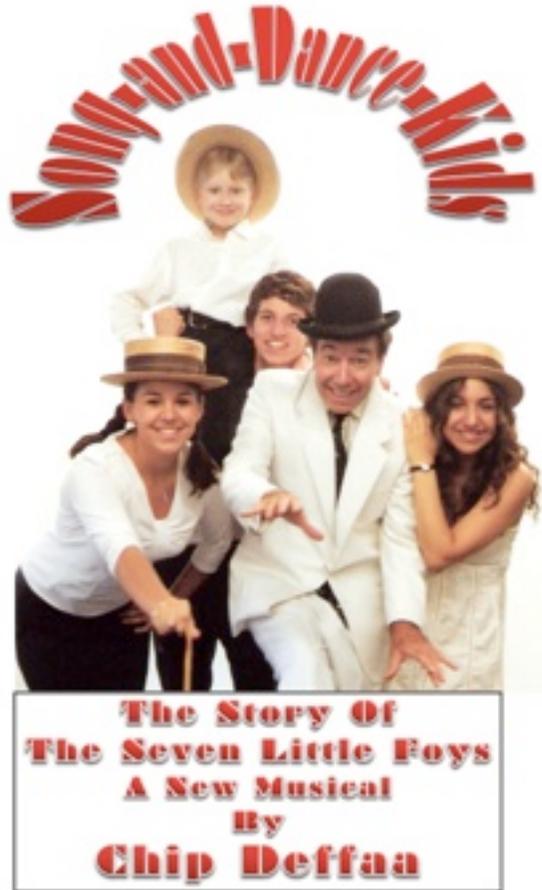
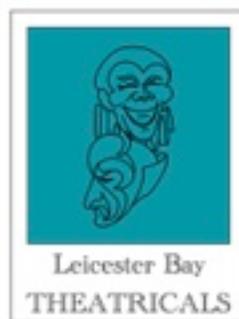


PERUSAL SCRIPT



*With songs from the era of Eddie Foy & family,
plus a few originals by Chip Deffaa
Music arranged by Chip Deffaa*



Salt Lake City

Libretto, new music, new lyrics, and all arrangements

© 2009 by Chip Deffaa

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SONG-AND-DANCE KIDS

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*For M. A. N., with appreciation,
and for my cousins Josh and Ava...
honorary Foys, all of 'em, young and old...*

SONG-AND-DANCE KIDS

MUSICAL NUMBERS....

ACT ONE:

1. "IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME" (words by Ren Shields, music by George Evans)
2. "YOU CAN'T DENY YOU'RE IRISH" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
3. "ALWAYS LEAVE THEM LAUGHING WHEN YOU SAY GOODBYE"
(words and music by George M. Cohan)
4. "IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME"--First Reprise (words by Ren Shields, music by George Evans)
5. "SWEET POPULARITY" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
6. "MY MUSICAL COMEDY MAIDEN" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
7. "ALL ABOARD FOR BROADWAY" (words and music by George M. Cohan,
with lyrical revisions by Chip Deffaa)
8. "YOU CAN HAVE BROADWAY" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
9. "IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME"--Second Reprise (words by Ren Shields, music by George Evans)
10. "IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME"--Third Reprise (words by Ren Shields, music by George Evans)
11. "STORIES ADAM TOLD TO EVE" (words by William Jerome, music by Jean Schwartz)
12. "ALL BY MYSELF" (words and music by Irving Berlin)

* * *

ACT TWO:

13. "WHEN I LEAVE THE WORLD BEHIND" (words and music by Irving Berlin)
14. "THE CIRCUS IS COMING TO TOWN" (words and music by Irving Berlin)
15. "DON'T GO IN THE LION'S CAGE TONIGHT" (words by John Gilroy, music by E. Ray Goetz)
16. "THE BARNUM AND BAILEY RAG" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
17. MEDLEY: "THE ABA DABA HONEYMOON" (Arthur Fields and Walter Donovan) /
"UNDER THE BAMBOO TREE" (words and music by Bob Cole and J. Rosamond Johnson)
18. "THIS IS THE LIFE" (words and music by Irving Berlin, with revisions by Chip Deffaa)
19. "THE SCHOOLHOUSE BLUES" (words and music by Irving Berlin)
20. "SWEET POPULARITY" (words and music by George M. Cohan) /
"I AM A POPULAR MAN" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
21. "THE SMALL TOWN GAL" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
22. "BIG-CITY SWEETIE" (words and music by Chip Deffaa)
23. "AN ODE TO LAVERGNE" (words and music by Chip Deffaa)
24. "MAGNETIC WATERBURY" (words and music by Chip Deffaa)
25. "DOWN BY THE ERIE CANAL" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
26. "ALL ABOARD FOR BROADWAY" (words and music by George M. Cohan,
with revisions by Chip Deffaa)
- 26a **Drumroll and Announcement**
27. "MUSICAL MOON--Intro." (words and music by Chip Deffaa)
- 27a. "MUSICAL MOON" (words and music by George M. Cohan; additional lyrics by Chip Deffaa)
28. "SO LONG MARY" (words and music by George M. Cohan, with revisions by Chip Deffaa)
29. "I AM A POPULAR MAN"--Reprise (words and music by George M. Cohan)

THE FINALE MEDLEY:

30. "ALEXANDER'S RAGTIME BAND" (words and music by Irving Berlin)
31. "SIMPLE MELODY"/ "MUSICAL DEMON" (words and music by Irving Berlin)
32. "THE AMERICAN RAG TIME" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
33. "YOU'RE A GRAND OLD FLAG" (words and music by George M. Cohan)
34. "TILL WE MEET AGAIN" (words by Raymond B. Egan, music by Richard Whiting)
35. "THIS IS THE LIFE"--Reprise. (words and music by Irving Berlin, with revisions by Chip Deffaa)
36. **BOWS: "IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME"** (music by George Evans)
37. **EXIT MUSIC: "THE CIRCUS IS COMING TO TOWN"** (music by Irving Berlin)

A NOTE ON THE CAST MEMBERS AND SETTINGS...

This musical play revolves around entertainer Eddie Foy; his wife and their seven children; and their various friends and acquaintances. The most important characters in the play are the members of the Foy family. Scenes take place in the Foy family home in New Rochelle, New York; in various theaters across the U.S; in two courtrooms; and in the office of the President of the United States.

This play includes 38 characters, half of whom are male and half of whom are female. That is to say, there are 38 speaking roles (19 male roles, 19 female roles). This play can be performed by as many as 38 singing actors (and you may even add some additional ensemble members, if you wish). However, the play can also be performed effectively by as few as 24 actors, with some actors “doubling”--that is, playing more than one small part.

Here are the characters of the play:

Eddie Foy is an endearing song-and-dance comedian who for years has headlined big-time musical comedies, revues, and vaudeville bills. To the public, he is simply a beloved, long-established star. He also likes to gamble, isn't always reliable, and has a bit of the blarney in him. His loyal and loving wife,

Mrs. Foy, gave up her career as a performer to devote herself to raising their family; nothing is more important to her than family. She is now in declining health; but has done a good job of masking just how seriously ill she is, so as not to worry the children. The play spans the years 1912-1918. At the start of the play, Eddie Foy is 56; Mrs. Foy, 44. (Your actors playing Mr. And Mrs. Foy, of course, need not suggest those exact ages; but they must be--or play--“middle-aged.”)

