

PERUSAL SCRIPT

Nursery Rhyme Café

A Play

Script and Lyrics by
E. Gray Simons III
with Music by
C. Michael Perry

From the series: *TALES FROM THE FRACTURED SIDE*

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NURSERY RHYME CAFE

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CHARACTERS (28) can be doubled to eight performers

Mother Goose	ACTOR ONE — Mother Goose
Molly	ACTOR TWO — Molly, Tricky, Nod, Mouse 1
Polly	ACTOR THREE — Polly, Quickie, Winken, Mouse 2
Dolly	ACTOR FOUR — Dolly, Sticky, Blinken, Mouse 3
<i>Mary-Mary</i>	ACTOR FIVE — Jack B. Nimble
Jack B. Nimble	ACTOR SIX —
<i>Taffy</i>	ACTOR SEVEN —
<i>Miss Muffet</i>	ACTOR EIGHT —
<i>Mrs. Piper</i>	
<i>Tom, The Piper's Son</i>	
<i>Simple Simon</i>	
<i>Humpty Dumpty</i>	
<i>Patty Cake</i>	
Tricky Dickie Bird	
Quickie Dickie Bird	
Sticky Dickie Bird	
<i>Man-In-The-Moon</i>	
Winken	
Blinken	
Nod	
<i>Diamond Sky</i>	
Blind Mouse 1	
Blind Mouse 2	
Blind Mouse 3	
<i>Old King Cole</i>	
<i>Crooked Mouse</i>	
<i>Crooked Cat</i>	
<i>Crooked Man</i>	

SONG LIST

- #1 — Nursery Rhyme Café (2:03) — MOTHER GOOSE, MOLLY, POLLY, DOLLY
- #2 — Humpty Dumpty (1:02) — MOTHER GOOSE, MOLLY, POLLY, DOLLY
- #3 — Winken, Blinken, and Nod (1:03) — MOTHER GOOSE, MAN-IN-THE-MOON, WINKEN, BLINKEN & NOD
- #4 — Twinkle Underscore (:40) — DIAMOND SKY & MUSICIANS
- #5 — And A Pear (:32) — MOTHER GOOSE
- #6 — Three Blind Mice (1:34) — MOTHER GOOSE
- #7 — Old King Cole (1:03) — MOTHER GOOSE, BACK-UP SINGERS
- #8 — Crooked Man (:27) — MOTHER GOOSE
- #9 — Nursery Rhyme Café (:37) — MOTHER GOOSE & ALL

SYNOPSIS

NURSERY RHYME CAFE *Script and Lyrics by E. Gray Simons III Music by C. Michael Perry. TYA*
About an hour. 28 characters can be played by a cast of 8 performers, if doubled. Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep, Little Miss Muffet has been badly frightened by a spider and Georgie Porgy has been making girls cry all over town. But when Jack B. Nimble and his associate Simple Simon bump into Humpty Dumpty in the Nursery Rhyme Café, the day only becomes more extraordinary. Humpty hasn't been the same since he had his great fall. In fact, he claims that all the king's horses and all the king's men never even tried to put him back together again. Is Humpty just a cracked egg or is Old King Cole not really a merry old soul? It's just the beginning of a mystery that unfolds as you enter the Nursery Rhyme Café. Part of the TALES FROM THE FRACTURED SIDE Series. **Order #3181**

AUTHOR BIO

Playwright **E. Gray Simons III** has worked for fourteen years as an Artist-in-Residence at BTF. In 2000, he became Artistic Director of BTF PLAYS! and has since written and directed more than a dozen original plays, among them *Aesop's Network*, *Nursery Rhyme Café*, *Mystery Sideshow 2: Strange Waves*, and *Mystery Sideshow 3: Way Out West*.

Simons made his BTF directorial debut in 2000 with *The Wind in the Willows* and in 2001 he became director of the *Summer Performance Stories*, *The Odyssey*, *The Magic Flute*, *Arabian Nights*, and *Monkey*. Other directorial credits include *The Wizard of Oz*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Oliver!* and *Peter Pan*(2009) on BTF's Main Stage, *Where Has Tommy Flowers Gone?* and *Holiday Memories* in the Unicorn Theatre, *Robin Hood* at the Berkshire Museum, *The Who's Tommy* at Brandeis University with co-director Eric Hill, and *Big Love* at Brandeis University. His BTF acting credits include *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Peter Pan*, *Moby Dick-Rehearsed*, and *Wilder, Wilder*.

