've forgotten. I think he went up as high as the moon or maybe he was one of the wise men who went to sea in a bowl.

DR. FOSTER. Oh, I'm sure you must know!

BO PEEP [*shakes her head*]. I can't remember.

DR. FOSTER. Some other nice little girl, then. [*All jump to their feet.*] No! No! The little girl who has the intelligent lamb may answer.

MARY HAD A LAMB. He called for his pipe,
 And he called for his bowl,
 And he called for his fiddlers three.
 Every fiddler he had a fiddle,
 And a very fine fiddle had he;
 "Twee-tweedle-dee, tweedle-dee,"
 went the fiddlers.
 Oh, there's none so rare,
 As can compare
 With King Cole and his fiddlers
 three!

[*Looks about much pleased.*]

DR. FOSTER. Good! Good! Without a mistake! Fine!

Now let us hear from some bad little boy. [*He smiles benignantly.*]

No little boy rises.

DR. FOSTER. What, no bad little boy here? That's a good thing! Let us hear from some good little boy, then! [*He pauses to look about.*] Little boy who's asleep may rise and answer!

The children pull the coat of LITTLE BOY BLUE, whose head is nodding.

DR. FOSTER. He may rise and tell me what Tweedledum and Tweedledee were fighting about.

LITTLE BOY BLUE [*waking and pushed to his feet*]. The cows, sir!

DR. FOSTER. Oh, not at all—no, not at all! It was over a rattle! I will try you again! Since you are interested in cows, you may be able to tell me whose cow is so famous!

LITTLE BOY BLUE [*beaming*]. Charley Warley had a cow—

DR. FOSTER. Fine! Fine! You've redeemed yourself! Sit down! Next! We'll have another splendid little boy—that one over there! [*He indicates JACK HORNER who sits in the corner.*] What is the most famous pie that ever was?

JACK HORNER. It had plums in it, didn't it? [*Smiling and waiting to be prompted.*]

DR. FOSTER. Oh no! Think again! It—it was made with— with— Can't you remember?

JACK HORNER. Oh yes! Four-and-twenty blackbirds that sat on a hill.

DR. FOSTER. Well, not exactly. We are not sure they were those blackbirds, but just "four-and-twenty blackbirds" that sang when the pie was open. Whom did it belong to?

JACK HORNER. The king!

DR. FOSTER. Good! Now another little girl, a very nice little girl. *That* little girl! [*He points to LUCY LOCKET.*]

LUCY LOCKET [*rises and fumbles about*].

DR. FOSTER. What is the matter, dear?

LUCY LOCKET. I've lost my pocket, sir!

DR. FOSTER. Well, we'll look for it afterwards. You may tell me about the King of France!

LUCY LOCKET. Oh yes, I know: He led them up the hill and down again.

DR. FOSTER. Who? Please phrase your answer in proper form!

LUCY LOCKET. The King of France
 And twenty thousand men.
 They went up hill
 And then went down again!

DR. FOSTER. Good! Now, we will go straight around. You need not rise, children! What is multiplication? Answer!

JACK HORNER. Vexation!

DR. FOSTER. What are little girls made of?

BO PEEP. Sugar an' spice an' everything nice.

DR. FOSTER. And little boys? Simple Simon! [*Turning.*]

SIMPLE SIMON [*grinning happily*]. I know!

DR. FOSTER. Well?

SIMPLE SIMON. Pollywogs, whales an' little dogs' tails.

DR. FOSTER. No! No whales—snails! Remember, *snails!*
Snails!

MOTHER GOOSE. Simple Simon, sit down! Enough!

DR. FOSTER. Next! What did King Arthur do?

POLLY FLINDERS. He made a pudding—a *bag* pudding!

DR. FOSTER. Correct! Next! What did the lion and the unicorn fight over?

TOMMY TUCKER. Some bread and butter!

DR. FOSTER. Oh, no! It was— What was it, next?

GEORGIE PORGIE. The crown.

DR. FOSTER. Yes, the *crown*; you got mixed a bit, boy! They *ate* white bread and brown. I don't believe anybody gave them butter. Next. Who can tell me what makes one healthy, and wealthy, and wise?

All appear to think deeply.

SIMPLE SIMON [*waving his hand frantically*].

MOTHER GOOSE [*pleased*]. Simple Simon knows!

DR. FOSTER. Simple Simon!

SIMPLE SIMON. Please, sir, it's Dr. Fell.

DR. FOSTER. Oh, *no*, Simple Simon! Something better. But there's no professional feeling that prompts me to say so, of course! Who can tell me what makes one healthy, and wealthy and *wise*!

SIMPLE SIMON [*waving his hand again very hard*]. I know!

DR. FOSTER. Well, Simple Simon, you bright boy!

SIMPLE SIMON [*joyously*]. Mother Goose.

DR. FOSTER. Er—er— Of course, Simple Simon! But that's not *quite* right. Of course, you know she does a great deal for *all* children. We know that! We lay our tribute at her feet! [*He bows toward MOTHER GOOSE.*] But in this instance—

MARY HAD A GARDEN [*waving her hands, first one and then both*]. Oh! I know!

DR. FOSTER. Well?

MARY HAD A GARDEN. Early to bed and early to rise.

DR. FOSTER. Yes! Yes! Fine! Splendid! Grand! [*Looking at his watch.*] Now, I'm afraid I must tear myself away. I see it is late. I must be going on to Gloucester!

Enter TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR hastily.

MOTHER GOOSE. Noon! Yes! That's the time this boy arrives, Dr. Foster! We call him our Ten O'Clock

Scholar! [*Ironically.*] Have you an excuse from your mother?

TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR. No, ma'am! I've been fishing.

SIMPLE SIMON [*to himself*]. A whale!

TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR. I didn't catch *anything*.

DR. FOSTER. Well, you can answer at least one question even if it comes late. Tell me how many miles is it to Babylon?

TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR. A crooked mile.

DR. FOSTER [*looking at his watch, absently*]. Yes, yes! [*Suddenly realizing error.*] Oh, no! You made a mistake. It is four score miles and *ten*. How many miles is *that*?

Children all think deeply but make no answer.

MOTHER GOOSE. We haven't learned to reckon that yet. It comes in the next book of lessons.

DR. FOSTER. Well, well, I'm sure it *will* come! You have all done very well—all, and I recommend that Mother Goose promote Simple Simon when he learns that whales are not caught in pails, but in the Atlantic Ocean. [*He looks about for his bag.*] My bag?

MOTHER GOOSE. Did you have a bag?

CHILDREN. Oh no! No, he didn't have any at all when he came in.

DR. FOSTER. My bag! What could I have done with it? [*Suddenly.*] Oh, I must have left it on the road when I lost an overshoe. I got the overshoe and forgot the bag—very absent-minded!

TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR. I saw the bag near the brook on the road to Gloucester.

MOTHER GOOSE. Run and get it!

Exit TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR.

MOTHER GOOSE. So glad we found it! And now children, while we are waiting we will sing the song of "*The Queen of Hearts*" to show how well we can sing!

The children rise and stand in semicircle and as she beats time they sing "The Queen of Hearts."

CHILDREN [*sing*]. The Queen of Hearts,
 She made some tarts,
 All on a summer's day;
 The Knave of Hearts,
 He stole the tarts,
 And took them all away!
 The King of Hearts,
 Called for the tarts,
 And beat the Knave full sore;
 The Knave of Hearts,
 Brought back the tarts,
 And vowed he'd steal no more!

TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR *dashes in with bag, puffing.*

TEN O'CLOCK SCHOLAR. There, sir!

DR. FOSTER. Oh thank you, my lad! The very bag!
 And now for the prizes! See here—here is a
 pocket marked Lucy Locket! And here is a pretty
 bowl for Miss Muffet! And here a fine lot of plums
 for Jackie Horner! And a knife for Tommy Tucker,
 and, let's see! Here is a pretty horn to wake up Boy
 Blue [*laughs*] and a little pail for Simple Simon for
 a whale, Simon! And a handkerchief for Polly Flin-
 ders, some cockle shells for Mary's Garden and a pink
 ribbon for the other little Mary's lamb, the *intelligent*
 lamb! And a crook for Bo Peep; a watch for the
 Ten O'Clock Scholar so he can come to school *on time!*
 There! [*He gives out the last prize as the children all*
gather round him.] I must be going! A fine school,
 Mother Goose! A splendid school! [*Bows himself*
out.]

Exit DR. FOSTER.

MOTHER GOOSE. Recess! Recess, children! Dismissed!
Curtain as MOTHER GOOSE says "Attention," Dismissed!"

THE GOBLINS

AN OCTOBER PLAY

CHARACTERS

TOM, TWICK, HARRIET, *Children*

THE HALLOWE'EN WITCH

RED, GREEN AND GOLDEN GOBLINS

COSTUMES

GREEN GOBLIN, in green goblin dress, ornamented with green leaves.

GOLDEN GOBLIN, in yellow dress, ornamented with yellow leaves.

RED GOBLIN, in oak red dress, ornamented with red oak leaves.

THE HALLOWE'EN WITCH, in dark cape and peaked hat. She carries a broom over her shoulder and on it is fastened a stuffed black cat.

TOM, a boy in overalls carrying a pumpkin lantern.

TWICK, a smaller boy with false face and dressed in Hallowe'en rig, with shawl.

HARRIET, a girl in middy dress, with a white sheet draped over her shoulders.

TIME: *The evening of Hallowe'en.*

SCENE: *A cornfield. The stage has a dark curtain hung at the back. A large yellow disk upon the curtain represents a full moon. There are tree boughs at rear to represent bushes; at the center of the stage is a cornstack with yellow pumpkins about it.*

The Curtain Rises to Disclose: GREEN GOBLIN *hiding back of the bushes, right. Other GOBLINS on hands and knees peeping from the rear of the cornstack.*

GREEN GOBLIN. Hist! Keep back! Hide!