The Foy family has seven children. At the start of the play,

Bryan is supposed to be about 15; the oldest and tallest of the Foy kids, can be a pretty good big brother to the brood, when needed; he's more mature than the other boys

Charlie, 13; is an extroverted adolescent with a good bit of mischief in him. (From time to time in this play, Charlie steps forward to speak directly to the audience, while everyone else on stage freezes; Charlie is serving as our narrator; the events we are seeing are his recollections of his childhood.)

Richard, 12; who is close to Charlie in age, makes a good younger side-kick to Charlie; Richard also happens to be the quietest of the Foy kids, more of an amiable follower than a leader.

The two Foy sisters are closer to each other than to the boys;

Mary, 11; is more reserved

Madeline, 8; the younger of the two sisters, is feistier

Eddie Jr., 7; closer to his little brother than to the rest of the family

Irving, 5; Irving is precocious, and has lots of personality. Is closer to Eddie Jr than to anyone else. In dance routines, Irving--the littlest of the Foy children--is also the child most likely to be out of step.

It is perfectly fine, however, to cast actors who might actually be a few years older or younger to portray the various Foy children, so long as they suggest a family with lively kids of assorted ages, heights, and personalities. The script states that all of the Foy children, at the start of the play, are under 16 years of age, but does not specify the exact age of every child in the family. And the script covers a span of about six years. The actors playing the Foy children should be able to sing and move well; at least a couple of them--ideally, all of them--should be able to tap dance. If your actors cannot tap dance, the play can still work all right, with some simple group choreography in key musical numbers. Marching, strutting, high-stepping--these sorts of simple steps can go far.

In family groupings, Charlie and Richard would often be sitting or standing next to one another; Mary and Madeline would often be sitting or standing next to one another; and Eddie Jr. and Irving would often be sitting or standing next to one another. If the family is supposed to be singing around the piano in the parlor at home, Bryan would be the family member who is supposedly playing the piano for everyone (although the actual music that the audience hears would be provided by the music director/pianist for your production).

The Foy family has various friends from the world of entertainment. In the play, we get to meet

Harry Houdini, who has known Eddie Foy for many years. He is the world's most successful magician and escape artist; he is middle-aged, well-built, self-assured, and somewhat vague.

Marie Dressler is a formidable, middle-aged actress who has appeared in musical comedies with Eddie Foy; she is clearly a star, and takes herself rather seriously.

Irving Berlin is an amiable, slightly built, self-effacing, rising young songwriter; he wears glasses.

Madame Tetrazzini is a heavy-built veteran diva from the opera world.

Mae West is a sultry, sexy, good-looking entertainer.

George M. Cohan (the original “Yankee Doodle Dandy”) The dapper, dashing top Broadway star, playwright, and songwriter.

Other supporting characters include

Miss Grouse, the Foy's' hatchet-faced, judgmental next-door neighbor in New Rochelle;

Miss Charney, a concerned, well-intentioned school teacher of the Foy kids; and

Officers McCune and **McClain**, two Irish cops from the neighborhood.

There are brief appearances of the following: (they can double with other characters being played by a single performer)

C. A. McCarroll -- Eddie Foy's lawyer and advisor

Aunt Clara and **Aunt Bernice** -- the Foy children's aunts

Doctor O'Reilly

Nurse Moore

J. S. Keating -- theater owner

Judge Conard

Judge Polsky

Miss Ava, **Miss Janell**, **Miss Julia** -- three (or more, if desired) women from the Society to Prevent Cruelty to Children

Lynda Barry and **Winnie Dooley** -- newspaper writers;

Court Clerk

LaVergne Lady #1, **LaVergne Lady #2**, **LaVergne Lady #3** -- the LaVergne, Tennessee, Welcoming Committee (and additional members, if desired)

Heckler from the audience

Woodrow Wilson -- United States President

The Foy's also make reference in the show to various pet dogs and cats (and even a goat) You have the option of using some actual animals in your production, if you wish. There is no need, of course, to use any actual animals, but incorporating an actual dog or cat into your production can certainly add warmth and life. It can be cute if an actual dog or cat can be seen when referenced. It is left to the discretion of the director as how any animal or animals may be integrated into a production. A child might hold a pet in his or her arms during a scene at home or in court, or even have a pet with him or her during a vaudeville-theater production number.

At several points in the show, Eddie Foy comes before a judge in court. You can have an actor, on stage, playing the judge. Or, if you prefer, the voice of the judge can simply be heard (with an actor offstage speaking the judge's lines into a mike), without the judge actually ever being seen on stage; if you choose that approach, Eddie Foy would simply speak his lines directly out to the audience, as if he were facing a judge we never actually see.

At various times in the show, we hear the voice of a theater announcer; introducing an act; these announcements could be performed "live" (perhaps by your music director/pianist, or by any actor or actors of your choice) or could be pre-recorded, if you prefer.

* * *

Song-and-Dance Kids is a full-length, two-act musical, with a running time (including intermission) of about two and a half hours.

The entire first act, which takes place in 1912, is set in the parlor of the Foy's' big old home in New Rochelle. The scenes of the second act, which spans the years 1912-1918, are set in various theaters, courtrooms, and in the office of the President of the United States.

Sets can be as minimalistic or as realistic as you prefer. The show will work perfectly fine even if you use just a few set pieces on a bare stage to suggest a scene. A sofa, some chairs, a table, and an upright piano can suggest the parlor of the Foy home; some simple benches can suggest a courtroom; scenes set in vaudeville theaters can be played in front of a curtain, with an optional vaudeville-style placard on an easel, off to one side.

If you wish to make trims or edits, to shorten the running time of your production, you may do so. If you wish to extend some musical numbers, adding extra choruses to provide greater opportunities for singing or dancing, you may do so. If you wish to add extra ensemble members to the finale, you may do so. You may change genders of characters, if need be, to accommodate your cast. You may not, however, add new dialog or new songs to the show, or make other changes without permission. (If you have any questions about whether a proposed change to the script might be permitted, please send a written inquiry to the publishers of this musical play, Leicester Bay Theatricals, 3877 W. Leicester Bay, South Jordan UT 84095-9067.)

* * *

This musical comedy **Song-and-Dance Kids** is inspired by the story of entertainer Eddie Foy (1856-1928) and his family. For more information on Eddie Foy and his family, you might enjoy reading Foy's autobiography, *Clowning Through Life* (by Eddie Foy and Alvin F. Harlow; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1928), and *Eddie Foy: A Biography of the Early Popular Stage Comedian* (by Armond Fields; Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1999).

For additional information on Foy and his era, you might also want to check out *The Vaudevillians* (by Anthony Slide;

Westport, Connecticut: Arlington House, 1981); *Show Biz: From Vaude to Video* (by Abel Green and Joe Laurie, Jr.; New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1951); *The Laugh Makers* (by William Cahn; New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1957); and *American Vaudeville: Its Life and Times* (by Douglas Gilbert; New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1963).

