

Noodle Rat Rotten Hat

(Little Red Riding Hood)

*Book, Music and Lyrics
by Gary LaVigne*

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DEDICATION

*To my own Miki and Dominique
&
All of my theatre kids*

STORY OF PLAY

Enter the enchanted forest where Little Red Riding Hood is gathering flowers before going to Grandmother's. Jack-o, a scared crow, tries to get the kids in the audience to warn Red that a wolf is stalking her, but Red's not afraid. Any wolf who calls her Noodle Rat Rotten Hat because of a speech problem – why, he's nothing but a big, sweet doggie! Soon Little Red meets others, including a demanding Goldilocks; brave Hansel and Gretel; and bevy of bears on holiday. But they've all gotten lost and a mean witch is threatening them. Can they outsmart the witch and can Wolf help them? Some songs include the "Holiday for Spaghetti Birds (Teddy Bears)"; Red's "Give Me a Hand, Give Me a Paw"; Goldilock's "Spoiled Rotten," and "Hamster and Gecko's (Hansel and Gretel's) Surprise." Songs by three Woodsprites throughout the show add to the fun.

Performance time about an hour.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

The show was originally performed as a summer musical by the Naples Players Children's Academy in Naples, Florida.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2-4 m, 5-7 w, numerous extras as desired)

- JACK-O:** The scared crow, our guide throughout the story. May be played as a puppet or a real child. He's a wise-cracker who has flown around and seen a lot.
- RUSTIC:** Woodsprite. Can be male or female. A spirit of the woods. Devilish and quick, and loves to make sport of visitors. Means no harm, only fun.
- SYLVAN:** Another Woodsprite. Can be male or female.
- TWIG:** Another Woodsprite. Can be male or female.
- LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD:** Clever, confident, and unafraid. She makes friends easily, is a sharp thinker, and at home in the forest.
- THE WOLF:** Very mixed-up guy. He opens as a typical, "big, bad wolf," but has a major change of heart. Since he never went to school, he has a habit of choosing words that only sound like the right ones.
- BEARS:** Are carefree, fun-loving, and unique. There may be as many bears as there is room and actors to play them, with each one aptly named for its predominant characteristic or child-actor's special talent: Ballerina Bear, Bouncy Bear, Buffy Bear, Booky Bear, Giggly Bear, etc.
- BIG SISTER BEAR:** Watches over her charges, but is not all grown-up herself.
- BINKY BEAR:** The baby with a pacifier on a ribbon which she spits out before every speech.
- GOLDILOCKS:** Prima donna. She is spoiled, rude and self-centered, but only because she has not been taught good manners. In the course of the play becomes a good sport.
- HANSEL:** Courageous, protective big brother. He is generous, brave and kind.
- GRETEL:** Imaginative girl who loves to tell tales. In spite of her asthmatic condition, she would still rather be the teller than the listener of any exciting story.
- THE WITCH:** Mean and evil, especially to children, who are her favorite diet. She is very suspicious.
- CHILD WITCH:** (optional)

The Place: In a deep forest.

The Time: A long time ago.

Synopsis of Songs

“The Overture” *Music only*

“Woodsprites #1: Welcome” *Woodsprites*

“The Stalking Wolf #1, #2 and #3” *Jack-o*

“The Stalking Wolf #4” *Jack-o*

“Diddle Oy?” *Wolf and Jack-o*

“Holiday for Spaghetti Birds” *Bears*

“Don’t Be Shy” *Red Riding Hood*

“Return of the Spaghetti Birds”

Red Riding Hood and Bears

“Give Me a Hand, Give Me a Paw”

Red Riding Hood and Bears

“Woodsprites #2: Wait” *Woodsprites*

“Goldilocks #1: Somebody Special” *Goldilocks*

“Goldilocks #2: Spoiled Rotten” *Goldilocks*

“Goldilocks #3: Duh? Hello??” *Goldilocks*

“Woodsprites #3: Watch!” *Woodsprites*

“Give Me a Hand Again!”

Red Riding Hood, Bears, and Goldilocks

“Hamster and Gecko’s Surprise” *Hansel and Gretel*

“Woodsprites #4: Warning!” *Woodsprites*

“Give Me a Hand, One More Time”

All except Woodsprites and Witch

“Squeeze a Spoon and See Ya Soon”

All except Woodsprites and Witch

“Oh, What Fun!” *Finale and curtain call*

CD: *A complete CD with rehearsal (singing) and performance (music and SFX) tracks is available. Please contact the publisher to order with your cast scripts.*

SCENERY IDEAS

Main stage is a forest of trees with one large tree mid-stage. This tree is backed by a black 6-foot stepladder. The trees may be constructed of rolled chicken wire covered with muslin soaked in brown paint and glue. Other alternatives might be painted 12-foot flats, or plywood cutouts, or long narrow pieces of brown cloth stapled to a half round plywood base. Leaves may be hung from teasers. On the UPS wall, there could be more trees painted in perspective.