GOLDEN GOBLIN [*standing up.*] I heard nothing.

RED GOBLIN [*creeping from hiding place.*] Only the autumn wind rustling the corn!

GREEN GOBLIN [*waving his right arm in command.*]
Hide! Hide! I hear footsteps! We must not be seen till the right time. I will give the signal, a catcall.
[*He hides back of the bushes.*]

GOLDEN GOBLIN and RED GOBLIN *run back to the bushes, left. There is silence.*

Enter, TOM, TWICK and HARRIET in single file, from left, with Hallowe'en pumpkin lantern and Hallowe'en get-ups.

TOM [*setting the pumpkin carefully down and then throwing himself upon the cornstack.*] My, I'm tired! That gate *was* heavy! Some work, that, getting it hung up high on the telegraph pole! [*Laughs.*]

TWICK [*removing false face.*]. I'm hot! [*Fans himself with the false face.*] Won't Mrs. Brown have a time of it to-morrow trying to find it! [*Laughs.*]

HARRIET [*doubtfully.*]. I'm not sure we ought to have done it. It seems rather mean. She hasn't anybody to get it down for her. She'll probably have to go and hire a man and pay him and she is poor. I don't think I'd like it if I were in her place!

TOM. Stuff! Isn't it a *joke!*

TWICK. Just like a girl! She'll have an awful time getting the gate back! That's where the fun comes in, don't you see, Silly?

HARRIET [*takes off the Hallowe'en sheet and folds it thoughtfully.*]. Fun! I don't think it's funny!

TOM [*impatently.*]. You needn't have come along with us!

TWICK. Oh, come on! It *is* funny!

HARRIET. If I hadn't come along, you might have gotten into trouble. Besides, I like to dress up and play Hallowe'en spook!

TWICK. You didn't keep me from hiding the water bucket over at Jones's! And *you* don't know where I put it!

HARRIET. I didn't see you do it!

TOM. And they won't find their wheelbarrow over at Browns'. You couldn't guess what I did with *that*. Or the washing that was hanging on the back porch!

HARRIET. Oh, I dare say you made heaps of trouble for a lot of people. But really, that isn't what I call *funny*.

TOM. Well, what's Hallowe'en for, then, if it isn't a time to play pranks and pretend it's goblins and Hallowe'en witches!

TWICK. Of course! [*Laughs.*] My, but they'll have a sweet time finding the things *I* hid!

HARRIET. I have half a mind to go back and fix things right. If anybody made *you* all that trouble, you wouldn't laugh so hard!

TOM. Oh, rubbish!

TWICK. Why, we're playing we're the goblin and witches, and the spooks!

HARRIET. There aren't any.

The bushes rustle.

TWICK [*jumping as if startled*]. What's that?

TOM [*peering about*]. There aren't any such things as goblins, or spooks, or witches. [*A bit frightened.*] What was *that*? A funny noise in the bushes. Don't you think it's time to go home? [*He gets up and the children form a group, looking about in the darkness.*]

A catcall comes from the bushes and the GOBLINS jump out and surround the children.

GREEN GOBLIN. Not any goblins, did you say?

RED GOBLIN. Am *I* a goblin, pray?

GOLDEN GOBLIN. I should like to know what *I* look like!

TOM [*turning to run, is caught by GREEN GOBLIN*]. I—
I—I should say you *were* a goblin. [*Shivers.*]

TWICK [*caught by GOLDEN GOBLIN*]. Oh, Oh!

GOLDEN GOBLIN [*to TWICK*]. Now what do I *look* like?

TWICK [*squirming to get away*]. A——a goblin! Please don't hurt me. I'll be good! Oh, I'll be good!

HARRIET [*with RED GOBLIN'S hand on her shoulder*].

Please do let us go! Really, I haven't done anything bad to you, you know! Now, have I? You oughtn't to grab me like that! It isn't polite—and you can't make me afraid, because I'm not.

GOLDEN GOBLIN	}	[<i>in turn</i>].	But there <i>are</i> such things as goblins! We've been just waiting to get at you!
RED GOBLIN			
GREEN GOBLIN			

TOM [*striking about*]. Now, look here. You let us go!

TWICK. You let us go.

HARRIET. Please, please!

GOLDEN GOBLIN	}	[<i>in turn</i>].	We heard what you <i>did</i> ! We saw what you did, too! You tried to make people say it was the goblins, and <i>we</i> are the goblins, and we didn't do that mischief! It is absolutely false!
RED GOBLIN			
GREEN GOBLIN			

TOM. Well, we didn't mean anything but fun.

TWICK. Just a joke! Nothing at all bad! Just fun!

HARRIET. Dress-up fun!

GREEN GOBLIN [*dropping TOM'S arm*]. Do you think it really was *fun*? [*He confronts the children.*]

TWICK [*truthfully*]. It seemed fun.

TOM. Why, yes. A kind of practical joke.

HARRIET. I wasn't so sure about the joke. I didn't think it was exactly funny, that is, the mischief part. It was fun to dress up and pretend.

GOLDEN GOBLIN	}	[<i>in turn</i>].	Oh, the dressing up was all right! We don't mind that sort of play! What we mind is being blamed for mischief we do <i>not</i> do! See!
GREEN GOBLIN			
RED GOBLIN			

TOM [*hanging his head*]. Um-hum!

TWICK. Of course, we didn't mean it wrong, exactly.

HARRIET. It was just Hallowe'en, you see!

GREEN GOBLIN [*doubtfully*]. Well—

RED GOBLIN [*thoughtfully*]. It has to be *made right*.

GOLDEN GOBLIN. How would you like to be missing things, hidden or hung on a telegraph pole, all the family hunting for them and needing them next morning? [*Threateningly.*]

HARRIET. Oh, please don't hurt my brothers!

TOM. We'll be good! We'll be good!

TWICK. We won't play any more pranks to make people trouble!

GREEN GOBLIN. You *mean* it?

TOM. You bet! Oh, I mean *of course not!*

TWICK [*anxiously*]. Oh, sure we mean it!

HARRIET. Of course! Haven't they given you their word!

GREEN GOBLIN. Then I'll give you ten minutes by Hallowe'en Moon-time: You go straight back and undo all the mischief you have done. See! Exactly ten minutes by Moon-time and you promise to come right back here and report afterwards? Promise!

HARRIET. And I? I didn't do anything but dress up, you know, but I'll go along and help the boys. I'd rather do that than stay here.

GREEN GOBLIN. You're hostage. You stay here! [*To the boys.*] Promise, now!

TWICK. I promise!

TOM. I promise!

TOM and TWICK run off left.

GREEN GOBLIN [*to HARRIET*]. Come, little girl, you can help. We'll show you what Hallowe'en is meant for. Just you see! And we'll be ready when the boys come back. Can you pick up apples and polish them?

HARRIET [*eagerly*]. Oh yes! That is easy. I like to do it.

GOLDEN GOBLIN. We won't hurt you. We truly never hurt people! We aren't as bad as we're made out, you know.

GREEN GOBLIN. Don't be nervous!

RED GOBLIN. You'll find a hoard of apples under the cornstack.

GREEN GOBLIN. Bring 'em here!

HARRIET. I'm not nervous. I'm not afraid of you!

GREEN GOBLIN [*impressively*]. That's because you've done no wrong. It's the people who have something to answer for who are the scare-cats. Go get me the tub that's in the bushes, Green Goblin! Help, Golden Goblin. [*To HARRIET.*] We will bob for apples first! That's fun!

HARRIET. And have you nuts?

GREEN GOBLIN. Oh, to be sure! Always on Hallowe'en! We roast chestnuts and name them. The one whose chestnut pops first gets the wish he wished!

HARRIET. Oh, that's fun!

GREEN GOBLIN [*dancing about*]. Let's see—what next? Fortunes? We'll make-believe tell fortunes by numbering beans. If you take a handful from a bag and guess the right number, it will turn to gold.

HARRIET. Only you never do guess just right.

GREEN GOBLIN [*laughing*]. But it's fun to play it.

HARRIET [*eagerly*]. Oh yes!

GREEN GOBLIN. By the way, you're not afraid of witches are you, little girl?

HARRIET. Oh—[*doubtfully.*] I don't know! I might be. Are they really true, too? I've only played them or read about them.

GOLDEN GOBLIN. Because we invited the Hallowe'en Witch to our party.

HARRIET [*a bit frightened*]. I don't know whether I ought to stay.

RED GOBLIN. But you're the hostage. You have to stay.

GREEN GOBLIN. You are afraid?

HARRIET. Well—I—I— I always *was* a *bit*! [*Trying to be polite.*] But—

GREEN GOBLIN. Just shake hands with her. She's harmless! She won't hurt you! And be sure to say a word to her about her fine black cat! She's tremendously proud of her cat!

RED GOBLIN [*looking to right*]. Oh, I see her!

Enter WITCH with black cat.

GOLDEN GOBLIN. Here she comes!

GREEN GOBLIN [*going to meet her*]. Welcome Witch! Here's a nice little girl; I'm sure you'll be pleased to meet her!

WITCH. Gr-r-r! Good even' to you! [*Offers a clawlike hand to HARRIET, who shakes it gingerly and then gets behind GREEN GOBLIN.*]

HARRIET. I—I see your cat! Such a pretty pussy, Mrs. Witch! I—I—I like cats!

WITCH [*pleased*]. I see you are a nice little girl. But why are you here with the goblins?