Berkshire Theatre Festival's year-round education program, BTF PLAYS! serves area students from kindergarten through high school. At the heart of BTF PLAYS! is a passionate commitment to bring live theatre and all its inherent excitement and creativity to children in our region. Each year, more than 10,000 students in underserved rural and inner city schools throughout Berkshire County are reached through in-school residency programs, vacation camps, and our touring production. Over the course of the summer, BTF PLAYS! hosts vacation camps for students from grades K-6, providing opportunities to learn about acting, improvisation, storytelling, and working behind the scenes in the theatre.

TALES FROM THE FRACTURED SIDE is a series of plays by E. Gray Simons III that premiered at the Berkshire Theatre Festival (BTF) TYA Summer Touring program. This series contains: *Alice In Wonderland*, *Arabian Nights*, *Cinderella*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *Hansel and Gretel's Grimm Tale*, *Just So Stories*, *The Magic Flute*, *Monkey*, *Nursery Rhyme Café*, *Pinocchio*, *Robin Hood*, *The Wind in the Willows*.

Nursery Rhyme Café

PROLOGUE

SETTING: THE NURSERY RHYME CAFÉ - Jazz music plays and the curtains open to reveal Mother Goose is seated on a candlestick. She is dressed in a satiny white dress and she is wearing a white feather boa. Three waitresses – Molly, Polly and Dolly – enter. They move about the stage setting up the Café.

MUSICAL #1 — NURSERY RHYME CAFE

MOTHER GOOSE:

RIDDLE ME ONE, RIDDLE ME TWO
WHAT IS THIS PLACE THAT YOU HAVE WANDERED INTO?
RIDDLE ME NIGHT, RIDDLE ME DAY
THE SIGN ON THE DOOR SAYS NURSERY RHYME CAFÉ.

RIDDLE ME RIGHT, RIDDLE ME WRONG
LISTEN UP NOW. I'LL BEGIN WITH ONE SONG.
RIDDLE IN BLACK, RIDDLE IN WHITE...

MOLLY:

I HOPE IT'S NOT LONG. WE SURE CAN'T STAY ALL NIGHT.

MOTHER GOOSE: *(Spoken)* Molly, just sit and be still. Don't shout or jump up.

POLLY: Mother Goose, are you thirsty? Can I pour you a cup?

MOTHER GOOSE:

Put the kettle on, Polly.
And make sure it's hot.

POLLY: You want cream and sugar?

MOTHER GOOSE:

I most certainly do not!
Quite the contrary, Mary-Mary
I like mine black.

SIMPLE, LIKE SIMON
AND NIMBLE, LIKE JACK.

(Polly pours Mother Goose a cup of coffee. Mother Goose takes the cup and sips. She nods her

approval at Polly and then she sits.)

WHAT I HAVE TO SING IS NOT REALLY A SONG,
IT'S MORE LIKE A STORY, SO DOLLY...

DOLLY: *(Who has been humming.)* What?

MOTHER GOOSE:

DON'T SING ALONG.

IT'S ABOUT A PRIVATE EYE, CALLED JACK, AND HIS PARTNERS, THREE
SIMPLE SIMON, MARY MARY, AND THEIR SNAP SHOT ARTIST, TAFFY
IT'S NOT JUST A STORY; IT'S A BEGUILING MYSTERY
AND IT STARTS JUST DOWN THE STREET
AT THE B. NIMBLE DETECTIVE AGENCY...

SCENE ONE

SETTING: THE B. NIMBLE DETECTIVE AGENCY, MORNING, The set changes to the busy office of the B. Nimble Detective Agency. Peter Piper's wife and son, Tom enter. Little Miss Muffet enters. Mary-Mary, the secretary, Taffy, the photographer are present. The phone rings.

MARY-MARY: *(Answers the phone.)* Good morning, B. Nimble Detective Agency. How can I help you? I'm sorry he's not available at the moment, but I'd be more than happy to take your information... On the contrary, Miss, anything you tell me is quite confidential... I'm Detective Nimble's private secretary, Mary Mary... Yes, go ahead... Um hm...

(Jack enters and she points to the phone.)

Jack, it's another crier. It's the fourth one this morning. "You know who" strikes again.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Georgie Porgie. Who did he kiss?