Downstage scenes play in front of a curtain, or a painted drop or traveler, or a group of portable flats which are painted in a forest motif.

Jack-o perches on a stepladder behind a tree, bush, or any elevated spot DL or DR. Stump may be constructed of a wood frame and chicken wire like the trees or an actual stump. It should be sturdy.

PROPS

Basket with handle and wafer cookies covered with napkin

Flowers stuck in moss at base of trees

Basket with handle and 2 bright tablecloths

Teddy bear and pacifier

3 real or fake branches with leaves

Broom (old and shabby, may be homemade)

Small waist pouch to hold gingerbread and "gold" pieces

Watering can

Two signs

COSTUMES

JACK-O: A baseball cap with extended brim for a yellow bill and a black pants and shirt, with feathered wings for arms. Bulging eyes may be stuck to the cap, if desired.

THE WOODSPRITES: Since they are part of the woods, they have leaves decorating their long-sleeved T-shirts and tights, dyed green. Perhaps a wreath of leaves in their hair, and a leaf or two painted on their faces would be fun. They may also hold comedy-tragedy masks in their hands.

RED RIDING HOOD: A homespun, old fashioned look with cotton dress, apron, red cape with hood (*lying flat most of the time*), stockings and short English riding boots. Her colors may be red, plaid and cream.

THE WOLF: He may wear a complete wolf or dog costume (*which is quite warm*) or bib overalls, long-sleeved shirt, and boots and gloves covered with fake fur. A cap of fake fur, and a plastic canine nose will top it off. After ears, the rest is makeup, leaving expressive eyes and mouth.

BEARS: Simple ski caps with cowls made of various colored fake fur, and 2 colored ears sewn in. (*Pattern available at fabric stores.*) Regular jeans and long-sleeved shirts, little felt vests and fur mitts and booties (*optional*) or sneakers. Ballerina Bear would have tights and tutu, Binky Bear a bib, Bouncy Bear gym clothes. Big Sister Bear would wear similar bear clothes with an apron added.

GOLDILOCKS: She is a city girl with perhaps a pink dress with puff sleeves, white lacy apron, white panty hose and black shiny shoes. She could have a pink ribbon in her long, curly, blond wig.

HANSEL: In the Bavarian style of white shirt with appliqué, gray short pants with suspenders, knee socks, shoes, topped off by an Alpine hat with feather ... or not.

GRETEL: In a colorful dress with crisscross piping in front, puffy sleeves, apron, knee socks and short boots. Braided hair or wig with ribbons.

THE WITCH: Typical traditional black dress and cape, with ugly black wig and tall, pointy hat. Maybe a long, crooked fake nose as well.

Scene 1

MUSIC: THE OVERTURE

(AT RISE: JACK-O appears in a tree DL and flaps his wings for attention.)

JACK-O: Caw, caw, cawling all kids, cawling all kids! Big and small, one and all! Hi ya, hi ya, everybody! (*Waits for response.*) Say, did you come to see a real, live show? Me, too! I'm Jack-o, the scared crow. Well, that's what everybody calls me. "The scared crow." Wanna know why? Because I'm caw-tious. Well, wouldn't you be? What if you were flying around a cornfield thinkin', lunchtime ... corn on the cob time! So you swoop down and ... uh oh! What do ya see? You see a big, ugly guy with his arms stretched, straw pokin' out all over ... and a dirty ol' hat coverin' his mean ol' face! What do you do? Land on his head and talk about the weather? No! You fly away and yell, "Caw, Caw," to warn your friends! Boy, that's scary! From that day on, I stay away from corn! Even popcorn makes me nervous!

So they call me a "scared crow." That's okay. It's better than bein' an ex-crow, like ex-tinct! And ... I'm really caw-tious when it comes to witches and wolves. If I see one, I'll let you know! Okay? And will you let me know too? (*Audience response.*) Now, are you ready for the play? Then, hey, let's go. Open the curtain and start the show!! (*Nothing happens.*) You see? Nobody pays attention to a scared crow! Would you help me out? Maybe if we call out together, we'd get some action. When I count to 3, we'll all shout, "Let's go! Open the curtain and start the show." Ready, 1,2,3: "Let's go! Open the curtain and start the show!" (*If loud enough, the CURTAIN opens and HE yells.*) We did it! We did it!! (*Otherwise.*) You call that together? One more time! 1,2,3: "Let's go! Open the curtain and start the show!" WE DID IT!!

(The CURTAIN opens revealing a forest of tall trees. Three WOODSPRITES poke their heads out, each after its chord.)

End of Freeview

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