

Just So Stories

Based on the book by Rudyard Kipling

Adaptation and lyrics by R. Rex Stephenson

Music and additional lyrics by Emily Rose Tucker

Performance Rights

It is an infringement of the federal copyright law to copy this script in any way or to perform this play without royalty payment. All rights are controlled by Eldridge Publishing Co. Inc. Call the publisher for additional scripts and further licensing information. The author's name must appear on all programs and advertising with the notice: "Produced by special arrangements with Eldridge Publishing Co."

ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY

www.histage.com

© 2007 by R. Rex Stephenson and Emily Rose Tucker

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing
<http://www.histage.com/playdetails.asp?PID=1362>

Just So Stories

- 2 -

This musical was originally produced June 28-July 1, 2005 by the Blue Ridge Dinner Theatre in Ferrum, Virginia. The original cast included:

Director: R. Rex Stephenson
Music Director: Emily Rose Tucker
Choreographer: R. Carter Cox
Performance Pianist: Fair Robey
Rudyard Kipling: Joe Ray
Caroline Kipling: Jody D. Brown
Josephine Kipling: Chandra Diesel
Elsie Kipling: Emily Rose Tucker
Camel, Elephant, Child, Goldfish: Maria Alegre
Horse, Crocodile, Strange Man, Narrator: Michael Antico
Djinn, Narrator, Mother: Catherine Baggs
Camel, Zebra, Whale, Head Chief, Horse: Giuseppe DiMeo
Dog, Snake, Neolithic Lady: Kara Dunne
Camel, Snake, Whate, T. Bopsulai, Man: Dustin Johnson
Ox, Elephant Mother, T. Tewindrow: Nicole Sanderson
First Assistant to the Vice-Chief's Deputy: Blake Allen
Mouse: Kane Allen
Baboon: Taylor Allen
Man, Giraffe, Vice-Chief: Zach Allen
Chorus: Abigail Ardis, Kelly Bennett
Deputy Vice-Chief: Dakotah Kelly
Neolithic Lady: Amelia Pagans
Chorus: McKenzie Prillaman, Casey Robertson
Snake, Neolithic Lady: Brittany Stone
Chorus: Arthur Stump, Blaire Stump, Cheryl Stump
Emma, Narrator: Ruth Trochim
Giraffe: Drew Turner
Baboon, Neolithic Lady: Kasey Winnemuth
Snake: Kaitlin Wray

Production crew included:

Rehearsal Pianist, Austin Robey; Lights, Juliet Stephenson;
Costumes, Martha Stephenson, Faye Prillaman, BRDT Company;
Scenic Artist, Kara Dunne; Box Office, Abigail Ardis, Melisa Allen;
Usher Coordinator, Ruth Jones.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Kipling's dramatic and entertaining stories about how the Camel got its hump, how the Elephant got his nose, how the Whale got his spout, and other richly woven tales come to life in this engaging musical. Mr. and Mrs. Kipling and their two bubbly yet unpretentious daughters serve as narrators. The story weaves from animal tales to a human one, how Man—or in this case an enterprising young girl!—wrote the first letter. Especially engaging is the two-person whale which is a great theatrical device. The show opens with the song, "When the World Was Brand New," and features other humorous and rhythmic tunes as "The Whale With a Whale of an Appetite," "An Elongated Nose that Looks Like a Hose," and "Firstest Friends." Easy to produce, this whimsical musical is sure to charm everyone.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The simpler the setting, the better. A large drop with "Just So Stories" painted on it and original student artwork inspired from animals in the play will suffice for scenery. Several platforms scattered about would add variety and also make it easier for a director in staging a large cast.

The water the Great Djinn creates in the desert is simply a long roll of blue material brought in by several actors and stretched across the stage. The Great Djinn's magic carpet could well be flown down from a flyspace, however, four actors can carry the Djinn on a carpet stapled to a piece of $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch plywood.

The "deer skin" in "How The First Letter Was Written," requires a bit of preparation by the actress portraying Taffy. Naturally, it has to be pre-painted, however, if the actress carefully unfolds the deer skin one section at a time, and she is drawing with her back to the audience, and the Strange Man is in a similar position, the audience will never see the full picture until it is hung on the trees.