MARY-MARY: Pudding and Pie...

JACK B. NIMBLE: Both of them?

MARY MARY: Kissed both girls and made them cry.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Add them to the list and we'll bring all of the girls in together. I just hope we can get one of them to press charges this time.

MARY-MARY: Good luck. Oh! And Mrs. Peter Piper and her son, Tom, are waiting in your office.

(Back to the phone)

Uh-huh, Yes, I understand, Miss. As soon as the boys came out to play Georgie Porgie ran away. Happens every time...

NURSERY RHYME CAFE by E Gray Simons III

(Taffy enters with a collection of photographs.)

JACK B. NIMBLE: Hey Taffy, can you show Little Miss Muffet those pictures you took?

TAFFY: No problem, J.B.

(Sits down with Miss Muffet who seems very jumpy)

Miss Muffet. Thank you for coming in. I'd like to show you some pictures and I want you to tell me if any of these spiders look like one that sat down beside you.

MISS MUFFET: *(Timidly)* Okay.

(Taffy shows her a succession of photos.)

TAFFY: Was it this one?

MISS MUFFET: *(Gasp!)* No.

TAFFY: Alrighty, what about this one?

MISS MUFFET: *(Gasp!)* No.

TAFFY: No? How about this big old hairy guy?

MISS MUFFET: *(Gasp!)* No.

JACK B. NIMBLE: *(Sits down across from Mrs. Peter Piper)* All right, Mrs. Piper, I know your husband is in jail for a crime that he says he didn't commit. So let's start from the beginning. According to testimony, while in the employment of the Farmer in the Dell, your husband Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers?

MRS. PIPER: Yes, that's right. A peck of pickled peppers, Peter Piper picked.

JACK B. NIMBLE: So, presuming Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers...

MRS. PIPER: Yes.

JACK B. NIMBLE: We need to ask ourselves... Where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

MRS. PIPER: *(Starts to cry)* I don't know, Detective Nimble. I told you, he puts me in a pumpkin shell.

JACK B. NIMBLE: And there he keeps you?

(Mrs. Piper nods through tears.)

Very well.

(He hands her a handkerchief.)

There, there, Mrs. Piper.

MRS. PIPER: Thank you, Detective Nimble. I'm just so upset. I don't know what happened and my husband can't recall a single event of the night the peppers disappeared and now he's been incarcerated and we can't prove him innocent. And I have my son, Tom, to look after. He really misses his father.

TOM: Mom.

MRS. PIPER: Hush!

(To Detective Nimble.)

NURSERY RHYME CAFE by *E Gray Simons III*

You know he's getting to the age when boys start to find trouble...

JACK B. NIMBLE: Yes, I understand you were recently caught stealing a pig, Tom.

TOM: I was just borrowing the pig.

SIMPLE SIMON: *(Enters)* Jack!

(Noticing Mrs. Piper)

Oh, pardon me.

JACK B. NIMBLE: It's okay, Mrs. Peter Piper, I'd like you to meet my associate, Simple Simon.

SIMPLE SIMON: Mrs. Piper... haven't we met before?

MRS. PIPER: Yes, you brought Tom home after his recent bit of trouble with the law.

SIMPLE SIMON: That's right. How are you Tom?

MRS. PIPER: He's all right... Thank you for asking, Detective Simon.

SIMPLE SIMON: Of course, and please, call me Simple.

MRS. PIPER: That's easy.

SIMPLE SIMON: No trouble at all.

MRS. PIPER: Detective Nimble, thank you for looking into my husband's case.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Yes, Mrs. Piper, I'll inform you right away if there are any further developments.

MRS. PIPER: Good day, gentlemen.

(She exits.)

JACK B. NIMBLE: So, where have you been?

SIMPLE SIMON: I was down at the Nursery Rhyme Café.

JACK B. NIMBLE: What's up?

SIMPLE SIMON: Humpty Dumpty is off the wall again.

JACK B. NIMBLE: He didn't fall, did he?

SIMPLE SIMON: No, this time he just wandered into the Café, and started shouting some crazy gabble about how he was pushed off the wall.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Wasn't that ruled accidental?

SIMPLE SIMON: I thought so.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Did he say anything else?

SIMPLE SIMON: Well, then he went on about how, "all the kings' horses and all the kings' men never even try to put him back together again."

JACK B. NIMBLE: All the kings' horses?

