

PLAYS FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY-MINNEAPOLIS

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Animal Fables From Aesop

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Act One. Prologue

GOAT/NARRATOR: (CS-TERU DRAPE) Ladies and gents, young ladies and young gentlemen, sons and daughters of the human race, -- all present here! You, who have a sense of fun, but a sense of justice, a sense of mischief, and a sense of truth, welcome to Aesop's Fables. Look and listen well as we unfold -- as we unfold --

Crash is heard, off. COUNTRY MOUSE appears, whispers nervously into NARRATOR'S ear.

GOAT/NARRATOR: (To MOUSE) What do you mean it's come off its hinges?
(MOUSE whispers reply) Well, fix it! (MOUSE whispers frantically) Oh, -all right! (To audience) If you will excuse me for just a moment, a little something seems to be awn.

NARRATOR exits, fuming. LAMB counter crosses.

SONG: We Will Present A Play
We rally here today
To frolic and carouse today
To honor you today
We will present a play.
We rally here today
To frolic and carouse today
To honor you today
We will present a play.
If skies be blue, if skies be gray,
If wolf be stalking lamb at play,
If cat be chasing mouse away,
We'll still present our play.

The play's the thing today
And so we dance and sing today
We'll go the dizzy rounds
On this very special day.
The play's the thing today
And so we dance and sing today
To honor and amuse you
We now present our play!
A play. Today.
We now present our play!

GOAT:

Thank you, thank you.
Now, then. Please excuse us for our little backstage problem, our error, our gaffe, our blunder, our faux pas. (*To actors offstage*) This will never, ever happen again, I promise you.
Now, come with me to a timeless time, a time that began very long ago and a time that is now. In the long ago, my ancestor Aesop walked the Earth as a slave. Old Aesop lived as a slave, and suffered as a slave, but he was an extremely intelligent man. He was a storyteller. These were stories called fables and each one ended with a little zinger of a message, called a moral. And in his stories, people went disguised as animals. In Aesop's Fables, the strong and the weak, the slave and the master appear safely disguised as wolf and lamb, cat and mouse, and as tortoise and hare. And sometimes the Masters heard these stories, but what could they say? His fables were nothing but harmless little tales

about animals, now, weren't they? So come away with me to a place where the fabled creatures meet at a country fair, a celebration, a jubilation, a briefly peaceable kingdom where certain creatures who otherwise never mix, exist for a time in peace and amity. At the fair!

Song: At The Fair

It's a lovely day for a fair
With a sky so blue it's quite beyond compare
On a day so rare
One can truly say
It's a very lovely day for a fair.
It's a lovely day for a fair
With a sky so blue it's quite beyond compare
On a day so rare
One can truly say
It's a very lovely day for a fair.
There are stands and exhibitions
There are peaceful competitions
At the fair, at the fair, at the fair.
You can try to win a prize
But if you lose, don't agonize.
At the fair, at the fair, at the fair.
Do you see yourself as quite artistic
Or at least you're optimistic
You're the finest dancer at the fair.
You can demonstrate your fancy stuff

Remember that we don't get rough
And you might be a winner at the fair.
It's a lovely day for a fair
With a sky so blue it's quite beyond compare
On a day so rare
One can truly say
It's a very lovely day for a fair.

WOLF:

I've got a hunger
That I must feed
I think I see just what I need.
I'd like to eat
What's on the street
At the fair, at the fair, at the fair.

COUNTRY MOUSE:

I've sewn a quilt that's quite the finest in town
It's made of silk and down
It's sure to take a prize
At the fair.

(CAT snatches at MOUSE, GOAT intervenes)

Test your strength
Test your skill
There's a game for every possible contestant

GOAT:

Test your strength
Test your skill
Test your strength
Test your skill
Test your strength
Test your skill

Take a chance
Come join the dance.

LAMB/COUNTRY MOUSE: Have your fortune told
Spend your hard won gold
Have your fortune told
Spend your hard won gold
Come join the dance

FOX: In for a penny
In for a pound
In for a penny
In for a pound
In for a penny
In for a pound
Come join the dance.

CAT: Come take a chance.
Come join the dance
Come take a chance
Come join the dance.

LAMB: It's a lovely day for a fair
With a sky so blue it's quite beyond compare
On a day so rare
One can truly say
It's a very lovely day for a fair.

CAT: Have you heard the very latest news
The hare will race the tortoise who, of course, will lose.
Can you believe it?
How could she possibly believe she'll win?

Let's hurry! It will soon begin.
It's sure to be the high point of the fair.
A race between the tortoise and the hare!
It's a lovely day for a fair
With a sky so blue it's quite beyond compare
On a day so rare
One can truly say
It's a perfect summer holiday
A perfect chance to get away
A very lovely day for a fair.

The race starts up. The race begins.

GOAT/NARRATOR: (SL LATTICE) And now to get the fair off to a running start -
- the Tortoise will race the Hare. Bets are being taken by Mr.
Fox. (COUNTRY MOUSE tries to get attention of FOX, finally
engages him, but he doesn't understand. She becomes emphatic.)
The Country Mouse wishes to place five pennies on the
Tortoise. (Aside) Yes, she understands that no one else is
betting on the Tortoise. But it's her money. (To Contestants)
The contestants will now take their places at the starting line.
On your marks, get set . . .

Music: Post Call. Fox shoots starting pistol and checkered flag comes out of gun.

Music: Race Theme.

WOLF: It doesn't appear there's much progress being made.
COUNTRY MOUSE: The Hare is merely teasing, don't they know that it's begun?
ALL: What's wrong with them, why can't they simply

CAT: Runnnnnnn!

HARE vanishes. TORTOISE makes agonizing progress 'round about and eventually out of sight.

Music: Reprise of The Fair:Hooray!

It's a lovely day for a fair

With a sky so blue it's quite beyond compare

On a day so rare

One can truly say

(Thunder)

This is quite an awful day for a fair.

Almost everyone off, except the WOLF and the CROW.