HARRIET. You see—

GREEN GOBLIN. She's hostage for her brothers. They've been playing pranks, saying the mischief was witches and goblins.

WITCH [*angrily*]. Gr-r-r! I knew mischief was abroad. I felt it in my finger-joints, I did! I knew it! Did you ever know *me* to play pranks, now? And I just riding about on my broomstick! The idea!

GREEN GOBLIN. Oh, don't get excited, Witch, please! By Moon-time it's time those boys were back.

GOLDEN GOBLIN. Have you your Magic Mirror, Witch?

WITCH. Yes, yes. I have it.

RED GOBLIN. Oh, look in it and tell us what you see. You might look in and tell us where the boys are.

WITCH [*taking a handglass from her pocket*]. I will look for mischief. [*Chants.*]

Rumpety-tumpety-tum-to-tee,
Where is the mischief, let me see?
Rumpety-tumpety-tum-to-tee,
Looking-glass! Looking-glass,
Where can it be?

[*Mysteriously.*] I see! I see! [*Holding the glass toward the moon.*] I see!

HARRIET [*anxiously coming forward*]. Oh, what do you see?

GREEN GOBLIN	}	[<i>peeping over her shoulder</i>].
RED GOBLIN		
GOLDEN GOBLIN		

What? What?

WITCH [*mysteriously*]. I see— I see a boy.

HARRIET. Where? Where? What kind of a boy? Oh, I wish I could see!

WITCH [*reprovingly*]. There—it's gone! I can't see anything when others look over my shoulder.

GREEN GOBLIN. Try again, Witch!

RED GOBLIN. I won't peep.

GOLDEN GOBLIN [*hiding his eyes*]. See! I'm not looking!

WITCH [*mollified*]. I see— I see— I see a boy bringing a gate down from a telegraph pole: He seems to have a good deal of trouble. He seems to wish not to break the gate. The gate is heavy for so small a boy. Oh— Oh! There, he has it down! He's putting it back where it belongs!

HARRIET [*clapping her hands*]. Oh, Oh! That's Tom! I'm glad he put it back all right.

GREEN GOBLIN [*to WITCH*]. Pray, dear Witch, try it again. There was more to be seen, I know!

WITCH. Yes, yes! Always more mischief stalking.
[*Chants again.*]

Tumpety-tump-tee-tee!

More an' more mischief for me to see!
Mirror, mirror! Where can it be?

[*Happily.*] Oh— Oh! Here it is! I see— I see— I see— this time I see a smaller boy finding a water pail hidden under a pile of wood. The wood is heavy. He is having a hard time to put it back as he found it. I see him putting the pail back upon a porch. I see him putting up bits of washing that he had hidden in the pail. He is hanging them on the clothesline where they belong.

HARRIET [*interrupting eagerly*]. Oh, that's Twick all over!

GREEN GOBLIN [*to WITCH*]. Do you see aught else, pray?

WITCH. I see the same little boy running. He has found a pan on top of a fence post. He is taking the pan back to the porch where he found it. Now he is putting back a chair that he had set on top of a grindstone.

HARRIET. I didn't know he did all *that*.

WITCH. Such a lot of mischief! No wonder my joints ached and my cat spit sparks!

GREEN GOBLIN. But it's all being made right. It's all being made right, Witch! Tomorrow nobody will think ill of the goblins and witches, for the mischief is made good.

WITCH. Our one happy evening holiday, just once a year to ride about on a broomstick, an evening for goblins to frisk and spooks to howl harmlessly!

GREEN GOBLIN. I know! I know! But please don't get excited.

GOLDEN GOBLIN. It's all right now, you know.

RED GOBLIN. Moon-time's almost up.

HARRIET. Oh, they'll soon be back. And I'm so glad you made them make right their mischief.

GREEN GOBLIN. You see it really was unjust to us, don't you, Hostage!

HARRIET. Oh, very, and beside that, so thoughtless of other people's property!

GOLDEN GOBLIN. Exactly!

RED GOBLIN. They won't do it again next year, I'm sure.

WITCH. I hope not!

HARRIET. Oh, no, of course not!

GOLDEN GOBLIN. No! No! Next Hallowe'en we'll all meet here as good friends and have a party.

WITCH. A party!

GREEN GOBLIN. Tonight a party, too!

RED GOBLIN. I love parties!

HARRIET. Such fun!

GREEN GOBLIN. We'll bob for apples first.

Enter TWICK and TOM, panting, left.

TOM. We fixed everything just as we found it!

TWICK. Sure we did. My, I'm out of breath!

TOM. Everything's in its place. You would never suspect that anything had been wrong. [*Seeing WITCH.*] Jinks! [*Starts to run.*]

GREEN GOBLIN [*to TOM*]. Harmless! Just come to have fun with us on Hallowe'en, the real thing, too! [*To WITCH.*] Pleased to meet the big boy, and the little boy?

WITCH. Pleased, I'm sure!

Shake! [*Shakes hands.*]

HARRIET [*in TOM's ear*]. Admire her cat!

GOLDEN GOBLIN. The party now! The party!

TOM. Kitty! Kitty! I'm sure it's a lucky cat!

WITCH [*pleased*]. A very lucky cat. 'Twill bring you luck just because you saw it!

TWICK. Me too?

WITCH [*pleased*]. Oh yes, yes, yes! Luck for everybody! Never any bad luck at all.

GREEN GOBLIN. And now everybody take hold of hands and we'll dance!

GOLDEN GOBLIN [*holding Harriet's hand*]. Three times around the cornstack and then reverse.

RED GOBLIN. And then we'll bob for apples, we'll bob for apples. Don't trip over the tub! Watch your step! Look out for the broom! [*They dance.*]

GREEN GOBLIN

RED GOBLIN

GOLDEN GOBLIN

TOM

TWICK

HARRIET

} [*stopping short, in chorus*].
What's the nicest holiday
there is in all the year?

WITCH. Hallowe'en!

CURTAIN

THE CHILDREN'S BOOKSHELF

CHARACTERS

MOTHER
DADDY
MAGGIE
MARK
SNOOKIE

} *the children*

COSTUMES

DADDY, in the later scenes, is dressed up like a genie, with white drapery over his coat and trousers. He wears on his head a turban.

MOTHER is in everyday house dress.

MARK, a boy, wears play clothes.

MAGGIE, a girl, is in middy dress.

SNOOKIE, the little sister, wears rompers.

SCENE: *A children's playroom. To right, covering an entrance, stands a screen. With back to it, upon a table, is a small hanging bookshelf. Near it is a large armchair standing upon a wide oriental rug.*

Discovered: MAGGIE, placing the bookshelf on the table. MARK is bending over a pile of books and sorting them. SNOOKIE is seated in the armchair with a picture-book.

MAGGIE. There now! [*Looks about.*] Where can we hang it, Mark?

MARK [*looking about the room*]. If it were only a bit taller, we needn't hang it at all.

SNOOKIE [*jumping up and down before it and clapping her hands joyfully*]. It's to be my very own bookshelf!

MAGGIE. Why, you little goosie! You have only three books or so to your name! It isn't your bookshelf at all! It belongs to Mark and me. Mother gave it to us.

SNOOKIE. But I want it, too!

MARK. Well, all right! You can put your books on my side of the shelf; but it's a very small shelf for three people!

MAGGIE. If we hang it, she'll be getting on chairs to reach it. We'll have to keep it on the table. She might fall and hurt herself.

MARK. Well, let it be for now, anyhow. It can stay on the table.

MAGGIE. It looks well there! [*Stands back, looking at the bookshelf on the table approvingly.*]

MARK. Now everybody go get books to put into it!

[*The children turn to hunt their books.*]

SNOOKIE. I don't know where mine all are! I must see. [*Finds a picture-book in a corner and runs to put it into place.*] More! [*Hunts about.*]

MARK. Here!

MAGGIE. Here are some of mine.

[*The two come bringing books.*]

MARK. What have you?

MAGGIE. All the books Aunt and Uncle gave me last Christmas.

MARK. And my birthday Scout Books. [*He arranges his books.*]

MAGGIE. The bookshelf isn't big enough.

MARK. I know it. But I'll make us each one with my carpentry tools.

MAGGIE. That would be just splendid!

MARK. Oh, Snookie! *More!* [*As SNOOKIE brings her books.*]

MAGGIE. Mercy!

MARK. We'll have to fix them on the table, too.

MAGGIE. I'll put the ones I like best here. Some I care less about than others.

MARK. Same here! But I like *all!* There are books you outgrow and others you like to reread. Here is Auntie's Midget Series. I liked them once. I don't now. Snookie will, though, I'm sure. Have you read them?

MAGGIE. I did once, when she gave 'em to me and they were new. I like other kinds of books *better*. I don't care about rereading 'em.

SNOOKIE [*carressing a second book*]. I like to read my stories over, an' over, an' over, an' over. [*She puts the third on the shelf.*] I got 'em all now! See!

MAGGIE [*looking at SNOOKIE'S row*]. Fine, Snookums! Now, maybe some day Mother'll give you your very own bookshelf, when you have *more* books! [*Reads.*] *Mother Goose, Andersen's Fairy Tales, and Peterkin Papers*—A good beginning!

MARK. I've got it, Maggie! We can put into the bookshelf *only* the worth-while books. See! Not any others. The sort that we tire of don't go in at all. We can only put in the books that are really *good!* Books like Snookie's are standard.

SNOOKIE [*pleased*]. Yes, good, good books! [*Pats the covers.*]

MAGGIE. Well, of course, we want only good books on our bookshelf, but how're we going to *tell* which *are* the good books?

MARK. Oh well, we'll find out.