SIMPLE SIMON: I know, who's the king and why would his horses help? That egg is cracked.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Seems like it. Did Little Boy Blue show up?

SIMPLE SIMON: Apparently he and the entire police force are busy.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Yeah, someone's always calling... "Little Boy Blue, come blow your horn! There are kids in my yard! They just stole my corn!" Or who knows what.

SIMPLE SIMON: Blue and his boys could be out looking for sheep.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Or they're over by the donut shop, fast asleep.

(Puts on his coat.)

It's just as well, there not usually much help in these situations. I'm going down to the Café.

SIMPLE SIMON: Want me to come with?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Yeah come on, we can talk about the Peter Piper case. It's really got me puzzled.

(They start to exit and the phone rings.)

MARY MARY: *(Answers phone.)* Good morning, B. Nimble Detective Agency... Hold on I'll tell him.

(To Jack.)

Jack, it's Little Bo Peep. She's lost her sheep and doesn't know where to find them.

JACK B. NIMBLE: I guess that means Little Boy Blue is somewhere enjoying fine pastry. Just tell her to leave them alone and they'll come home, wagging their tails behind them.

(They exit.)

SCENE 2

SETTING: THE NUSERY RHYME CAFÉ, A SHORT TIME LATER. — The scene shifts back to the Nursery Rhyme Café. Mother Goose enters. Followed closely by Molly, Polly and Dolly.

MUSICAL #2 — HUMPTY DUMPTY

MOTHER GOOSE:

HUMPTY DUMPTY SAT ON A WALL

HUMPTY DUMPTY HAD A GREAT FALL.

POLLY, MOLLY and DOLLY: *(in a whisper.)*

ALL THE KING'S HORSES AND ALL THE KING'S MEN

COULDN'T PUT HUMPTY TOGETHER AGAIN.

(A "cracked" Humpty Dumpty enters followed by Jack and Simple. Everyone watches Humpty in amazement as he does a psycho-ballet reenactment of his great fall.)

HUMPTY DUMPTY:

THERE WAS WELL-DRESSED EGG UPON A WELL-APPOINTED WALL

AND HE WAS IN LOVE WITH A BEAUTIFUL STAR.
THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THE MAN IN THE MOON!
TWINKLE, TWINKLE. THERE YOU ARE!

(MUSIC continues as Humpty dances with an imaginary partner.)

SIMPLE SIMON: What'd I tell you?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Yeah, I see what you mean. Can you write down what he just said?

SIMPLE SIMON: Sure, Jack.

(Simple takes out a small notebook and a pencil and writes.)

JACK B. NIMBLE: Morning, ladies.

POLLY, MOLLY and DOLLY: Hi, Jack.

POLLY: Can I get you fellas anything?

JACK B. NIMBLE: No thanks, Polly.

(Observing Humpty who continues to dance around.)

Is he always like this?

POLLY: Yeah, ever since he had his great fall last week. He does that at least three times a day. Isn't that right, Dolly?

DOLLY: Yeah, it's kinda strange. At least a couple times a day he does sort of a little dance recital. And then he says some poems. Isn't that right, Molly?

MOLLY: Yep, after the dance, he starts in with the poetry... bad, bad poetry.

HUMPTY DUMPTY:

Three blind mice... see how they guess!

I guessed how... they should confess!

They all tell lies

And they hide their eyes

They hide their lies

And no one's the wiser

Three blind mice!

POLLY: I think it's kind of fascinating.

DOLLY: But... sad, too.

MOLLY: Yeah, fascinating and sad... just like a bad accident.

DOLLY: We try to look away.

POLLY: But we can't.

HUMPTY DUMPTY:

Old King Cole was a stingy old soul.
What a greedy old soul was he.
He gave me a bill
But I gave him nil
So he sent the crooked man after me. Eek!

JACK B. NIMBLE: What do you make of it, Simple?

SIMPLE SIMON: I think we might as well make an omelet. He's scrambled.

HUMPTY DUMPTY:

All the king s horses and all the kings men
For Humpty they had not a penny to lend.
One minute Humpty was ten feet tall
The next moment he had been pushed off his wall!

(Humpty slumps into one of the chairs and cries.)

JACK B. NIMBLE: Hey Polly, do you think you and the girls can get this guy back out to his wall?

POLLY: Sure, Jack.