Eddie Foy's career spanned six decades. What did the theater mean to him? He once said: "You have to want to entertain people. It is hard work.... Please the audience. Make people laugh. Make sure no one gets hurt in the process. Give 200 per cent to your acting. Always leave your audience wanting you again. Respect the theater." And as he told a reporter, late in life: "If I had all the money I've spent making my children happy, I'd be a millionaire today. But I wouldn't want a dollar of it back. Not a dime. Not a cent... Every one of them [the children] is wonderful."

* * *

MANY THANKS...

My gratitude, always, for their encouragement and wisdom, to the one and only Carol Channing and to master song-and-dance man Tommy Tune (who always felt that the story of Eddie Foy and the Seven Little Foys would make a good basis for a stage musical). Special thanks to the gifted and generous actor Michael Townsend Wright, who, with the author, did the very first readings of drafts as this project got started; to the good folks at Cracking Inc. (Casey and Janell McCarroll, principals); to the ever-inspiring Matthew Broderick and Sarah Jessica Parker; to the irrepressible Victoria Leacock Hoffman; to Jack Saleeby and Peter Charney, who've not only helped as actors, they've also helped suggest some material in the script; to gifted playwright/songwriter Lisa Lambert; to Matt Nardozi, a first-rate actor and valued friend; to that talented filmmaker Max Galassi; to Tennessee's favorite sons, the irrepressible Justin R. M. Eisbrenner and Corey M. Smathers (such intriguing writers), and Jim Cortese (the Cortese family's many kindnesses and insights are greatly appreciated); to my audience-research consultants, Max and Julia Deffaa; to the ever-inspiring Ben Youngstone and Samantha McCoy, who brighten my life; to Donnie, Earl, and Lucas Snyder; to my Korean producer friends, Hansaem Song and Ungsuh Kenneth Park; to my British producer friend Edmund Sutton; to my American producer friends Jim Morgan, Charlotte Moore, Ciaran O'Reilly; Edith O'Hara, Sandra Nordgren, Meryl Budnick, and Jeffrey Dunn; and to Keith Anderson of Univision.

My gratitude, also, to the late George Burns and Todd Fisher, for the tales they so generously shared with me from their early days in vaudeville, which influence this work; to a much-appreciated latter-day vaudevillian, Michael Kasper; to show people Okey Chenoweth, Santino Fontana, Renee Purdy, and Anthony Rapp, who've helped more than they realized; to ASCAP's unfailingly helpful musical-theatre expert, Michael Kerker, who's always been there to answer any questions; to Ryan Foy and the Foy family (without whom this show would not exist); and to my own wonderful family (ditto). Thanks, too, for the help provided in various ways, by John Kander and his late partner, Fred Ebb, Bailey Cummings, Jerry Herman, Hawkins Gardow, Zack Riopelle, Bernice Burge, Max Beer, Giuseppe Bausilio, Joe Franklin, Jack Sprance, Cody Green, Tyler DuBoys; Chase Brock, Will Conard, Howard Cruse, Joe Polsky, Connor Barth, Chadwick Von Rankin, Jillian Wipfler, Nat Wolff, Alex Wolff, Barrett Foa, Matt ZanFagna, Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Clark Kinkade, Jamie DeRoy, Emily Bordonaro, Beth Bartley, Alec Bordonaro, Rayna Hirt, E. A. Stevens, Alex Craven, Dea Julien, Matt Snyder, Braden Bacon, David Eckstein, Sharon A. Wilcox, Mike Walker, Agnes Duggan Dann, Ed Bassett, and the inspiring folk I've enjoyed at the Thomaston Opera House. Richard Danley has been more than just a music director on this project; he's been a good friend and sounding board. And the thoroughly professional, unflaggingly supportive help of Don Brown, who's overseen music preparation, can't be beat. The show has been developed by Chip Deffaa Productions LLC (Chip and Deb Deffaa, principals). A tip of the hat to interns Ian Palmer and Michael Herwitz. Special thanks to publisher C. Michael Perry, Leicester Bay Theatricals; I always appreciate his belief in my work.

The music for *Song-and-Dance Kids* has been arranged primarily by Chip Deffaa. The music has been prepared primarily by Don Brown, who made much-appreciated additional arranging contributions. Don Brown and Richard Danley (who also made valued additional arranging contributions) edited the charts. Other music copyists who've worked on the project include: Chase Baird, Evan Barker, Peter Ecklund, Josh Clayton, Shawn Stanley, Seth Sikes, Brett Kristofferson, and D. Jay Bradley. All music preparation, arranging and editing on this project has been done as work-for-hire for Chip Deffaa Productions LLC. All arrangements, all new music, and all new lyrics copyright © 2009 by Chip Deffaa. Please visit: www.chipdeffaa.com

* * *

Song-and-Dance Kids had its first reading at Roy Arias Studio, 300 W. 43rd St., New York City, on February 8, 2009, with the following collective personnel (and it is infused with their good energy): **Michael Townsend Wright, Beth Bartley, Joan Jaffe, Dea Julien, Peter Charney, Michael Herwitz, Mitchell Schneider, Eric Johnson, Jeffrey Omura, Alexis Schwoyer, Elvera Roussel, Wendy Morris, Lewis Chambers, Marissa Smoker, Sandra Bloom, Chip Deffaa.** The show has been further workshopped by Connecticut's **In-the-Hills Drama Club**, under the supervision of **Pam Pinto.**

* * *

SONG-AND-DANCE KIDS

ACT ONE

(As the scene opens, we see Mrs. Foy, in the parlor of the family's big old home in New Rochelle, New York, singing with some of her children: Bryan, Richard, Mary, Madeline, Eddie Jr., and Irving—the whole family except for one of her children, Charlie, and her husband, Eddie Foy. The date is January 1, 1912.)

(SONG #1. “IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.”)

MRS. FOY. *(Sings, with spirit:)*

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME, IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.
STROLLING THROUGH THE SHADY LANES WITH YOUR BABY MINE.

BRYAN.

YOU HOLD HER HAND ,

MARY.

AND SHE HOLDS YOURS,

MRS. FOY.

AND THAT’S A VERY GOOD SIGN

IRVING.

THAT SHE’S YOUR TOOTSIE-WOOTSIE,

IRVING and EDDIE JR.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

MRS. FOY. *(Spoken, to the children.)* Everybody!

MRS. FOY, BRYAN, MARY, RICHARD, MADELINE, IRVING and EDDIE JR.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME, IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.
STROLLING THROUGH THE SHADY LANES WITH YOUR BABY MINE.
YOU HOLD HER HAND , AND SHE HOLDS YOURS,

MRS. FOY.

AND THAT’S A VERY GOOD SIGN

MRS. FOY, BRYAN, MARY, RICHARD, MADELINE, IRVING and EDDIE JR.

THAT SHE’S YOUR TOOTSIE-WOOTSIE,

MRS. FOY. *(Spoken, to the children.)* Where?