SCENES AND CHARACTERS

Act I

The Kipling Family*

Rudyard Kipling (storyteller)

Caroline Kipling (wife)

Josephine (eldest daughter)

Elsie (younger daughter)

How The Camel Got His Hump

Camel

Horse

Dog

Ox

Man

Djinn

How The Elephant Got His Trunk

Betty (a narrator)

Emma (a narrator)

Elephant Child

Giraffe

Baboon 1

Baboon 2

Mother Elephant

Zebra

Snake

Crocodile

How The Whale Got His Spout

Whale (2 actors)

Goldfish

Act II

How The First Letter Was Written

Accompanist (non-speaking)

Tegumai

Teshumai

Taffy

Trees (1-3 actors)

Strange Man

Neolithic Ladies (1, 2, 3 & 4)

Head Chief

Vice Chief

Deputy Vice Chief

Assistant Deputy Vice Chief

Warriors and Extras

Reporter

How the Cat Became Friendly But Not Family

Michael (a narrator)

Wild Man

Woman

Horse

Dog

Cat (Josephine)

Cow

Baby (Elsie)

Mouse

Also:

Extras as desired.

Sailor (female)

This musical can be done with as few as 14 people by eliminating one Baboon and the three Assistant Chiefs. With the exception of Kipling, Man and Tegumai, the rest of the cast can be women.

**As narrators, Kipling family members weave in and out of all the scenes.*

SYNOPSIS OF SONGS

ACT I

Overture

“When the World Was Brand New” ... Chorus

“What Shall We Do?” ... Ox, Dog, Horse

“The Camel’s Hump” ... Chorus

“An Elongated Nose That Looks Like a Hose” ...

Elephant Child and Mother, Snake, Zebra, Crocodile

“The Whale With a Whale of an Appetite” ...

Whale 1 and 2, Fish

“The Whale With a Whale of an Appetite” – Reprise ...

Whale 1 & 2, Fish

“Honest Serving Men” ... Chorus

ACT II

“Honest Serving Men” – Reprise ... Chorus

“I Fish With My Dad” ... Taffy, Tegumai Bopsulai

“War Now” ... Men

“Muh-un-wa-kee Exit” ... All

“I Sing a Song of Welcome” Part 1 ... Woman, Chorus

“I Sing a Song of Welcome” Part 2 ... Woman, Chorus

“Cat Lullaby” ... Cat, Chorus, Baby

“Firstest Friends” ... Cat and Family

“The Whale With a Whale of an Appetite” ... Curtain Call

PERCUSSION SOUND EFFECTS

Sound effects used in the original production, and called for by the script include: tambourine, slapstick, wood block, cowbell, kazoos (3), slide whistle, ratchet and vibraslap. The original production also used hand drums, a cabasa, and maracas. Other small percussion instruments may be used to create sound effects as well, and to accompany the chanting of the “War Dance.”

COSTUMES

Costumes would be best as representational, so that the Dog might have ears, a Horse a mane, a Cat a tail. In the original production three people were used to create the Camel and two people to create the Giraffe. The Snake can be made with between two and six actors, depending upon the cast available and the size of the stage.

For the Whale, shape a piece of wood to resemble the front view of a whale, then cut it in half. Cut two large holes for the eyes, and two actors approximately the same height can put their faces through the holes. Handles placed on the back side allow the actors to easily move the whale forward and back. When the Whale swallows Little Fish, it just separates, and when the Woman escapes, the Whale again separates.

The Crocodile actor wears a glove that resembles a crocodile's mouth. For the Elephant's trunk use a dryer hose and cover it with grey sweatshirt material. It is attached to a headband and a string that ties around the actress' head. When the Zebra arrives with loud sound effects and your whole audience is looking stage right, Mrs. Kipling can surreptitiously untie the nose. There are probably many other ways to accomplish this, but this is probably the simplest and least time consuming. Overall, it is not necessary to hide these accoutrements.

As far as costuming the company, Kipling can wear a period suit from the early 1900s. For the rest of the company, costumes can consist of khaki shorts or pants with brightly colored tee-shirts; however, they could just as well wear leotards, sweatsuits, or about any combination of clothing, except blue-jeans or bib-overalls.

End of Freeview

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing
<http://www.histage.com/playdetails.asp?PID=1362>

Eldridge Publishing, a leading drama play publisher since 1906, offers more than a thousand full-length plays, one-act plays, melodramas, holiday plays, religious plays, children's theatre plays and musicals of all kinds.

For more than a hundred years, our family-owned business has had the privilege of publishing some of the finest playwrights, allowing their work to come alive on stages worldwide.

We look forward to being a part of your next theatrical production.

Eldridge Publishing... for the start of your theatre experience!