(Polly, Molly and Dolly help Humpty out of the chair.)

HUMPTY DUMPTY: *(To Molly.)* He sent the crooked man after me.

MOLLY: That's nice, dear. Did you straighten him out?

(They exit.)

SIMPLE SIMON: Any idea who the "crooked man" is?

JACK B. NIMBLE: No, but I recognize a few of the other people he mentioned. Come on let's get back to the office.

SIMPLE SIMON: Do you think he was pushed off his wall, Jack?

JACK B. NIMBLE: I'm not sure, but if there's a case here, we'll crack it.

(They exit)

SCENE 3

SETTING: *BACK AT B. NIMBLE AGENCY* — *The set changes back to the B. Nimble Agency. There is a bustle of activity. Mother Goose enters.*

MOTHER GOOSE:

NURSERY RHYME CAFE by *E Gray Simons III*

As you might guess, word got around
And believe you me, it gets around fast in this town.
Soon everyone knew that Jack was determined and bound
To figure out why Humpty Dumpty fell down.

(Then the phone rings and Mary-Mary answers it.)

MARY-MARY: Good afternoon, B. Nimble Detective Agency. How can I help you? All right, thank you, I'll tell him.

(She hangs up.)

Hey, Jack. The newspaper is sending someone over to cover your investigation into Humpty's fall.

SIMPLE SIMON: Wow, that was fast.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Word gets around in this town.

(To Taffy.)

Hey, Taffy, did you pull those file photos I asked for?

TAFFY: Yep, they're all right here. The Man in the moon, Old King Cole, and The Three Blind Mice.

(Hands photos to Jack.)

SIMPLE SIMON: *(Looking over Jack's shoulder at the pictures.)* Hey, the Three Blind Mice. I saw those guys the other day at the county fair.

TAFFY: What were you doing at the fair?

SIMPLE SIMON: There's this great Pie man there.

TAFFY: Ooh, what kind of pies?

SIMPLE SIMON: Apple, peach and... pear.

JACK B. NIMBLE: So what about the three blind mice?

SIMPLE SIMON: Yeah, and I saw the mice. They were doing this trick... Even though they're blind, the mice could guess what kind of clothes a person was wearing. They were so good people started paying them to do the trick. It was amazing! It was almost like they could see. They got it right every time.

JACK B. NIMBLE: All right, I want you and Taffy to go over to the fair and see if the mice have any link to Humpty? If they don't cooperate, I want you to tail them and see where they run. I'm going to shoot over to the Twinkle Twinkle Theatre and drop in on the man in the moon.

SIMPLE SIMON: What about Old King Cole?

JACK B. NIMBLE: He's an old acquaintance of mine. I'll go over to his club to see him tonight.

TAFFY: *(Looking at pictures.)* Are all these people suspects?

JACK B. NIMBLE: They were just some names Humpty mentioned, but at this point anyone that has any connection to that egg is a suspect.

SIMPLE SIMON: Yeah, it could be the next person that walks in our front door.

(Patty Cake enters and walks up to Mary-Mary.)

MARY-MARY: Can I help you, Miss?

(Everyone else in the room turns around to see who it is.)

PATTY CAKE: Yes, I'd like to speak with Detective Nimble.

JACK B. NIMBLE: That's me.

PATTY CAKE: Detective, my name is Patty Cake. I'm sure you probably know who I am.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Yes, Miss Cake, I've seen you in the Daily News from time to time... Usually, it's something to do with an exclusive social gathering or a fashionable party. What can I do for you?

PATTY CAKE: I'm here to talk to you about Humpty Dumpty. May I have a word with you in private?

JACK B. NIMBLE: I trust everyone here. Whatever you say in front of these people will be held in the strictest confidence.

PATTY CAKE: Well, then I'll come right to the point. I would prefer that you leave Humpty Dumpty alone.

JACK B. NIMBLE: And why is that?

PATTY CAKE: His fall was proven to be an accident.

JACK B. NIMBLE: I have reason to believe otherwise.

PATTY CAKE: I don't care what you believe.

JACK B. NIMBLE: I don't care, that you don't care!

PATTY CAKE: I don't care, that you don't care, that I don't care!

JACK B. NIMBLE: Who cares!

PATTY CAKE: Don't you think he has suffered enough?

JACK B. NIMBLE: I think he is still suffering and I want to know if someone is responsible. And by the way why do you care?