MRS. FOY, BRYAN, MARY, RICHARD, MADELINE, IRVING and EDDIE JR.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME, IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMERTIME
STROLLING THROUGH THE--

(At this point—or earlier in the song, if the director prefers—we hear a loud knocking on a door, or else a doorbell; and this interruption cuts off the singing.)

MRS. FOY. Richard, go see who’s at the door, please. It’s probably Miss Charney—

Song-and-Dance Kids by *Chip Deffaa*

RICHARD. My teacher!?! Why would she be coming to our house? And on a Sunday afternoon--

MRS. FOY. She told me she wanted to speak with me about you and Charlie, and how you've been acting at school.

RICHARD. *(As he exits to see who's at the door.)* Aw, we haven't been bothering her, Ma. Honest.

EDDIE JR. They're hardly ever even at school, Ma.

MRS. FOY. Is that Miss Charney?

(Richard returns, followed by two policemen.)

RICHARD. No, Ma, it's Officer McCune and Officer McClain.

MRS. FOY. To what do I owe the honor of a visit from two of New Rochelle's finest policemen?

OFFICER McCUNE. We're very sorry to be botherin' ya, Mrs. Foy. Especially at supper time.

MRS. FOY. Mary, why don't you bring these fine gentlemen some brownies and some hot chocolate?

MARY. Sure, Mom.

(Mary exits, and returns with brownies and hot chocolate for the policemen.)

OFFICER McCUNE. We always like the Foy family brownies.

MRS. FOY. And we haven't sat down for supper yet. I sent Mr. Foy out on an errand several hours ago, but he seems to have gotten lost.

MADELINE. Then Ma sent Charlie out to fetch our father, and Charlie hasn't come back yet, either. So we're waiting for the both of them before we can have our supper.

EDDIE JR. We're just sitting around the piano, singing, like we do most every Sunday.

MRS. FOY. Perhaps you'd care to join us for a bit, officers? Do you know, "In the Good Old Summer Time"?

OFFICER McCUNE. That's a funny song to be singing in the dead of winter, isn't it, Mrs. Foy?

MRS. FOY. Singing about the summer makes me feel a bit warmer.

(She coughs.)

I do like the summer time.

MADELINE. Ma's been feeling kinda poorly this winter.

OFFICER McCUNE. I know. And I hope you'll be feeling better soon, Mrs. Foy. The Influenza is really strong this year.

OFFICER McCLAIN. Singin' is good for the soul.

MRS. FOY. And it keeps the kids off the streets.

OFFICER McCUNE. The New Rochelle police department is sincerely grateful for anything that keeps the Foy kids off of the streets.

OFFICER McCLAIN. Mrs. Foy, I do believe we've got something of yours, out in the wagon--something that really ought to be in this fine home of yours.

OFFICER McCUNE. *(To Officer McClain.)* Corey, why don't you bring in what we've collected?

(Officer McClain exits. To Mrs. Foy.)

These brownies are delicious, ma'am. Everyone on the police department always appreciates the Foy brownies, and such. You're a fine cook.

MRS. FOY. Well, my daughters actually baked these. You know Madeline and Mary, don't you?

OFFICER McCUNE. Yes.. Although I'd say we're better acquainted with your sons.

(Officer McClain returns, bringing with him Charlie Foy, age 13, who looks a little embarrassed at being brought in by a policeman.)

OFFICER McCLAIN. *(To Mrs. Foy.)* I do believe this is one of your boys.

Song-and-Dance Kids by *Chip Deffaa*

MRS. FOY. Charles Foy! What have you been up to now?

OFFICER McCLAIN. Mrs. Foy, do you know that great big rock behind the Robert Louis Stevenson School?

We found your son Charlie sitting up on that rock, throwing snowballs at the good folk strolling down Stevenson Boulevard in their Sunday best.

OFFICER McCUNE. And they didn't quite seem to be in the mood for that.

MRS. FOY. *(To Charlie.)* Charles, wait until your father gets home! Bringin' embarrassment onto this family.
(To the policemen.)

You have our sincerest apologies, officers. As you can imagine, Mr. Foy and I don't go for this sort of thing at all.

OFFICER McCLAIN. Ah, well, Mrs. Foy, I do believe we may have something else of yours, out in the wagon.

OFFICER McCUNE. *(To Officer McClain.)* Would you care to do the honors, Corey?

(Officer McClain exits. To Mrs. Foy.)

Mrs. Foy, I'm afraid we caught your boy Charlie red-handed. We used to catch your older boy Bryan throwing snowballs as that exact same spot.

BRYAN. I was King of the Snowball Throwers.

OFFICER McCLAIN. Well, apparently, Charlie's inherited your throne.

BRYAN. You get a pretty good view from that rock: New Rochelle's leading citizens, promenading proudly down Stevenson Boulevard.

(He pantomimes throwing a snowball.)

OFFICER McCUNE. And do you know who Charlie hit with his snowballs, among others--the Chief of Police, and his wife. Knocked her hat clear off, he did!

CHARLIE. It was a hideous hat, Ma! Really. With all these feathers. I was doing her a public service by getting rid of that hat.

MRS. FOY. *(To Officer McCune.)* When Mr. Foy gets home, he will give Charlie a good talking-to; oh, you can count on that.

(To her son Charlie.)

Charles Foy! Throwing snowballs at people. What would your father say?

(Officer McClain returns--bringing with him Eddie Foy, who appears as if he just might be a bit tipsy.)

OFFICER McCLAIN. *(To Mrs. Foy.)* Mrs. Foy, I do believe this one is yours, too..

MRS. FOY. Edwin!

EDDIE. Not so loud, not so loud, my dear! Everyone talks so loudly nowadays.

MRS. FOY. Eddie Foy!

ASSORTED FOY CHILDREN. Papa! Daddy!

EDDIE. Oh, it's good to be inside my own home. Do you know, it's snowing out there! Quite a bit, actually.

OFFICER McCLAIN. *(To Mrs. Foy.)* Mrs. Foy, we caught your husband, red-handed, too.

MRS. FOY. Eddie! Were you really throwing snowballs?

EDDIE. No, no, Mrs. Foy. What a question! A big Broadway star like me, throwing snowballs?

IRVING. It does seem a bit ridiculous, Ma.

EDDIE JR. He's not some little kid.

EDDIE. I was merely offering Charlie a bit of helpful fatherly advice--guidance as to planning and aim and

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trajectory. That boy has a keen eye, a strong arm, good muscular coordination.

(He pantomimes throwing a snowball; little Irving mimics his motions.)

CHARLIE. If you'd have seen that pretentious hat she had on, Ma, with all those maroon feathers—it was practically begging to be knocked off.

EDDIE. Practically begging.

OFFICER McCUNE. Mrs. Foy, your husband was making snowballs and then handing them to your son Charlie to throw.

EDDIE. There's no law against packing fine snow into cylindrical objects, is there? Helps develop dexterity, coordination,--

CHARLIE. --appreciation for nature!

EDDIE. My own dear father, may he rest in peace, never taught me anything. Not even juggling. I had to learn it on my own. Juggling's fine exercise.