MAGGIE. Or put in only nice, fresh, new books that *look* well—

MARK [*placing some on the bookshelf beside SNOOKIE'S books*]. Well, you can't decide that way. A very poor book *might* have a very fine cover, you know! I'm going to put in some that I *like* best. Look at this, and this. [*He holds up Treasure Island and The Arabian*

Nights.] I've read 'em almost to pieces! And their covers never were very good!

MAGGIE. Yes, I know! I have some like that, *Little Women* and *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*, and *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*, and *Sara Crew*. [*Arranges these upon her shelf.*]

SNOOKIE. The reason they come to pieces, I guess, is because they've been loved so hard.

MAGGIE [*instructing SNOOKIE*]. But you should be very careful of the books you love. You don't mistreat the books you love, Daddy said so! But, then, handling books a great deal wears them out. It's bound to.

MARK. I'm careful, but when I was little I wasn't—not till I realized what books *meant*.

SNOOKIE. I'm going to read some of your books. I'm 'most old 'nough!

MAGGIE. If you do, you'll have to take care of them and not leave them about on the floor, Snookums! Because Mother wants us to take care of the books. That's why she gave us the bookshelf.

MARK. And we're not going to put any silly books into it, because there won't be any room for them on *our* bookshelf, and we don't want them.

MAGGIE. Only the *best* ones go in!

MARK. I put *Arabian Nights* first on my shelf.

SNOOKIE. My shelf, too. I know the story about Aladdin.

MAGGIE. My! But I wish we had a wonderful lamp and a treasure.

MARK. And a magic carpet!

SNOOKIE. I'd say, "Genie, go get me lots an' lots of beautiful books, with lots of beautiful pictures, too. An' he'd bring all, all nice and new and my *very own* bookshelf.

MARK. Oh, I would wish that too.

MAGGIE. Wouldn't it be fun!

SNOOKIE. We can play it.

Enter DADDY, right, from back of the screen.

DADDY. Hello! [*Picks up a book from the couch.*]
There! I've been looking everywhere for that.
[*Comes to where the children are gathered around the bookshelf.*] Fixing up the bookshelf all fine, are you?

MARK. Only we wonder how we'll get all our books into it.

SNOOKIE. An' we don't know how to choose which are good, 'cept the ones we *like* best. So we wished and [*laughing*] we wished a genie'd come an' help, one like Aladdin's, to bring us only truly good, beautiful, interesting books.

DADDY [*laughing*]. I see! Shall I call a genie?

CHILDREN. Yes! Yes! Oh, yes!

DADDY. Mark better call him. There ought to be a genie of the bookshelf, if you only know how to call him!

SNOOKIE. Oh look, here's something! Play this is the lamp. [*Takes up a publisher's catalogue that lies on the floor.*] See!

MARK [*taking the catalogue*]. A book catalogue! That'll do! Now then, I stand before the bookshelf and I—I wish a wish—and I hope the genie'll come!

DADDY [*going away*]. That's it! Wish hard! [*Exit.*]

MARK. Wouldn't it be fun if it really could happen! I wonder how long Aladdin had to wait for the genie to appear. Didn't he come at once?

MAGGIE. Of course! Now wish hard!

SNOOKIE [*clapping her hands*]. Come, Genie! Come!

MAGGIE. Genie of the Bookshelf!

MARK. Of course it's just play.

MAGGIE. Just play.

SNOOKIE. Play fun.

Enter DADDY, draped in a white sheet that is worn like a genie's robe of flowing folds. On his head is a turban made from a Turkish towel wound about.

DADDY [*bowing low*]. Your servant! What would you?

MARK. The genie!

SNOOKIE. *Daddy!*

DADDY. I am your genie.

MARK. Hush, Snookie! He isn't Daddy. He's our genie.

MAGGIE. Genie, I want a Treasure! Right away, quick! I want a Treasure, the best you can find. Pearls and rubies and emeralds —

MARK. And a Magic Carpet, genie!

DADDY [*bowing very low, impressively*]. Children of the Bookshelf, these gifts that you desire are right here in your very own playroom!

MAGGIE. Oh, no— not really! [*Laughing.*]

DADDY [*again bowing low, impressively*]. Children, the Treasure is here—and the Magic Carpet too!

MARK. Oh, yes, we play it, Daddy! Excuse me, I meant, genie! Just for fun—

DADDY [*solemnly*]. Your genie tells the solemn truth. The Treasure is here and the Magic Carpet too!

MAGGIE [*putting her finger on his ring*]. Oh! That's not the kind of jewels I want in my Treasure.

MARK [*putting his foot on the rug*]. And I suppose this is the Carpet?

SNOOKIE. Oh! Oh!

DADDY. No! The Treasure that is greater even than pearls, and emeralds, and rubies, and sapphires, and diamonds is *here*, [*impressively*] and the Magic Carpet that can transport you whithersoever you may wish to go, that is here too, although it is not outwardly such as Aladdin beheld!

MAGGIE [*seriously*]. Really? *Where?*

DADDY [*goes to the little bookshelf*]. Behold your Treas-

ure that is even greater than Aladdin's pearls and rubies! [*Taking from the bookshelf a volume.*] Behold the Magic Carpet of Imagination, which in a twinkling may carry you whithersoever you wish!

MARK [*looking at the genie*]. Why, it is so!

MAGGIE. Of course! and I never thought of it.

SNOOKIE. I want to try it!

DADDY. Let's all try it and see if it isn't true.

MARK. I say we go to Bagdad!

Enter MOTHER, right, peeping around the screen.

MOTHER. I heard you all having *such* a good time. What are you doing? Playing a game? [*Laughs at DADDY.*]

SNOOKIE. Oh, Mumsie! Daddy's a genie!

MAGGIE. The Genie of the Bookshelf! And we've got a Treasure and a Magic Carpet!

MARK. And he's going to help us select books for our bookshelf!

SNOOKIE. An' we're goin' to have the best books and the most interesting.

MAGGIE. And Mother, you're to sit right down in the chair there and help, too! And you're to write to all the aunts an' uncles and cousins and tell them we *don't* want any more worthless little stories, we intend to plan ahead for standard reading that is worth while. And oh, we want The Book of Knowledge and Mark wants biography and science, and I want to know how to make things, to sew and cook, and stories, too, that are ever so good—that I'll want to keep forever and *ever!*

MOTHER. Yes! Yes!

MARK [*showing the catalogue*]. Here, see! We'll go over this and select beforehand the books we want and then we'll work towards a real library.

DADDY. The genie says he will help.

MAGGIE. Oh, the genie'll go and get them for us! [*Claps her hands.*]

MARK. We'll be better off than Aladdin and have *two* genii to help! [*He puts his hand in his mother's and looks up at her smiling. She nods.*]

DADDY. Both genii will surely bring you books for the bookshelf! The best books will come to you on birthdays and Christmas.

MAGGIE. And don't let the uncles and aunties give us any more useless books.

DADDY. Such books only as are real Treasures, rubies of thought; pearls of treasured knowledge; beautiful stories that are ever green in our memory like the pure color of emeralds; sparkling happiness of hours well spent in reading—diamonds!

MOTHER. Such books as are *real* Magic Carpets!

DADDY. That is good—

MOTHER [*laughing*]. Splendid!

MARK. Some of these books, you know, I shall always like. Oh, I'm sure of it, even when I grow up like Daddy.

MAGGIE. Me too! Even when I get to be a lady like Mumsey!

MOTHER. *Arabian Nights*, for instance.

MAGGIE. Oh yes! And ever so many more.

MARK. That everybody wants to own.

MAGGIE. That everybody loves.

SNOOKIE. Loves almost to pieces.

DADDY. You shall have them!

MARK. Oh, genie!

MOTHER. You shall have them!

MAGGIE. Oh, isn't it splendid!

MARK. Great!

MAGGIE. A Treasure, a Magic Carpet, and two Genii!

MARK. Let's go right off now on the Magic Carpet. [*He sits on the rug. MAGGIE leans over the side of the chair*]

and DADDY leans on one arm, while SNOOKIE curls at his feet.]

DADDY. We wish to go to—

MARK. Bagdad!

MAGGIE [*taking Arabian Nights to hand him from the bookshelf*]. To Bagdad! To Bagdad!

SNOOKIE. Going to Bagdad!

DADDY [*opening the book*]. To Bagdad then! Upon the Magic Carpet of Imagination, in a twinkling it will transport us through the magic of thought, and we shall be living far away, far, far away from here in the Orient.

SNOOKIE. Hurry! Start!

MOTHER. We're all ready, genie dear!

DADDY. I think we'll have to take trips together, too, —down Alice's rabbit hole, maybe; to Fableland with *Æsop*; through the *Child's Garden of Verses* with Stevenson; into the Jungle, too, with Kipling; up to the Alps with *Heidi*; to Dreamland with *Davy and the Goblin* and the White Rabbit; to Crusoe's Island with Defoe. But now, now we are off to Bagdad! And here we go upon the Magic Carpet of our Bookshelf's thought! Imagination is our Magic Carpet. [*He opens the story-book and begins it as the curtain slowly falls.*]

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

SANTA CLAUS, *with bright red suit and long white beard.*

MRS. SANTA CLAUS, *in red dress with white apron.*

THE HOLLY ELVES, *in green suits with red trimmings and bright red caps into which holly sprigs are thrust.*

SCENE

SANTA CLAUS' Workshop: *To the right is a large desk covered with letters and long Christmas lists. To center rear is a pile of wrapped Christmas gifts and a Christmas tree, unlighted. To left are big covered baskets showing toys sticking out from their coverings. Letters and envelopes lie scattered about SANTA CLAUS' desk.*

The curtain rises showing SANTA CLAUS seated at the desk, busy with Christmas letters, MRS. SANTA CLAUS bending over him.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. Oh, please come and have your supper, dear!