PATTY CAKE: Because he's my brother!

SIMPLE SIMON: Didn't see that one coming.

JACK B. NIMBLE: *(Jack hands her a tissue.)* I'm sorry I didn't know. I just want to find out the truth.

PATTY CAKE: Detective, you must understand that my brother's fall has already been a strain on my family and of course the extra attention of your investigation would only cause more.

JACK B. NIMBLE: All I can promise you is that our investigation will be as discreet as possible.

PATTY CAKE: And I can promise you that if your inquiry creates more problems for my brother or me, I will indeed take more forcible action.

JACK B. NIMBLE: What's that supposed to mean?

PATTY CAKE: I have forcible friends.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Now wait a minute.

NURSERY RHYME CAFE by *E Gray Simons III*

PATTY CAKE: Don't worry detective, I think you're an honest man. And I'm sure you'll be prudent.

(Suddenly the Dickey Birds from the Dickey Bird Daily News enter.)

DICKEY BIRDS: Hello, we're here to speak with Detective Nimble!

MARY MARY: He's busy at the moment, can you tell me what it's regarding.

DICKEY BIRDS: We're reporting for the Dickey Bird Daily News!

JACK B. NIMBLE: Oh, perfect. Come this way, Miss Cake. There's an exit out back.

PATTY CAKE: Thank you, detective. Remember our agreement.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Of course, Miss Cake.

PATTY CAKE: And one more thing.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Yes?

PATTY CAKE: Call me Patty.

JACK B. NIMBLE: No problem.

(Patty exits. Jack walks toward the Birds.)

Can I help you?

DICKEY BIRDS: There he is!

TRICKY: Detective why are you investigating Humpty Dumpty's great fall?

QUICKIE: Do you think he was pushed off his wall?

STICKY: Do you have any possible suspects, at all?

(They start to fire questions at him all at once.)

JACK B. NIMBLE: All right one at a time!

(Dickey Birds ask questions and scribble in their notebooks. They move down stage as the set begins to change to the Twinkle Twinkle Theatre.)

TRICKY: B. Nimble Detective Agency claims Humpty Dumpty's "great fall" was no accident!

QUICKIE: Detective Jack B. Nimble says, "It's obvious, Humpty was pushed, anyone who can't see that must be tweedle dum!"

STICKY: Tweedle Dum has made no public response to this allegation.

TRICKY: Suspects were not mentioned in the case –

QUICKIE: However, sources say that Detective Nimble will be at the Twinkle, Twinkle Theatre for today's matinee –

STICKY: Now showing is the hit play "Winken, Blinken and Nod"... Starring the Man in the Moon!

TRICKY: This has been Tricky Dickey Bird –

QUICKIE: Quickie Dickey Bird –

STICKY: And Sticky Dickey Bird –

DICKEY BIRDS: Reporting for the Dickey Bird Daily News!

SCENE 4

SETTING: THE TWINKLE, TWINKLE THEATRE, LATER THAT DAY — As the Dickey Birds exit the set change into the Twinkle Twinkle Theatre is complete. Winken, Blinken and Nod enter paddling in a wooden Shoe followed by two twinkling stars. Soon after, Mother goose enters.

MUSICAL #3 — WINKEN, BLINKEN AND NOD

MOTHER GOOSE:

WINKEN, BLINKEN AND NOD ONE NIGHT
SAILED OFF IN A WOODEN SHOE
SAILED ACROSS A RIVER OF CRYSTAL LIGHT
INTO A SEA OF INDIGO BLUE.

(The Man in the Moon enters.)

MAN IN THE MOON:

WHERE ARE YOU GOING AND WHAT DO YOU WISH?

MOTHER GOOSE:

ASKED, THE MAN IN THE MOON OF THE THREE.

WINKEN, BLINKEN and NOD:

WE HAVE COME TO CATCH THE SILVER FISH
THAT LIVE IN THE BEAUTIFUL SEA.

(The Man in the Moon laughs.)

MAN IN THE MOON:

THEY ARE NOT SILVER FISH
THAT LIVE WITHIN THE SEA.
THEY ARE THE TWINKLING STARS OF THE UNIVERSE
AND YOU SAIL TOWARD INFINITY!

(The set changes to the backstage area. The Man in the Moon puts on a robe and sits in front of a dressing table. One of the twinkling stars enters.)