(He picks up some oranges—or other objects suitable for juggling—and juggles for a bit.)

EDDIE JR. You preach it, Pop!

EDDIE. And you can usually find a good spot for juggling in almost any theatrical production you happen to be in. "I say—Is that the cavalry I hear approaching? This might be a good time for me to do a bit of juggling."

OFFICER McCUNE. *(To Mrs. Foy.)* Mr. Foy may also have been drinking a bit.

MRS. FOY. I'm sorry to hear that, officers. I'm a tea-totaler myself.

OFFICER McCLAIN. We witnessed Mr. Foy drinking from a flask he was carrying.

EDDIE. And there's still a bit left. Officers, this is New Year's Day. Would you care to join me in a toast—to 1912?

OFFICER McCUNE. I'm sorry, Mr. Foy, but we're on duty; we really can't.

EDDIE. You'd turn down a fellow Irishman's invitation to officially welcome in the New Year? I can't believe it. A toast, to the New Year!

OFFICER McCUNE. I'm sorry—

EDDIE And to the Irish!

OFFICER McCLAIN. Mr. Foy, it's not that simple.

(SONG #2. "YOU CAN'T DENY YOU'RE IRISH.")

EDDIE.

YOU CAN'T DENY YOU'RE IRISH,
SURE IT SHOWS IN YOUR GRACE,
NOSE ON YOUR FACE,
SHOWS EVERY TIME THAT YOU TRY TO POSE,
SHOWS EV'RYWHERE FROM YOUR HEAD TO YOUR TOES.

Don't you know this song? I introduced it in my hit show, "The Strollers."

OFFICER McCUNE.

JUST BETWEEN US IRISH,

OFFICER McCLAIN.

IF EV'RY ONE WAS IRISH,

OFFICER McCUNE.

THEN WE'D BE IN CLOVER,

OFFICER McCLAIN.

HARD TIMES WOULD BE OVER,

EDDIE, OFFICER McCUNE, and OFFICER McCLAIN.

THE WHOLE WORLD GAY!

OFFICER McCUNE. Mr. and Mrs. Foy, no real harm was done today. We won't be pressing any charges this time.

EDDIE *(To the policemen.)* But you officers probably ought to give young Charlie here a warning. A stern warning. So he'll learn his lesson, properly.

OFFICER McCLAIN. Yes, Mr. Foy.

EDDIE There's great value in a stern warning. I've received many in my day. Did me a world of good.

OFFICER McCUNE. *(To Charlie.)* I do worry about you Foy boys. Always getting into trouble.

OFFICER McCLAIN. *(To Charlie.)* The next time, we won't be going so easy on yez.

MRS. FOY. *(To the policemen.)* Thank you!

EDDIE. You're fine officers! Fine officers! You two are a lot better than those coppers they have down in New York City, I'll tell you that. Do you know, they recently arrested me down there in a raid on a supposed gambling joint.

OFFICER McCLAIN. We do read the papers, Mr. Foy.

EDDIE. They played that up big, didn't they? "Broadway Star Nabbed in Gambling Den."

MARY. It was a little embarrassing for me at school, Pop—the kids saying, "Your old man's been arrested."

RICHARD. The New York Post ran a pretty good photo of you, Pop.

EDDIE. *(Beaming proudly.)* Front page. My hair looked good that day.

CHARLIE. Any publicity is good—right, Pop? It sells tickets for your show, doesn't it?

EDDIE. *(To the policemen.)* Of course, officers, I had no idea that gambling was going on there. This was in a new restaurant on 42nd Street, in the back room, upstairs. I simply went up there after a show, in search of telephone. I was thinking of calling an old friend of mine, Joshua Schaller—

CHARLIE. You mean Josh Schaller, your bookie, Pop?

EDDIE. *(Flustered, clearly improvising.)* Uh, no, no, no son; this was another Josh Schaller altogether. A distinguished professor at, if I recall, Duke University--an expert on meteors and meteorology, and applied science. And cookies. All sorts of things. Very bright fellow. But just then, alas, the police raided the joint.

EDDIE JR. Was it a big raid, Pop?

EDDIE. Part of the Mayor's annual crackdown on vice, for the holidays. I do admire the Mayor for caring so much about vice, around the holidays.

OFFICER McCLAIN. We all do.

EDDIE. Of course I had no idea that people were gambling all around me. Actors, mostly. That establishment apparently draws quite a theatrical crowd.

BRYAN. Pop *could* have gone there in search of a telephone.

CHARLIE. Who's to say he didn't?

EDDIE JR. I believe you, Pop.

EDDIE. Well, they definitely had a telephone there. I remember that. It was black. I could see that telephone, across the room, almost beckoning me. A beautiful sight.

IRVING. Did you win, Pop?

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EDDIE. Well, I certainly don't condone illegal gambling. But had I been gambling, I can assure you I'd have won. And you'd all be sharing in the proceeds today.

ASSORTED FOY CHILDREN. Ya-ay!

MRS. FOY. Hush, children. Thank heavens, all charges have now been dropped.

EDDIE. Well, none of the New York policemen actually witnessed me gambling. Others around me may have been playing blackjack, roulette, poker, and such; I didn't notice. But when the police arrived, I was simply standing there, as innocent as child. I didn't even have any money on me, at that time.

IRVING. You'd lost it all by then, Pop?

EDDIE. You know, officers, I was actually pinched in that very same joint on two separate occasions, within a span of one week.

OFFICER McCLAIN. And both times you were simply searching for a telephone?

EDDIE. What are the odds? Remarkable, isn't it?

IRVING. Almost unbelievable, Pop.

OFFICER McCLAIN. I always enjoy your work on stage, Mr. Foy. Everyone says you're the best song-and-dance comedian in America.

EDDIE. Well, I'm not quite the dancer I used to be. I'm pushing 60 now. But I do my best.

OFFICER McCLAIN. I like that bit in your new show, where you're playing a lawyer arguing with a judge. And you're saying--

EDDIE. "How dare they accuse my client here of forging checks. Your honor, he can't even sign his own name."

OFFICER McCLAIN. *(As the Judge in the scene he's recalling.)* "No one's accusing him of signing his own name."

EDDIE. *(Proudly.)* I wrote that bit, you know. Inspired by my own lawyer and close personal advisor, Mr. C. A. McCarroll.

OFFICER McCUNE. Mr. Foy, we're going to have the Policeman's Ball later this year. It's a big charity event. Maybe you could be a special guest entertainer. If you could get up and perform a couple of your famous numbers, it would really make the night.

EDDIE. I'll have to think about that....

CHARLIE. Do it, Pop!

MADELINE. You never refuse a request to do a benefit.

OFFICER McCLAIN. You could do, "Always Leave 'Em Laughing." That song was always one of my favorites.

EDDIE JR. Mine, too!

IRVING. I like that song.

EDDIE. I'm not sure I'd even remember all the words to that song--much less the little gags we used to work into it.

(Irving Foy and Eddie Foy Jr.--the two youngest of the Foy children--step forward and go into the routine, obviously in imitation of the way they've often seen their father do it.)

