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Dramatic Publishing

ONCE UPON A SHOE

(OR)

The Rhymes and Mimes of
Mother Goose
and Her Traveling Troubadors



A Musical for Children
by
JOSEPH ROBINETTE
and
JAMES R. SHAW



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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ONCE UPON A SHOE
(The Musical)

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ONCE UPON A SHOE
(The Musical)

*A One-Act Play
for a Large, Flexible Cast*

C H A R A C T E R S

MOTHER GOOSE an elderly, yet spirited, lady

HER CHILDREN typically aged 8 through 12

*MR. SMITH a middle-aged gentleman, nicely
dressed. A bit stuffy at first, but becoming friendlier.*

TIME: The Present

PLACE: The Front Yard of a Shoe-Shaped House

ONCE UPON A SHOE

MOTHER GOOSE enters from inside a large shoe onto the porch. It is morning and she carries her roll book with her. In her apron are several poems written on colored paper.

MOTHER GOOSE. Ah, another beautiful day. The air is clean, the sky is clear, the sun is bright – not too hot and not too cold, but just right. Now who used to say that all the time? Oh, yes, that little girl with the golden hair – when she would come to play with the children. “Mother Goose,” she would say, “you live in a lovely shoe and your family is wonderful as well – not too big and not too small, but just right.” And you know, Goldilocks was just right. A family of eighteen (*See Production Notes.*) is a perfect size. Now that might seem like a very big number, and it’s true . . .

(SONG: “A FUNDAMENTAL FUN-FILLED FAMILY”)

WE OFTEN SLEEP SIX TO A BED
AND WE NEVER HAVE ENOUGH OF MEAT OR BREAD.
OUR HAND-ME-DOWN CLOTHES ARE BARE TO THE
THREAD –
BUT WHEN EVERYTHING’S ALL BEEN DONE AND
SAID,

WE'VE GOT EACH OTHER – SISTER AND BROTHER
AND ME THEIR MOTHER,
HAPPY AS WE CAN BE
IN OUR FUNDAMENTAL FUN-FILLED FAMILY!

(She opens the roll book and begins to call out the names of one-third of the CHILDREN, who then enter. SOME wave to her from the top windows of the shoe.)

(Spoken.) Chris, Kate, Rick, Kathy, Jennifer, Todd!

COME OUT, EVERYBODY, A GREAT NEW DAY,
A PERFECT MORNING FOR YOU TO PLAY.
SO, LET'S GET STARTED WITHOUT DELAY.
WE'RE POOR, IT'S TRUE, BUT WE'RE NOT BLUE
THERE'S LOTS TO DO TODAY!

WE'VE GOT EACH OTHER – SISTER AND BROTHER –

CHILDREN.
AND OUR DEAR MOTHER,
(ALL point to MOTHER GOOSE.)

HAPPY AS WE CAN BE
IN OUR FUN AND GENTLE, FUNDAMENTAL FUN-
FILLED FAMILY!

MOTHER GOOSE (opening the roll book and reading the names of the next one-third of the CHILDREN, who then enter). Christina, Scott Lee, Hope, Teddie, Anita!

CHILDREN.
WE NEVER FIGHT MUCH – WE ALL GET ALONG.

SCOTT LEE.
JUST FEEL THAT MUSCLE, I'M VERY STRONG.

TEDDIE.

BUT I'M MUCH STRONGER, YOU DUMB DING-DONG!
(He and SCOTT LEE start to fight. MOTHER GOOSE steps between them.)

MOTHER GOOSE.

NOW, CHILDREN, STOP. JUST LET IT DROP.
IT'S VERY LIKELY YOU BOTH ARE WRONG.
(SCOTT LEE and TEDDIE shake hands and walk together to sit with the other CHILDREN.)

ALL.

WE'VE GOT EACH OTHER – SISTER AND BROTHER
AND OUR DEAR MOTHER,
HAPPY AS WE CAN BE
IN OUR SENTIMENTAL, FUN AND GENTLE,
FUNDAMENTAL, FUN-FILLED FAMILY!