STAR: Sir, Man in the Moon, there is a Detective Jack B. Nimble here to see you.

MAN IN THE MOON: Show him in.

NURSERY RHYME CAFE by *E Gray Simons III*

JACK B. NIMBLE: *(Enters.)* Good Evening, Mr. Moon. I'm Detective Jack B. Nimble.

MAN IN THE MOON: Good evening, detective and if you don't mind, it's "Sir" Man in the Moon... I was recently knighted by the queen.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Oh, forgive me, Sir Moon. That was some performance tonight.

MAN IN THE MOON: It's nothing really – just a fearless display of unyielding passion.

JACK B. NIMBLE: I've never seen anything like it.

MAN IN THE MOON: Very few can endure the revelation of the soul, detective, and I alas am one of the chosen. Nightly, I undertake my humble task for my devoted audience and they adore me, but such adoration can be draining.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Yes. Well, if you've had enough time to... compose yourself, I'd like to ask you a few questions.

MAN IN THE MOON: I'm utterly spent, but I'll do my best.

JACK B. NIMBLE: It's about Humpty Dumpty.

MAN IN THE MOON: Ah, yes, the poor fellow. I heard he had a nasty spill.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Can I ask if you had any kind of relationship with Mr. Dumpty?

MAN IN THE MOON: Yes, we were very close at one time. He used to be come to the theatre quite often, but we had a bit of a falling out.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Why is that?

MAN IN THE MOON: It was over the love of a beautiful star.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Humpty mentioned a "beautiful star" that he had feelings for.

MAN IN THE MOON: Yes, her name was Diamond Sky. She was one of the twinkling stars in the show and I was going ask her to marry me, until that reprehensible egg stole her away from me.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Are you kidding?

MAN IN THE MOON: It may seem hard to believe, but Humpty Dumpty can be quite charming.

(The Man in the Moon moves down stage and the lights change to indicate a flashback.)

It was the opening night of Winken, Blinken and Nod. I had finished the show, gotten out of my costume and rushed over to Diamond's dressing room. She was there, reading a note...

(Diamond Sky enters with the note and flowers.)

MUSICAL #4 — TWINKLE UNDERSCORE

DIAMOND: *(She reads the note.)*

Twinkle, twinkle little star

Up above the world so far

For you, these flowers I did buy
For you, my eggshell I would dye
I like bright stars and I cannot lie
How I love you Diamond Sky.

(Sigh.)

MAN IN THE MOON: Who is that from, Diamond?

DIAMOND: *(A pause)* My mother.

MAN IN THE MOON: You're lying! Let me see that.

DIAMOND: Oh, here.

MAN IN THE MOON: *(Takes the Note from her and reads.)* See you soon my starlet, with love, Humpty Dumpty. P.S. I hope you liked the view from my wall!

(To Diamond)

Have you been on his wall?

DIAMOND: Yes.

MAN IN THE MOON: How can this be?

DIAMOND: He's sensitive and he listens to me.

MAN IN THE MOON: But he's just egg!

DIAMOND: He's a wonderful egg! And I'm in love with him!

MAN IN THE MOON: This can't be. I'm the star of the show. You should be in love with me!

DIAMOND: No! I'm in love with an egg. A charming, wonderful egg!

(She grabs the note and leaves crying.)

MAN IN THE MOON: She left the show soon after that. And I never spoke to Humpty Dumpty again. Of course, the next night he fell off his wall.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Well, Sir Moon, I think he was pushed by someone who wasn't very happy with him. Any idea who that person might be?

MAN IN THE MOON: It wasn't me! I was here doing the show when it happened. I have hundreds of witnesses that saw me perform magnificently that night.

JACK B. NIMBLE: What about the starlet? Could she have had anything to do with it?

MAN IN THE MOON: I don't know. After that thieving egghead cracked his shell, she left town.

JACK B. NIMBLE: So you haven't heard from her?

MAN IN THE MOON: I've heard she's a back up dancer on Wee Willie Winkie's "Sing a Song of Sixpence" tour.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Sorry you lost your star.

MAN IN THE MOON: I'm an artist, Detective Nimble. The pain of heartache only fuels my creativity. I

can remove the dagger that has pierced my heart and use it as a chisel to carve new and wondrous monuments of theatrical renown!

JACK B. NIMBLE: Good for you, Sir Moon. Me, I'm stuck with a big heavy hammer that I usually just drop on my toe. Thanks, I'll be in touch.