(SONG # 3. "ALWAYS LEAVE THEM LAUGHING WHEN YOU SAY GOODBYE.")

IRVING.

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ALWAYS LEAVE THEM LAUGHING WHEN YOU SAY GOODBYE.
NEVER LINGER LONG ABOUT, OR ELSE YOU'LL WEAR YOUR WELCOME OUT.

EDDIE JR.

WHEN YOU MEET A FELLOW WITH A TEAR-DIMMED EYE,
YOU CAN LEAVE HIM LAUGHING, IF YOU TRY.

IRVING.

WHEN HE TELLS HIS TROUBLES, INTERRUPT HIM WITH A JOKE.
TELL HIM ONE HE'S NEVER HEARD AND HE'LL DECLARE THAT IT'S A BIRD!

EDDIE JR. Say, waiter! Waiter! Do you serve ladies in this restaurant?

IRVING. Sure. First, prove you're a lady.

EDDIE JR. No, you don't understand. I'm Eddie Foy, the famous entertainer! I'm thinking of taking my wife to this fine restaurant and I want to make sure she'd like it. Mrs. Foy is very fond of baked Virginia ham. Do you serve hams here?

IRVING. We'll serve anybody, Mr. Foy. Even you.

EDDIE JR. First, I need to sample the food and see if it's good enough. Bring me some ham.

IRVING. This is our very best ham.

EDDIE JR. Is this ham cured?

IRVING. Sure it is.

EDDIE JR. I suspect it may have had a relapse.

IRVING. Well, try our dessert. Everyone talks about our Strawberry Shortcake.

EDDIE JR. You call this Strawberry Shortcake? I can see the cake, but where are the strawberries?

IRVING. That's what we're short of.

EDDIE JR. Stop! Stop with the kidding. I'm Eddie Foy. Foy. I've been an entertainer for 50 years!

IRVING. I saw you 50 years ago. And you sound the same today as you did back then.

EDDIE JR. Why, thank you!

IRVING. *(To the audience.)* Can you believe it, folks? HE thinks that's a compliment.

IRVING and **EDDIE JR.** One-two-three-four!

IRVING.

WHEN THEY'RE GIGGLING GOOD, YOU KNOW, THAT'S THE TIME TO TURN AND GO.

IRVING and **EDDIE JR.**

ALWAYS LEAVE THEM LAUGHING WHEN YOU SAY GOODBYE!

OFFICER McCUNE. *(To Eddie.)* Maybe you kids should perform at the Policeman's Ball.

IRVING. Aw, we've never performed outside of our home.

EDDIE JR. And it's never gonna happen.

IRVING. We're not some "song-and-dance kids." We were just sorta imitating our Dad.

EDDIE JR. Our Mom used to be in the show business, too. But she gave it up, to raise us.

EDDIE. *(To the policemen.)* Officers, I'd love to perform for you. Why don't you stay and join us for dinner?
We can talk things over, make our plans. It will be fun.

OFFICER McClain. Oh, we couldn't stay for dinner

EDDIE. But you must!

MRS. FOY. Our home is your home.

IRVING. It's a rule; anyone who sets foot in this house stays for dinner. And usually sings.

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OFFICER McCUNE. Well, actually, we are almost through working for the day.

EDDIE. And how much crime is anyone liable to commit in New Rochelle on a snowy winter's day like today?

OFFICER McCUNE. It's not like we spend that much time chasing real criminals anyway, way out here in the country—more often, we're just chasing mischief-makers.

CHARLIE. And most of the likely suspects are already right here in this very room.

OFFICER McClain. You're sure we wouldn't be imposing?

EDDIE. Nonsense!

IRVING. There's usually someone extra at suppertime.

EDDIE. I've actually invited a few of our theater friends to stop by.

MRS. FOY. And I've invited my sister to join us, too.

EDDIE. There's always room for one more.

OFFICER McClain. Well, then we'd be much obliged.

(A nurse enters, with some medicine.)

NURSE. Mrs. Foy, it's time for your medicine.

(Mrs. Foy takes it.)

Perhaps you'd like to rest in your room for a while before dinner? You like to take a nap around this time, don't you?

MRS. FOY. I'm enjoying this day, Charlotte. It's good having the whole family here together. They're the best medicine for me. And we all might want to sing a bit more, before supper.

NURSE. Just so long as you don't get over-tired, Mrs. Foy. Remember what Doctor O'Reilly said.

EDDIE. *(To the policemen.)* We have Nurse Moore staying with us, just till Mrs. Foy gets her strength back.

The Influenza has been powerful bad this winter.

MRS. FOY. *(To her husband, softly.)* It's a bit more than just Influenza, Eddie; you know that.

EDDIE. *(To Mrs. Foy.)* You're beginning to get stronger now, though. I don't care what that doctor says.

MRS. FOY. Oh, Eddie.

EDDIE. I can see it.

NURSE. *(To Mr. Foy.)* Mrs Foy does seem to be having a good day, today; sir.

EDDIE. Mrs. Foy, why don't you start us off on that song you love? It always makes us all feel better.

(SONG #4. "IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME"—First Reprise.)

MRS. FOY.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME,

ALL.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

STROLLING THROUGH THE SHADY LANES WITH YOUR BABY MINE.

EDDIE.

YOU HOLD HER HAND ,

MRS. FOY.

AND SHE HOLDS YOURS,

ALL.

AND THAT'S A VERY GOOD SIGN
THAT SHE'S YOUR TOOTSIE-WOOTSIE,

EDDIE. (*Spoken.*) Where?

(*We hear a loud knocking on a door; or else a doorbell. The singing stops.*)

MRS. FOY. Bryan, will you go see who's at the door, please. (*Bryan exits.*)

RICHARD. It's probably my teacher, Miss Charney, Pop; she's coming over tonight.

EDDIE. I remember hearing something about that.

RICHARD. She apparently wants to talk to you and Ma.

CHARLIE. For no reason at all.

EDDIE. Well, we're a popular family.

(*Bryan returns, with a sharp-faced woman who looks none too pleased.*)

BRYAN. Mom, Pop, it's our next-door neighbor, Miss Grouse.

MISS GROUSE. Mr. and Mrs. Foy, if I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times—I do not want your wild, unruly children, or their wild, unruly pets on my property.

EDDIE. My children do love their pets.

MISS GROUSE. It's like living next to a circus.

EDDIE JR. I like circuses.

EDDIE. Me too, Eddie Jr.! Children, remind me to take you to the circus the next time it comes around.

IRVING and EDDIE JR. (*Chanting, with anticipation.*) The circus is coming to town, the circus is coming to town!

MISS GROUSE. Mr. Foy! One of your children and his great, big, mangy dog invaded my home this afternoon.

EDDIE. Bryan, my lad, you have a big dog, Rex. Has he been getting onto Miss Grouse's property?

BRYAN. No, Pop, he's been in our house the whole time, in the basement where he belongs.

EDDIE. And Richard, your dog Wilson has been in the basement, too?

RICHARD. Absolutely, Pop. Wilson's a good dog.

EDDIE. And Eddie Jr.?