SANTA CLAUS. Supper! Why, look at all these Christmas lists that have come in at the last moment!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. Oh bother! Come and have your supper! You'll be able to work twice as well and twice as fast after!

SANTA CLAUS. No! No! I can't stop! Think of it—if any children who had counted on me should really find nothing in their stockings Christmas morning! Oh, I'm very, very, very busy, my dear! Don't ask me to stop yet.

There is a rap on the door outside.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*turning*]. Come in!

Enter a HOLLY ELF with mail bag

HOLLY ELF [*bowing low*]. Some more mail, just arrived by Chimney-Place Air Mail Route, Sir!

SANTA CLAUS [*distractedly*]. More mail! Well, well, well—more mail! Mercy me! Put it there. [*Pointing.*] I'll see to it as soon as I can.

Another rap on the door outside.

HOLLY ELF. Shall I answer it? I think it's another batch of Christmas lists that have come by the Air Mail Route. [*He answers the door.*]

Enter another HOLLY ELF with mail bag slung over his shoulder.

SECOND ELF. Mail by the Air Mail Route, Mr. Santa Claus.

SANTA CLAUS. Thank you—yes! Put it there [*pointing*] beside the other sack and call my stenographer, please.

The HOLLY ELVES empty their sacks on the floor near SANTA CLAUS' desk and exeunt.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. The stenographer is just hurrying through her supper. Can't I help? Let me help?

SANTA CLAUS. Well, all right! Just go over those new letters for me—there's a dear! And put the lists on file so that the Holly Elves can fill them.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*seating herself in a large rocker, opens envelopes and places one list after another on a long bill file.*] These children are asking for such a lot of things! They want everything from radio outfits to automobiles and aeroplanes.

SANTA CLAUS. Yes, the children are asking for all sorts of things—they always do! I'm sure I don't know how we're coming out! [*Holding out a package of lists to MRS. SANTA CLAUS.*] There, these can be filled out. You might call the Holly Elves and have them pack

up the presents and label them. [*He turns back to work over the file MRS. SANTA CLAUS has placed on his desk.*]

MRS. SANTA [*goes to table and rings a little bell that is there.*]

SANTA CLAUS. No! No! They're out in the Christmas Tree Grove. They won't hear that.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*going to the door and ringing the bell*]. That's all right! I'm sure they'll hear that! [*Goes back to her lists and tosses the envelopes into piles, sorting rapidly.*]

Enter HOLLY ELVES, running. One has an armful of dolls; another has an armful of games and toys, another an armful of wrapped presents, another is dragging three sleds; another carries a basket.]

SANTA CLAUS [*jumping up*]. Well, well! Now let's see! How are things going down in the Christmas Tree Grove?

FIRST HOLLY ELF. Oh, we're getting on beautifully! Almost all the presents are picked.

SECOND HOLLY ELF. I just brought these dolls in because they are the very last.

THIRD HOLLY ELF. And these are the last games and toys from the plaything trees.

FOURTH HOLLY ELF. And these books and candies that are in the basket—Almost everything *all* picked!

SANTA CLAUS [*excitedly*]. And all these letters and all these lists still to fill! Whatever am I going to do? Whatever are *we* going to do? [*Walking back and forth excitedly.*] All those children asking for things—and not finding them on Christmas morning! And they'll never believe in me any more! Didn't we grow more presents in the Christmas Tree Grove this year than ever before?

FIRST HOLLY ELF. There was an unusually large crop.

SECOND HOLLY ELF. And dolls were very plentiful—larger and lovelier than ever—French dolls, foreign dolls, character dolls, dolls of every sort! Even the little dolls were most abundant.

THIRD HOLLY ELF. And as for the games and the toys, sir, they were unusually plentiful. And very few fell from the trees and got broken.

FOURTH HOLLY ELF. And the skates and sleds grew splendidly, as well as all the other out-of-door playthings. The sports toys and radios came up beautifully as our new venture. But they, too, have all been gathered.

FIFTH HOLLY ELF. And the books were even better than ever. And all the candy bushes bore fine crops of Christmas candies.

SANTA CLAUS. Then I really can't understand it.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*picking up a list off SANTA CLAUS' desk*]. But I think I understand it. I think the real trouble is that the children have been asking for too much.

SANTA CLAUS [*stopping short and looking at the lists on the desk*]. Well, my dear, maybe you are right.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. You see, you've filled all the lists just as they came in. Look over there at that big wash basket. Now, all of those toys are labeled to go to one child!

SANTA CLAUS. I know it. They're going to Johnnie, the wealthy little son of John Elmore McKrae of New York. Didn't he ask for them?

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. But it seems to me he might share with somebody else.

SANTA CLAUS. Well, he did ask for a great many things. The whole list isn't there. Some of his things are outside being packed into the sleigh, I remember.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*looking at the other big baskets standing about*]. And here—look here! These are all for

Tibbit and Tottie Harrison, those rich little children who live in that big house in that millionaire suburb.
 SANTA CLAUS. I know it! And I love Tibbit and Tottie! They believe in me!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*picking up a letter*]. Now, my dear, just look at this and you'll see what I mean. [*She hands SANTA CLAUS a letter.*]

The HOLLY ELVES draw close to SANTA CLAUS as he takes it up.

FIRST HOLLY ELF. What does it say?

SANTA CLAUS. I'll read it.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. Yes, you read it!

SANTA CLAUS [*reading*]. "Dear Mr. Santa Claus: Don't you know anything about us, I wonder? There are eight of us in our family and we live at number 1313 Smith Street. There's a lot of other children in the same tenement, but you never yet came down our chimney to bring any Christmas presents. I don't care so much about myself, because I can do without. But I wish you'd bring our baby a Teddy bear. And if there weren't toys enough to go 'round, you might bring just a little Christmas candy for us to divide." [*He takes out his pocket handkerchief and stops short.*] No! No! I'm not going to cry! I'm not! To think that I've gone and passed by the very children that really needed me!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*wiping her eyes*]. And, you see, there are other letters just like that. I found ever so many and some from very needy little children, who hadn't warm clothes to wear! All that pile there— [*She points to a stack of letters lying on the desk.*]

SANTA CLAUS. All I've got to say about it is that those little poor children have got to be remembered!

FIRST HOLLY ELF. They ought to be!

SECOND HOLLY ELF. Of course, they ought to be.

THIRD HOLLY ELF. They really need presents and playthings much more than the rest.

FOURTH HOLLY ELF. And we ought to go right over all the things and rearrange the lists.

FIFTH HOLLY ELF. Let's see! Where shall we begin?

SANTA CLAUS. Dear! Dear! Dear! Then I shall have to disappoint some children in order to remember the others.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. But when some get so much more than others—and the little poor children need so much more than the rich children—

SANTA CLAUS. Yes! Yes! I know! I know! I know—— Those dear little children who need Christmas shall have it! They certainly shall! They certainly shall! ——And I'll go over all the lists——I shall have to!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. At this late hour! Why, it's almost time for the reindeer to be at the door with the sleigh! [*Looking at the clock.*] Dear, and you haven't had even a bite of supper!

SANTA CLAUS [*taking up one letter after another*]. Well, these are the ones I must make right, these One Thousand and One Needy Cases. I wonder how I ever overlooked them. I suppose it was because of the very long lists from the very wealthy little children. [*He begins to sort the Christmas gifts, taking them out of the big baskets.*]

FIRST HOLLY ELF [*crossing to him*]. May I help? You see, I have thought of a way to even up things.

SANTA CLAUS. Oh, please do help! What a help you Holly Elves have always been to me!

FIRST HOLLY ELF. I have thought of a plan.

SANTA CLAUS [*eagerly*]. Yes, yes.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS [*jumping up from her work of sorting Christmas lists*]. Quick! Tell us about it!

FIRST HOLLY ELF. You see, there are so many little poor children—

SANTA CLAUS. Yes, so many that I have never known them all.

FIRST HOLLY ELF. And the other children should be taught to think of others beside themselves.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. That really is the spirit of Christmas. They've only been thinking about what they themselves were to receive!

SECOND HOLLY ELF. Exactly!

THIRD HOLLY ELF. The rich children ask for so much that there is not enough to go around.

FIRST HOLLY ELF. That's just it! And it's so much work for Santa Claus to fill out such long lists. I think we might just put all the presents into the sleigh and divide them all up evenly, going down every chimney to see if any children are there who might otherwise be forgotten!

SANTA CLAUS. A fine plan! And we'll visit the children in the tenements first, to be sure they aren't forgotten.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. If I were you, I'd ask the rich children to be sure to ask some poor children to their Christmas tree celebrations! Couldn't you send everybody a happy dream suggestion about that? Slip it under the children's pillows when you go down the chimney to fill the stockings!

SANTA CLAUS [*laughing*]. Why, to be sure I can! To be sure I can! [*To HOLLY ELVES.*] Run off and pick every single Christmas present that is left on the trees of the Christmas Tree Grove. Pile them all on my sleigh. This year we won't forget anybody—no, not anybody! And I dare say that it will be a very, very Merry Christmas for everybody.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. For Christmas really is giving and sharing—not asking and getting!

FIRST HOLLY ELF. For Christmas is jolly giving.

SANTA CLAUS [*laughing*]. Oh, now I'm not worried any more! Here! [*To FOURTH HOLLY ELF.*] See if the

sleigh is ready. There's so much to do we ought to start just as soon as we can.

Exeunt HOLLY ELVES, dancing about in a merry little dance on their way to the door.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. I'll put your dinner on now. You really must have a bite before you go!