MOTHER GOOSE (calling in the remaining CHILDREN). Sue,
Dominic, Theresa, Ross, Patti, Mike!

(The rest of the CHILDREN enter.)

CHILDREN.

WE'RE ALWAYS SHARING MOST EVERYTHING,

THERESA (pointing to PATTI).

EXCEPT FOR THAT MORNING WHEN SHE HAD THE
SWING
AND WOULDN'T GET OFF 'TIL EVENING.
(She and PATTI begin to argue.)

MOTHER GOOSE.

NOW, PLEASE DON'T FRET. LET'S JUST FORGET
AND STOP THIS ARGUING!

ALL.

WE'VE GOT EACH OTHER – SISTER AND BROTHER
AND OUR DEAR MOTHER,
HAPPY AS WE CAN BE
IN OUR MONUMENTAL, SENTIMENTAL, FUN AND
GENTLE, FUNDAMENTAL
FUN-FILLED FAMILY!

MOTHER GOOSE. Good morning, children.

CHILDREN. Good morning, Mother Goose.

JENNIFER (getting four pieces of mail from the mail box).

Here's the mail, Mother Goose.

MOTHER GOOSE. Thank you, Jennifer. Let's see what we have today. A note from Little Bo Peep. She wants to know if we can take care of her sheep while she's on vacation. (ALL agree that they can.) Our cousin Little Red Riding Hood wants to come for a visit. (ALL are enthusiastic.) I'll send her a road map this time. And here's a card from Old Mother Hubbard. There's nothing on it. It seems to be bare. Well, she is a little forgetful these days. And what's this? Oh, no.

TODD. What is it, Mother Goose?

MOTHER GOOSE. The people who rent the shoe to us are going to turn it into a condominium.

KATE. A condo – what?

MOTHER GOOSE. Minium. They're going to make our shoe into apartments and then sell them.

ANITA. Well, why don't we buy the shoe ourselves?

MOTHER GOOSE. We simply don't have enough money. I'm afraid we're going to have to move to a cheaper home – an old sneaker across the tracks. (The CHILDREN react negatively.)

DOMINIC. Mother Goose, maybe we could earn some money to keep the shoe.

CHRISTINA. We could mow lawns.

THERESA. The lawn mower is broken.

KATHY. We could rake leaves.

RICK. You rake leaves in the fall, silly. This is spring (or winter or summer).

PATTI. Let's sell lemonade.

MOTHER GOOSE (gently). Do you know how much lemonade we'd have to sell to buy this old shoe?

ROSS. Ten glasses?

MOTHER GOOSE. Ten **thousand** glasses.

TEDDIE. I've got it. Let's have a yard sale.

ALL (ad libbing). Good idea! Let's try it! Why not!

HOPE. I'll sell my toy boat and my train and — no, I want to keep them.

CHRIS. I'll sell my bicycle and . . . but I like my bicycle.

CHRISTINA. I could sell my puzzles. But I don't want to sell my puzzles.

SCOTT LEE. I don't think the yard sale is such a good idea.

SUE. Me, either.

TODD. Nobody wants to sell anything. (ALL rack their brains for an idea.)

RICK. I've got it! Let's put on a show.

ANITA. What kind of a show?

KATE. A comedy. (She puts on a false nose and glasses.) "Make 'em laugh. Make 'em laugh. Say the secret word!"

PATTI. A mystery. (She hums mystery music and mimes playing a detective looking through a magnifying glass.)

HOPE. A tragedy! (She steps forward.) Romeo . . . Romeo . . . Where you at, Romeo? (She does a death scene as ALL crowd in to look at her. She jumps and scares them.)

SCOTT LEE. A melodrama! I'll be the villain. (He uses a bow tie on a stick for a mustache as he talks to SUE.) The rent, the rent, you must pay the rent, the rent, the rent.

SUE (using the bow tie as a bow in her hair). But I can't pay the rent, the rent, the rent.

SCOTT LEE (taking the bow tie back). But you must pay the rent, the rent, the rent.