EDDIE JR. Well, my dog, King, gets too lonesome if I put him in the basement. So he sleeps in my room, in my bed with me.

EDDIE. And Irving doesn't have a big dog. Just a little teeny stray mutt that he found in the streets.

IRVING. Pop says my little doggy has to stay outside because who knows where that little doggy has been.

EDDIE. You don't let him sleep in your bed, do you, Irving?

IRVING. Oh, no, Pop. You told me he has fleas. So I let him sleep in Eddie Jr.'s bed.

EDDIE. And Mary, here, just has kittens.

MARY. Toby, Tiffany, and Sarah. Wouldn't hurt a flea.

MISS GROUSE. Mr. Foy! I clearly saw this great big, mangy, gray dog standing right in my kitchen! I practically fainted. When I looked up again, that dog was gone! And so were a whole plate of cookies that I'd set out to cool.

IRVING. Some dogs LIKE cookies.

MISS GROUSE. And then I saw that dog heading straight back to your house, along with one of the Foy kids,

all bundled up for the winter.

IRVING. Well, nobody had better accuse my dear sweet sister Madeline of anything. Because Madeline doesn't even have a great big, mangy, gray pet dog.

EDDIE. That is so true.

IRVING. Madeline has a great big, mangy, gray pet GOAT named Little Sethy. And I'm not saying anything about where that Madeline and that goat might have been this afternoon.

EDDIE. Good boy!

IRVING. Because I promised Madeline I wouldn't say ANYTHING if she'd just let me share the cookies.

MISS GROUSE. (*Exasperated.*) Oh, them Foy kids and their pets—dogs and cats; even a goat!

EDDIE. We also have a horse and a couple of cows, plus some chickens, out back.

BRYAN. We raise pigeons, too.

EDDIE JR. I can juggle a little.

MISS GROUSE. It's like living next to a circus.

IRVING. (*To Miss Grouse, politely.*) You're a very good baker, Miss Grouse. Those were very nice cookies.

MISS GROUSE. (*To Eddie Foy, referring to Irving.*) And that undisciplined little boy you have--keeping a dog in your house that has fleas.

IRVING. (*Softly.*) Not just a dog with fleas, Miss Grouse. I also have a little cat that's got fleas, too, that Pop doesn't even know about.

EDDIE. I don't want that cat in the house. Put it outside!

IRVING. Uhm... I already did put that cat out, Pop. Yep, yep.

EDDIE. You wouldn't be fibbing to me, would you, Irving?

IRVING. No, I put the cat out, Pop.

EDDIE. All right, I just wanted to be sure.

IRVING. If you really think I'd tell a lie about a little thing like that, Pop, then go and put the cat out yourself. It's up in my room.

MISS GROUSE. What's to become of these Foy children?

EDDIE JR. It's one of the age-old questions.

MISS GROUSE. I'm a respectable person, I am. I don't deserve this aggravation. I'm active in the church.

MRS. FOY. I've seen you there often, Miss Grouse.

MISS GROUSE. I volunteer at the orphanage in town, too. Almost every day, I'm out at that orphanage. I'm used to being treated with respect.

MRS. FOY. As well you should be.

MISS GROUSE. When the Foys moved into our neighborhood, I said to all of the neighbors around here: "The circus is coming to town now."

MADELINE. I can do a split.

MISS GROUSE. This used to be a peaceful little neighborhood. We never had show people living here, with their wild wild ways.

MRS. FOY. I'm sorry for your troubles, Miss Grouse.

MISS GROUSE. Do you have any idea what it's like to have an intruder in your house?

MADELINE. It was just an accident, Miss Grouse. My sweet, little pet goat Sethy broke free; and your kitchen door wasn't quite closed all the way.

MISS GROUSE. Living all by myself, a vulnerable single woman, in a big house way out here on the outskirts

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of town—why, just the thought of an intruder makes me very nervous.

MRS. FOY. I'm so sorry.

MISS GROUSE. Every night before I go to bed, I check carefully for intruders. I look in the closet, to make sure there isn't a man hiding there. I look under the bed to make sure there isn't a man hiding there.

EDDIE. Have you ever found a man?

MISS GROUSE. Never!

IRVING. Don't give up hope, Miss Grouse; you're not that old.

MISS GROUSE. This used to be a nice quiet neighborhood. We had all respectable people living here—bookkeepers, shopkeepers, accountants, lawyers—

EDDIE. Boring people.

MISS GROUSE. We never had any ACTORS living in New Rochelle until Mr. and Mrs. Foy moved here.

EDDIE. Almost 20 years ago.

MISS GROUSE. And now the Foyes have actor friends visiting them all the time. I'm not one to gossip or pry, or to stare and spy—

MRS. FOY. Of course not.

MISS GROUSE. But sitting at my window seat, I've seen some of the biggest stars in America making their way to the Foyes' house: George M. Cohan, "the Yankee Doodle Dandy" himself—

EDDIE. An old pal.

MISS GROUSE. And Eva Tanguay—the infamous "I-Don't-Care-Girl"—and sultry Lenore Ulrics.

MRS. FOY. Oh, we've known Eva and Leonore since they started out as chorus kids in Eddie's show, long before they became stars. Good kids.

MISS GROUSE. And that hotsy-totsy, honky tonk woman, Mae West.

EDDIE. Mae and I have shared vaudeville bills.

MRS. FOY. Mae can actually do a pretty good imitation of Eddie. They're dear old friends. I've been inviting them out.

(We hear a loud knocking on a door, or else a doorbell.)

Mary, would you go see who's at the door, please.

(Mary exits.)

RICHARD. *(Calling to Mary.)* If that's my teacher, Miss Charney, please tell her nobody's home.

CHARLIE. Tell her it's the wrong house. Nobody even lives here.

(Mary leads onto the stage a woman and two men. All three are well-dressed, with a kind of flair that suggests they might be show people; the woman is middle-aged, somewhat stocky, rather formidable in appearance; one of the men is middle-aged, well-built, with his hair parted in the middle; the other man is younger, slighter, wearing glasses.)

MARY. It's not Miss Charney, it's--

MISS GROUSE. Why, you're Marie Dressler!

MARIE DRESSLER. Indeed I am.

MISS GROUSE. Marie Dressler! Why, you're my favorite actress!

MRS. FOY. Eddie and I first appeared with Miss Dressler in a musical comedy, "Little Robinson Crusoe," nearly 20 years ago.

(To her guests.)

This is our neighbor, Miss Grouse.

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EDDIE. And the gentleman standing next to Miss Dressler only happens to be the best magician and escape artist in the whole world. Ladies and gentlemen...The Great Houdini.

HOUDINI. *(To Miss Grouse, kissing her hand.)* Your most humble servant, Harry Houdini.

MISS GROUSE. Well, of course I recognize the Great Houdini. Who wouldn't?

HOUDINI. I'm charmed.

MISS GROUSE. *(To Houdini.)* Your escapes from all of those chains and padlocks—when you've obviously got no possible place to hide a key--are positively thrilling.

HOUDINI. Yes, yes they are.

EDDIE. And Harry stays in peak physical condition, too.

HOUDINI. Yes, yes, I do.