SANTA CLAUS. Yes, yes! In a minute! Do you think that all the children will be happy this Christmas? I want them all to be happy.

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. I think they will; if it is better to give than to receive, the children who have much to share should have a very Happy Christmas.

SANTA CLAUS. And the children who have little will have the jolliest Christmas they ever knew. I must go and wrap up the little dreams to put under their pillows!

MRS. SANTA CLAUS. Here, let me help! [*She fills a basket with bright tinsel, Christmas candles, Christmas stars, sprigs of holly and mistletoe.*] [*To SANTA CLAUS.*] There, that's ready! Nobody can resist those Christmas dreams. They are sure to give one thoughts of giving happiness to others!

Sleighbells are heard without.

SANTA CLAUS. Here are the reindeers. I must hurry! So much to do to-night! Such lots of little children to visit! [*Kissing her good-by.*] Really, the dinner can wait! And if I'm hungry, maybe I'll eat Christmas candy, if there's any left over! [*He chuckles.*]

The HOLLY ELVES come dancing in.

FIRST HOLLY ELF. The presents are all packed.

SECOND HOLLY ELF. The sleigh is waiting!

THIRD HOLLY ELF. We found ever so many more presents than we thought. They are all in the sleigh.

FOURTH HOLLY ELF. And nobody shall be forgotten.

FIFTH HOLLY ELF. All the little children shall share the joy of Christmas!

SANTA CLAUS. Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas to everybody!

The sleighbells jingle as the curtain descends on SANTA CLAUS and the HOLLY ELVES, laden with Christmas tree, baskets and presents, going to the door followed by MRS. SANTA CLAUS.

CURTAIN

At close of curtain many children pass dancing in front of it laden with toys and Christmas greens. They call to audience, "Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas to all!" They dance down the aisle, greeting the audience.

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

CHARACTERS

DICKY

DADDY

DOLLY

SANTA CLAUS

MOTHER

THE CHRISTMAS HOLLY ELF

COSTUMES

DICKY, a boy in dressing-gown and felt slippers.

DOLLY, a girl in a bath-wrapper and bedroom slippers.

SANTA CLAUS, in regulation dress of red, with a large pack on his back and a long white beard about his chin.

THE CHRISTMAS ELF, a small boy dressed in a tight green dress, wearing a scarlet cap and scarlet boots. In his hat is struck a sprig of holly with red berries.

MOTHER and DADDY, both in dressing-gowns, with felt slippers.

MOTHER carries a flashlight. DADDY carries a toy pistol.

Costumes of other characters are just what anybody might wear at bedtime on Christmas Eve.

SCENE: *The stage is set to represent a room with a large fireplace at center, rear. This may be made from a big box and should be large enough to permit SANTA CLAUS to step through. There is a couch to right of the fireplace. It is covered with a bright cover and there are gay pillows on it. Before the fireplace is a rug and at the right an easy chair. At the left front of the stage is a low table with cover. At the right front is a chair.*

TIME: *Evening of the day before Christmas.*

The curtain rises to disclose DOLLY with a small stocking in her hand, advancing from right toward the chimney. DICKY, holding an enormous red cotton stocking, large enough to fit a giant, coming from left. They meet at center, in front of the fireplace.

DICKY [*holding up his stocking*]. How's this for size?

DOLLY. Where'd you get it?

DICKY [*tries to hang up the long stocking, but it falls down on the rug*]. I made it myself [*proudly*] and it's big enough to hold all Santa Claus's whole pack. Think of the lovely things I'll get. More'n anybody else!

DOLLY. I think it's no fair to ask for more'n your share! You ought to hang up your *own* stocking!

DICKY. You could get more, too, if you'd make yourself a big stocking.

DOLLY [*hanging up her stocking*]. I don't want to. I'd be ashamed to hang up a great big, piggy stocking like that! I don't believe that Mother or Daddy'd approve. You'd better ask them about it and whether you can hang it up. [*Peeping into the fireplace.*] Oh, yes, he can get through *that*, I'm sure.

DICKY [*finally fastening his stocking up successfully*]. Well, mine stays here. Of course, Mother and Daddy haven't seen it. Why should they? And besides, they've gone to sleep, I am sure. I suppose they thought we hung up our stockings hours ago, but I was making mine and I couldn't get it done earlier.

DOLLY. And I was finishing Christmas presents and forgot to do it before. I was making this. [*She reads as she holds up a package: "To Santa Claus, with Dolly's love. Merry Christmas!"*]

DICKY [*coming over to where Dolly stands beside the table*]. What is it, a present for Santa Claus?

DOLLY [*laughing*]. Yes. Do you suppose he'll like it? You can't guess what it is.

DICKY [*poking the parcel*]. Bed socks?

DOLLY [*letting him feel of the parcel*]. Guess again!

DICKY [*feeling of it.*] A pink sachet! [*Smells of it with a sniff.*] No. 'Tisn't that, because it doesn't smell of violets or anything. It's candy, maybe?

DOLLY [*dancing up and down*]. No! No! It's a pair of

red mittens. I knit them *myself!* What would Santa Claus want with candy? He has tons of it. And I don't think he'd *ever* care for a sachet. It's mittens!

DICKY. Well, I'm not going to give him any present.

DOLLY. I can put "From Dicky" on it, too.

DICKY. Yes—give it here. I'll write it. [*Writes on parcel.*] Now, where'll you put it, so he'll see it? Put it beside my big red stocking.

DOLLY [*crossing to fireplace*]. No! No! He'd be sure to see it on the table, I think. [*Goes back to the table and lays it there, trying various places.*]

DICKY. What were you doing out there in the dining room? I thought I heard you there. Find anything to eat?

DOLLY. I was fixing up a tray for Santa Claus. I think he must be hungry after a ride on a cold night like this. I must go get it.

[*Exit DOLLY, right.*]

DICKY. He'll never see it there. It would be better near my big stocking! If he thinks I gave him so much, he'll want to leave me pretty nice presents, too! [*He moves the stocking and lays it beside his big one, which drops upon the floor full length.*]

[*Reënter DOLLY, right, carrying a tray on which are some sandwiches and a piece of cake, with a glass of milk.*]

DOLLY. I think he'll like this. [*Puts the tray down on the table and sees that the parcel is not there.*]

DICKY. Oh, let me have a sandwich! Just one!

DOLLY. No! No! You bad boy! Put the parcel back where I left it. You can't have any of the sandwiches. There are only four anyway, and Santa Claus will be hungry! Go 'way!

DICKY. Just one cake. I'm so hungry!

DOLLY [*protecting the cake*]. No! No! No!

DICKY [*grabbing, unsuccessfully*]. He wouldn't miss it.

DOLLY [*looking at the tray and arranging it*]. Now come, for it's late, Dicky. We oughtn't to stay any longer. It's 'most twelve. He may come any minute! [*Starts to go.*]

DICKY. I'm going to stay. I can hide under the table so he'll never see me! [*He hides under the table, but his red felt slipper shows under the cloth.*] I shall stay here. I'm all hidden.

DOLLY [*pulling his slipper off*]. No, you aren't. Your slipper sticks out. It isn't right to stay, and he won't like it if he finds you.

DICKY. I don't care!

DOLLY. Besides, if I leave you here, you'll be sure to eat the sandwiches and the cake. [*She carries his slipper with her, left, toward the couch.*] I shan't give you your slipper till you come out from under the table!

DICKY [*crawling out from under the table on all fours, reluctantly, and rather angry*]. Give it here! I want it. My feet are cold! Besides, I might step on a tack! [*He takes the slipper and puts it on.*] I could curl up on the couch and pretend to be asleep. [*He jumps on the couch and curls up, snoring audibly.*] How's that? Doesn't it sound as if I were asleep? [*Snores.*]

DOLLY. No, it doesn't—not a bit! Come! [*She tries to pull him off couch.*] He won't like it, if he finds you!

[*Sleigh bells jingle off scene.*]

DOLLY. Hark! I heard sleigh bells! Come, Dicky, Come!

DICKY. Let me be. I'm asleep! I want to see him! Go away.

[*Sleigh bells again jingle, louder.*]

DOLLY. Oh Dicky—please!

DICKY. There now! Hide, quick. He's coming! [*He*

throws the couch rug over the two of them and holds
DOLLY.] Quiet!

Enter SANTA CLAUS from the chimney. He stops on the rug and dusts his feet off.

SANTA CLAUS. Musn't get any tracks on the rug! Awfully tight chimney! [*Lays down his pack upon the rug and looks around.*] That's some stocking! Must be a giant's child in this house. Dear me! [*Thoughtfully.*] I thought Dicky and Dolly lived here. [*Looking again.*] One stocking looks like Dolly's that I filled last year. Pshaw! Dicky's trying to fool me! [*He nods thoughtfully.*] It's Dicky's doing. No giant child here.

DICKY [*snores loudly and regularly*].

SANTA CLAUS. Children here? Well, it's all right if they're asleep. [*In a whisper.*] I must be very, very quiet! [*Turns to the big stocking.*] Why, if I filled a stocking like this, there'd be nothing left for anybody else—nothing for the poor children, the little orphans, the children that don't get any gifts when things run short. Some children get too much! [*Pulls down the big stocking.*] I don't know what to do about it. [*Puts it in place again.*] It might belong to somebody that was oversize, perhaps.

DICKY [*giggles from the couch*].

DOLLY. Hush!

SANTA CLAUS [*crossing to the couch and pulling off the covers*]. There! I thought that snoring wasn't real. Well, so long as you're here, you can explain why you stayed and hid.

DICKY. We were hanging up our stockings—and——

DOLLY. I didn't want to stay. I was afraid you'd be put out about our seeing you.