(He exits and the set shifts out of the Twinkle Twinkle Theatre.)

SCENE 5

SETTING: THE FAIR, MEANWHILE — Mother goose enters.

MUSICAL #5 — AND A PEAR

MOTHER GOOSE:

AS JACK QUESTIONED THE MAN IN THE MOON
HIS PARTNERS HAD GONE TO THE FAIR.

SIMPLE AND TAFFY ARRIVED THAT AFTERNOON
AND FOUND THREE BLIND MICE ON THE SQUARE.

PLUS THE PIE MAN WAS THERE.
WITH AN APPLE, A PEACH AND A PEAR.

(The three blind mice enter. They all wear dark glasses and have canes to help them feel their way.)

MOUSE 1: Hey, Hey people!

MICE: Three Blind Mice!

MOUSE 2: See how we guess.

MOUSE 3: We know what you're wearing.

MOUSE 1: Skirt, pants or dress.

MOUSE 2: If we go astray...

MOUSE 3: We will have to pay.

MOUSE 1: If we are correct...

MOUSE 2: You're money we'll collect.

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(Mother Goose crosses in front of them and they obviously look at her as she passes and stops.)

MOUSE 3: Was that a beautiful lady that just passed us?

MOUSE 1: I believe it was.

MICE: Excuse us, Ma'am?

MOUSE 2: Would you like to partake in an amusing pastime?

(Mother Goose rolls her eyes and exits.)

MOUSE 3: It won't cost you much.

(The mice follow her off stage. Soon after Simple and Taffy enter.)

SIMPLE SIMON: The pie man must be around here somewhere. You can't miss him. He's the guy with all the pies.

TAFFY: You say he makes a good peach pie?

SIMPLE SIMON: Oh yeah. And pear... the pear is unbelievable.

TAFFY: We need to keep an eye open for the mice, too. Maybe we should split up?

SIMPLE SIMON: Yeah, why don't you make your way over to the sideshow tents and I'll search the other side of the square.

TAFFY: Sounds good.

(Taffy exits and Simon looks around as Mice enter.)

MOUSE 3: Hey, check it out. It's the chump from the other day.

MOUSE 2: Oh, snap! It's Simpleton. We must have taken him four or five times.

MOUSE 1: Yeah, in less time than it takes Hickory Dickory Dock to go up the clock.

MOUSE 3: Let's see if he bites again.

MICE: Three Blind Mice! See how we guess!

SIMPLE SIMON: Excuse me, gentlemen!

MICE: (As if they are searching for Simple's voice.) Who's there? Did someone say something? Please excuse us, we are visually impaired, etc...

SIMPLE SIMON: I'm right here, mice, to your right.

(The mice stop casting about and turn toward Simple.)

MOUSE 1: What can we do for you, sir?

MOUSE 2: Need directions to the Pie man?

MOUSE 3: Would you like a tour of the midway?

MOUSE 1: Or perhaps you'd like to partake in an amusing pastime?

SIMPLE SIMON: Hey, don't you guys remember me?

MOUSE 2: Have we met before sir?

MOUSE 3: We almost never forget a voice.

SIMPLE SIMON: Yeah, it's Simple Simon, from the other day.

MICE: Oh! So sorry, please excuse us, our bad, etc...

SIMPLE SIMON: So what am I wearing?

(The mice hold out a change cup and Simple rewards them for each right answer in turn.)

MOUSE 1: Hmm, let's see...I sense you are wearing a brown fedora.

MOUSE 2: And possibly...Brown trousers and... wingtips, brown.

MOUSE: And maybe... a brown trench coat. Unbuttoned.

SIMPLE SIMON: *(Putting a coin in each one of their cups.)* I don't know how you guys do that!

TAFFY: *(Enters)* Simple! You found them.

SIMPLE SIMON: Yeah. You've got to meet these guys. Mice this is my associate, Taffy.

TAFFY: Hello.

MICE: How are you this fine day, pleased to make your acquaintance, pleasure to meet you, etc...

SIMPLE SIMON: *(Looking offstage.)* Ooh! I just spotted the Pie man. Hey, guys show Taffy your trick.

(To Taffy.)

It's amazing. They'll guess what you're wearing. I'll be right back I'm just going to grab a couple of pies.

(He exits.)

10 more pages to end of script