SANTA CLAUS I am! I am! [*Stalking up and down the stage.*] I am! I am! You ought to be abed and—
—asleep and no peeking!

DOLLY. I know—I know. But please forgive us; I was up late tying up Christmas gifts and forgot all about my stocking, and when I came down, Dicky was here and we were fooling—

DICKY. And we hid when we heard the sleigh bells. That was how it happened. I'm sure we couldn't be to blame! Let's see what you have brought us! [*Goes to the SANTA CLAUS pack and is about to open it.*]

SANTA CLAUS. Hie there! If you don't leave that alone, I've a mind not to leave you anything. I have a mind to go back up the chimney. Why didn't you go to bed the way you ought to? [*Crossly.*] I'm quite put out! [*Going into the chimney.*]

DICKY and DOLLY. Oh, please don't go! Please don't!

DOLLY. You see, Mr. Santa Claus, it was really my fault. I—I fixed you up a lunch. You haven't found it!

SANTA CLAUS [*coming out of the chimney*]. Hey, what's that, Dolly?

DOLLY. Oh, I'm glad you came back. You see, I fixed you up a nice little lunch. It's here [*running to the table.*] See! Just sit down in this big chair and eat it. And you don't need to leave me any games or toys or anything, if there aren't enough to go around to the little poor children and the orphans, and those that usually get very little.

SANTA CLAUS [*seating himself in the chair and eating*]. How thoughtful of you, Dolly! Thank you, Dolly! That was kind of you!

DOLLY. I have everything that you brought me last year—the doll, the tea set, the books, the games; and though I've played with them, they're still just as good as new.

DICKY [*pushing in between SANTA CLAUS and DOLLY*]. Did you bring me all the things I asked for in my letter?

SANTA CLAUS. Oh, I see! That stocking must be yours, Dicky?

DICKY. Yes, it's mine. I could have made it bigger.

SANTA CLAUS [*with a chuckle, eating the cake*]. What very large feet you must have, Dicky!

DICKY [*looking at his feet*]. Not at all! [*Crossly.*]

SANTA CLAUS. Do you think that stocking's quite—quite your size?

DICKY. Oh, I didn't suppose it mattered. I asked for so many things! If I'd put up my own stocking, there might have been holes in it. I wear them very hard. Mother says so! Please, what did you decide to give me? May I see?

DOLLY [*reprovingly*]. Let him eat his cake. [*To SANTA CLAUS*]. Dicky always wants more'n his share!

DICKY. No, I don't.

SANTA CLAUS [*finishing up the crumbs*]. Awfully good! I feel as if I'd had a dinner! You know Dicky isn't the *only* child who has asked for more than his share; maybe he didn't know what it meant.

DICKY [*poking the SANTA CLAUS pack*]. Oh, do let me see! [*Peeps in.*]

DOLLY. You musn't! Put it down!

SANTA CLAUS [*to DOLLY*]. Oh—a present for me! [*Picking up the gift that is on the table.*] How wonderful! [*He takes out the mittens and tries them on.*]

DOLLY. You like them?

SANTA CLAUS. They just fit! Thank you! Thank you!

DICKY. It was part mine, too!

SANTA CLAUS. I suppose you each knit one.

DICKY. Well—not exactly. Dolly did them, but we gave them together. She let me.

SANTA CLAUS. I see! Well, I'm much obliged, Dicky.

DICKY [*in off-hand manner*]. Oh, that's all right. But, see here, let me have my things, won't you? [*Looking into the sack.*] There's the radio set I wanted, and

the toy aeroplane, and the skates. I can see them. And the bat and the—oh, yes, the baseball mask. And those must be my candy boxes. [*Putting his hand into the bag as if to pull them out.*] Oh!

SANTA CLAUS. Wait a bit!

DICKY [*dancing up and down*]. I say, Dolly, see all I've got! Oh, I've got all there is in the Santa Claus pack!

SANTA CLAUS [*taking down the big stocking and putting in its place the whole pack.*] I suppose I might as well—you asked for almost all.

DICKY. Oh, the whole pack! How dandy! [*He is overjoyed.*]

DOLLY [*reprovingly*]. Oh, Dicky!

SANTA CLAUS. Never mind, Dolly. Let him take out what he finds in the pack.

DICKY. Oh, Oh, Oh! Look! I'll pull out this—a great big, enormous package! [*He pulls out with effort a big parcel which almost fills the sack.*] Oh! Oh! Oh! Look! [*He pulls the package out and finds it labeled "Christmas Greediness."*] Oh! [*Taken aback.*] Oh!

SANTA CLAUS. That's what you asked for, you know. You've got it! It isn't a mistake—no "Christmas Greetings"—"Christmas Greediness."

DICKY. But I didn't want that! [*Beginning to cry.*] I didn't want that!

SANTA CLAUS. I can't do anything about it. That's what all selfish children get.

DICKY. But I wanted the other things. All of them.

SANTA CLAUS. Huh!

DICKY [*crying*]. I don't want it! I don't like "Christmas Greediness." I don't care! I'm going back to bed! I'm not going to open it. [*Starts, but turns back.*] I didn't know you could be mean! [*To SANTA CLAUS.*]

DOLLY. Oh, hush!

SANTA CLAUS. Dicky, I'm sorry. You see, as soon as you looked into that pack, you changed all the toys that were in it. I'm not responsible because you pulled out a big package of greediness instead of a toy; if Dolly had tried, it would have been different. We'll see what we can do. I'll have to call my Christmas Elf to consult about it. He's up on top of the roof. [*Goes to chimney and calls.*] Christmas Elf, come! Come here! Want your help!

There is a jingle of bells and a little CHRISTMAS ELF peeps out from the chimney. There are bells sewed all over his elfin dress of red and green.

Enter CHRISTMAS ELF, from chimney.

CHRISTMAS ELF. I'm here!

SANTA CLAUS. There's a little boy here who has asked for all that was in my whole pack; so I gave him the whole of the pack, you see, and he is crying because when he started to take out the presents, he found nothing but *greediness!* Christmas Greediness!

CHRISTMAS ELF. Exactly!

DICKY. I didn't know I was selfish!

DOLLY [*putting an arm about him*]. Don't cry. It's going to be made all right, I'm sure.

CHRISTMAS ELF. We'll try what can be done. [*Puts the package into the pack again.*] Now, little boy! Try again!

DICKY [*crying*]. I don't want to be selfish. I hate that stocking! I don't care whether I have *any* presents. I want the children who haven't much to enjoy—I want them to have my share——

CHRISTMAS ELF. Now that's the Christmas spirit! Now, I'm sure things will look better! [*To DICKY.*] Try again and see what you pull out. [*Holding the pack open.*]

DICKY. Oh! It's another big package! [*This time the*

other side of the package is turned toward the audience and it reads "Unselfishness."]

SANTA CLAUS [*patting DICKY on the back.*] There! Now, you see things are quite right. If you hadn't felt like that, the Christmas Fairy couldn't have worked such true magic!

DICKY. And there's a letter.

DOLLY. Let's read it.

DICKY [*breaking open the letter and reading.*] Dear Dicky: I am giving you the very biggest thing Christmas can bring. It is the chance to think of others. This is the real Christmas gift. It is better than having many toys and many little gifts that you can break. I invite you and Dolly to go with me and distribute the big gift tonight.—Santa Claus.

DOLLY. May we? Oh, may we? I know some little poor children I'd like to take toys to. And there are the Smiths who aren't going to have any Christmas—no gifts at all!

DICKY. I will take my skates to Billy Smith. His mother is too poor to buy him any.

DOLLY. Oh, what fun! [*Suddenly thinking.*] Mother will let us go. We'll have to ask.

A door slams off stage.

SANTA CLAUS. Well, I must go. Don't dare to get caught again. [*Runs toward chimney.*]

The CHRISTMAS ELF is about to follow SANTA into the chimney when the door opens and in comes DADDY, followed by MOTHER.

DADDY [*surprised*]. Oh! [*Dropping the toy revolver he holds.*] Santa Claus! I thought it might be a burglar! [*Laughs.*] So it was *you!*

MOTHER. So good of you to come and remember the children, Santa Claus!

SANTA CLAUS [*laughing*]. They were very naughty. They hid.

DOLLY. And Santa Claus has asked us to go with him and help give out the Christmas gifts. [*To her MOTHER in a whisper.*] He's wearing my red mittens—see! [*To DADDY.*] You'll let us go? Oh, please!

DADDY. Oh, yes, to be sure! Don't forget to hold on tight, though!

MOTHER. Run and get your coats.

SANTA CLAUS. There are plenty of furs and warm things up on the roof, Mother. [*To children.*] Hurry! We have to make up for lost time.

DOLLY. We'll be home in time for early breakfast.

SANTA CLAUS [*standing beside the fireplace*]. Children and Elf first! [*To parents.*] Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Oh, I'll take care of the children! Merry Christmas!

MOTHER. Have a good time!

DADDY. Yes! Have a good time!

DICKY [*turning and laughing*]. The best time in all the world! [*Calling back.*] Mother, please hide that horrid old selfish red stocking!

MOTHER. I will. [*Laughing.*]

SANTA CLAUS *turns to go up the chimney.*

ALL [*in chorus*]. Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!

CURTAIN

THE THREE DWARF BROTHERS

CHARACTERS

STINGY DWARF
SELFISH DWARF

GENEROUS DWARF
THE STRANGER

COSTUMES

STINGY, red brownie dress, pocket at waist.

SELFISH, blue brownie dress, pocket at waist.

GENEROUS, yellow brownie dress with overalls and pocket bag.

THE STRANGER, long green cape with hood. He carries a staff.

Under the long cape that entirely covers him and fastens down the front, he wears a glittering dress such as a Good Fairy might wear.

SCENE: *The living room of a tumble-down house where the THREE DWARF BROTHERS live. There is an entrance at right and near it a couch covered by a worn rug. At rear is a small cupboard and a stove. At left stands a table with three broken plates and three china mugs.*

The Curtain Rises to Show: The THREE DWARF BROTHERS seated around the table.

SELFISH. I want more to eat!

STINGY. Well, you've already had more than I have.

GENEROUS. I do wish there was more in the cupboard; but there's only the bread that we must save for dinner.

SELFISH. I must have that! I am hungry!

STINGY. No! I must have it!

GENEROUS. Well, if it were not for dinner, I'd let you have it.

SELFISH. There you go again!

STINGY. You never let us have what we want to eat.

GENEROUS. But you see, there is so very little, brothers!

And I am the one who looks out for things! The bread must be saved, for greater hunger will come.

SELFISH. There you go *again!* I want it *now!*

STINGY. I want more!

GENEROUS. Well, I haven't eaten my second slice. I'll give you each an equal half. Then we will save the loaf for time of greater need. [*He very carefully divides his slice into two equal portions and gives one-half to each brother.*] There!

STINGY [*stuffing his down*]. Give me some of yours! [*He grabs at SELFISH's bread.*]

SELFISH. Stop that! This is mine! [*He keeps tight hold of the slice and grabs at his mug too.*] You'll be taking my milk next! But this is *my* mug! You have your own. [*To GENEROUS.*] And you too!

STINGY. My mug's the best looking of the lot, and we all got our mugs at the same time. Selfish, you can't have it. Anyhow, it's too good to use; I'm not going to use it any more. I'm going to put it away where it will be safe! [*He jumps up from the table, wraps the mug in paper, and puts it in a drawer which he locks, putting the key into his pocket.*]

SELFISH. Nobody shall have mine to use either! It's *my* mug! [*He slips it into his pocket.*] There! I won't have you two breaking or using it. The mugs are alike, except that Generous has cracked his!

GENEROUS. Oh, oh, Brother! I didn't crack mine! But I will let you two use it, when you want. Then you can save your own that are so pretty and new. You know well who cracked it carelessly, but we won't remember that! Accidents will happen. I know you did not mean it. It will still hold water! [*He holds up the cracked mug.*] It is still useful! We will all three use it!

STINGY. Oh yes, that'll do! We can save *our* mugs and keep 'm! [*Complainingly.*] Nothing more to eat, I

suppose! [*He gets up and pushes aside his chair.*]
 GENEROUS. Time to clear up!

SELFISH. I'm not going to do any work!

STINGY. I'm busy! [*He goes to the couch and curls up comfortably.*] You can help, Selfish! [*SELFISH brushes the crumbs from the table with his hand and throws them on the floor.*] There! I've done my share! Brother Generous can finish! [*He curls up in a chair with a picture-book.*]

GENEROUS. Oh, the work will soon be done! [*He clears the table. As he comes to his own plate, he finds a bit of bread still there. This he puts into the cupboard carefully and then he takes up the broom to sweep.*]

A knock is heard at the door.

GENEROUS. Oh! Oh! Brothers, won't one of you go, please?

STINGY [*pretending to be asleep*]. Ron! Ron! Ron!
 [*Pretending to snore loudly, and making much noise.*]
 Ron! Ron! Ron!

SELFISH. I'm busy!

A second time the knock comes at the door.

GENEROUS. Oh! Such a cold day! Don't let anybody stand at the door in this stormy winter weather!

SELFISH [*goes to STINGY and shakes him*]. You go!

STINGY. I'm asleep! Go away! [*Snores loudly in make-believe.*]

GENEROUS [*darting forward to the door*]. Well, I'll go! Never mind! [*He opens the door.*]

Enter THE STRANGER, leaning on his staff.

STRANGER [*coming forward, still leaning on his staff*].
 Good luck and good day to you all!

GENEROUS. The same wish to you, sir! It is stormy weather for the New Year to come in on! Come to the

stove and warm yourself! You must be cold. Have you come a long way?

STRANGER. Aye, a long way, and I am already tired.

GENEROUS. Stingy, dear, do let the gentleman have the couch!

STINGY [*snoring very loud*]. Ron! Ron! Ron!

GENEROUS. Oh, he must be asleep. Take this chair. Selfish, won't you let the Stranger have the comfortable chair?

SELFISH *pretends to be absorbed in the picture-book so as not to hear.*

GENEROUS [*seeing that his brother has refused*]. I will put this here by the fire for you! [*He offers THE STRANGER a chair.*] I wish I had something to give you to refresh you! We have no tea!

STRANGER. A glass of cold water, if you have it handy!

GENEROUS [*going to the cupboard*]. We have mugs. You won't mind using a mug, Stranger? [*Pantomime while he looks at the chipped and broken mug and shakes his head, and then goes over to SELFISH, to whom he whispers, while SELFISH shakes his head and says, "No," holding tight the pocket-bag with the good mug in it.*]

GENEROUS [*apparently begging for the mug*]. I'll soon bring you the water, sir! Make yourself quite comfortable by the stove! [*He goes to the couch, but STINGY snores and pays no attention to his whisper, "Do let me take your mug, Brother! I cannot offer company a broken mug!"*]

STINGY. Ron! Ron! Ron! No! It is *mine*. I won't let anybody use it! Ron! Ron! It's *my mug*!

GENEROUS [*returning to the closet*]. I am sorry, I have only a broken mug to offer you, Stranger. It is all I have! [*Gives him the mug.*]

STRANGER [*taking the mug*]. I am very grateful!

GENEROUS. I have no doubt you are hungry, too!

STRANGER. A bit to eat would not go amiss! [*He smiles at GENEROUS.*]

GENEROUS. I wish I had something to give you, but alas! We are poor dwarfs who live in a tumble-down house, Stranger! I have but the part of a crust of bread, but you are welcome to that, if you will? [*Brightly.*] I will put it upon our best plate! [*He offers THE STRANGER the crust.*]

STRANGER. The first that I have eaten this New Year! Ah, but how good it tastes!

GENEROUS. Wouldn't you be more comfortable with your cape drying by the fire? I could hang it for you. [*Taking back the plate and the broken mug.*] Oh, sir, there are gold pieces here. You do not mean them for me! I would not take any reward for so simple a kindness. 'Tis but an everyday thing to help a stranger on the road, if he needs shelter and refreshment! [*Putting the coin beside THE STRANGER'S hand.*]

STRANGER. It is but your own magic returned to you! Is not generosity always a golden thing? Keep the broken mug, for, so long as you use it, it will be full to the brim with wealth and treasure!

GENEROUS [*amazed*]. Oh, sir! I thank you!

STRANGER [*throwing off his cloak and showing himself without beard, young and handsome*]. I will show you what I am. I am the New Year, the happy New Year. I came to you in guise of poverty because I wished to bestow my gifts on those who best deserved them, even as *you* do! [*Taking the basket.*] I have gifts also for your brothers!

STINGY [*jumping from the couch*]. A gift, did you say?

SELFISH. Something for me?

STRANGER. Give me your mugs and I will fill them.

STINGY [*running to cupboard*]. Yes! Yes! You shall have mine in a moment!

SELFISH [*running with his to THE STRANGER*]. Here! Fill mine! Fill it to the brim. Give me more than either of the others have!

STRANGER. Here! And here! [*Returning the mugs to STINGY and SELFISH.*]

STINGY. But there's nothing in mine but *sand!*

SELFISH. And nothing in mine but *pebbles!*

STRANGER [*pointing first at one and then at the other*]. You are stingy and you are selfish, therefore the magic could not work. The New Year gives you what you yourself *are!*

GENEROUS. Alas! Alas! [*Sobbing.*] My brothers!

STINGY. I told you the New Year would bring us nothing happy!

SELFISH. I do not want a mugful of pebbles! [*He stamps his foot.*]

STRANGER. I am sorry!

GENEROUS. My brothers!

STRANGER. If they had been different—

GENEROUS. Alas! Alas! Alas!

STRANGER [*comforting GENEROUS, draws him away*]. You see the trouble is in themselves so I cannot think how to help them.

GENEROUS. Oh, could you not change them by some happy magic?

STRANGER. If they did but show a change of heart!

STINGY and SELFISH [*who have been talking together at the other end of the room, come forward to GENEROUS*]. Brother!

GENEROUS [*turning*]. Yes!

STINGY. I am sorry! I have been a mean brother to you. I will be better this New Year. I will try not to be stingy any more. I will help with the work.

SELFISH. And I too, Brother! I have been selfish. I will be more thoughtful of you and of others!

STRANGER [*who is a good fairy*]. Good! Now I can

make the magic! [*He touches them each with his long staff.*] A Lucky Magic now! [*He smiles at them and at GENEROUS and goes toward the door.*] A Happy, Lucky Magic!

STINGY. Oh, oh!

SELFISH. Oh, Happy, Happy New Luck!

THE STRANGER *puts on his cloak and goes.*

GENEROUS. And now we must be truly happy and share and share alike truly, as brothers should!

The three put their mugs on the table side by side and as they tip them, it is seen that all are full of gold.

STINGY. We will rebuild the tumble-down house and in the New Years we will never turn a deaf ear to need.

SELFISH. And whoever may wish to drink from our mugs, he will be welcome. All that is given is meant to be shared!

STRANGER [*shutting the door*]. Farewell!

ALL. And Happy, Happy New Year! Happy New Year!

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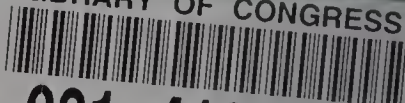
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