EDDIE. Miss Grouse, you should feel his muscles, sometime. Solid as a rock.

HOUDINI. Yes, yes, that's true.

MISS GROUSE. I can only imagine.

EDDIE. And this younger gentleman—standing next to Mr. Houdini—has not only written some of the songs in my current show, "Up and Down Broadway," he actually appears in the show himself, along with me.

Everyone, this is one of my favorite young songwriters, Irving Berlin.

IRVING BERLIN. Eddie, I've brought over some new songs to show you after dinner.

EDDIE. I'm gonna need 'em. I want to finish out the season, starring in "Up and Down Broadway" in New York. And then set out on a year-long vaudeville tour.

IRVING BERLIN. Eddie, there's a new song I've written that I'd love to show you, called "Alexander's Ragtime Band."

EDDIE. Irving, this whole "ragtime" thing is just a passing fad. Here today, forgotten tomorrow. You'll never have any lasting success with a song called "Alexander's Ragtime Band."

BRYAN. I love ragtime, pop.

EDDIE. The younger generation will go for anything. When I was a kid, we had REAL music.

IRVING BERLIN. It's actually a pretty catchy song.

IRVING. I'd sing it.

EDDIE. Oh, ragtime might be all right for kids, I guess. Just give me a simple melody like the ones my mother used to sing.

IRVING BERLIN. Eddie, I'll see if I can come up with something else—a song more to your liking.

EDDIE. *(To Irving Berlin.)* Thank you, Irving, thank you. I mean *(speaking with disdain):* "Alexander's Ragtime Band"

(He shakes his head, as if he knows that song must be a dud. To his kids.)

Sometimes, kids, you can tell, just from hearing a title, that a song's not going to go anywhere.

BRYAN. Really, Pop?

EDDIE. Oh yeah, absolutely. Comes from years of experience. Like being able to tell, simply from hearing the names of the horses at the race track, which horse you should bet on.

EDDIE JR. You can tell which horse to bet on, Pop, just from hearing the names?

EDDIE. Do it all the time.

MRS. FOY. Marie, it's so good to see you again. I had so much fun in that show we were all in, back in the day, in Chicago.

MARIE DRESSLER. *(To Mrs. Foy.)* I remember telling you, "I'd work again with you any time, but I'll never

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work again with that Eddie Foy!”

MRS. FOY. And then of course, the very next show he did, you were co-starring with him again.

EDDIE. Audiences loved our work together.

BRYAN. Miss Dressler, why did you say you’d never work with my father again?

MARIE DRESSLER. Because he’s impossible! Oh, I love Eddie Foy, but working with him on stage is like working with a very young child. No offense to young children.

EDDIE JR. and **IRVING.** None taken.

MARIE DRESSLER. Eddie will do anything for laugh. He’s a clown.

IRVING BERLIN. They call him “the Clown Prince of Broadway.”

MARIE DRESSLER. I am an actress, and a dignified one. I pride myself in delivering the lines of a script exactly as written.

MRS. FOY. For Eddie, a script is just a jumping-off point.

IRVING BERLIN. Eddie’s a master at ad-libbing.

MARIE DRESSLER. I’ve never been comfortable with ad-libbing. In “Little Robinson Crusoe,” I’d be standing there on stage, ready to go into an important monologue, and Eddie would pop out, make that childlike grin of his, and say something totally random, like:

EDDIE. “I once knew a fellow named Willy,
Whose actions were what you’d call silly.

He went to a ball

Dressed in nothing at all

Intending to represent Chile.”

MARIE DRESSLER. When we did our next show together, “Hotel Topsy Turvy,” I begged him: “Edwin, please--no surprises!” All through rehearsals, he was a perfect gentleman. Then came opening night. And when I said my line: “I’m feeling a bit chilly,” he replies:

EDDIE. “Chilly? I once knew a fellow named Willy,
whose actions were what you’d call silly.

He went to a ball,

wearing nothing at all--“

IRVING. “Intending to represent Chile.”

MARIE DRESSLER. I almost screamed.

MRS. FOY. Eddie maintains files of every gag he’s ever done, and every song he’s ever sung.

MARIE DRESSLER. And then he’d go into some utterly irrelevant song.

IRVING BERLIN. Eddie carries hundreds of songs in his head--comic songs, love songs...

EDDIE. “By the Light of the Silvery Moon” will fit almost any situation. You just want to make sure you have a nice prop moon handy. I carry a prop moon in my trunk, for just such emergencies.

MARIE DRESSLER. I came to realize I couldn’t win. Eddie can get away with almost anything on stage. And the audience will always take his side, not mine.

EDDIE. A good moon song has saved many a show.

MARIE DRESSLER. It doesn’t matter what Eddie says or sings; the audiences just take to him. He’s like some little child that everyone seems to adore, for no reason.

MRS. FOY. That’s the first rule for actors: Never share a stage with a child or an animal.

EDDIE. I’ll have to remember that.

MARIE DRESSLER. The audience just knows that Eddie likes them, and they like him.

(SONG #5. "SWEET POPULARITY.")

EDDIE.

SWEET POPULARITY, GLORIOUS POPULARITY,
I'D RATHER HAVE THAN A MILLION
OR A BILLION
OR QUADRILLION.
WHY WEALTH TO CONTENTMENT'S A PARODY.
I ONLY USE IT FOR CHARITY.
MY PLEASURES ARE FEW,
EV'RYTHING THAT I DO
IS FOR POPULARITY.
MY PLEASURES ARE FEW,
EV'RYTHING THAT I DO
IS FOR POPULARITY.

MARIE DRESSLER. We'd get so far from the script, I'd be desperately worrying how we would get ever back. And Eddie might say...

EDDIE. "Ladies and gentlemen, Miss Marie Dressler will now favor us with a song. Contrary to what your ears may tell you, she actually has a lovely voice. Whenever I hear Marie Dressler sing, I think, 'This woman is too big for the theater. She really belongs in silent movies!'"

MARIE DRESSLER. I'd step downstage, trying to concentrate

(she steps downstage, makes a very serious face, as if she is trying hard to concentrate)

Meanwhile, behind me, Eddie would be doing things you would never believe.

MISS GROUSE. Like what?

MARIE DRESSLER. Like... suddenly putting on these ridiculous, comic false teeth. Or fake eyeglasses, or a fright wig! He used to carry such things in his pockets. Without my knowing it, he'd be making faces.

(Behind her, as she speaks, Eddie Foy is doing the very things she is describing—putting in comic false teeth that he's had in his pocket, and putting on glasses, and making faces.)

Different nights, he'd try out different hats, canes.

(Aided by his kids, Eddie Foy is trying out hats and canes, which the kids are pulling out of a prop trunk on stage.)

Eventually he'd scamper off stage.

(Eddie Foy exits.)

I'd tell the audience, "We have finally seen the last of Eddie Foy." And then he'd come loping back on—this time dressed as a woman!

(Eddie Foy returns, wearing a woman's wig, hat, scarf, and dress.)

I'd say, "Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot possibly work under these conditions."

EDDIE. "Oh Marie! Please don't hate me because I'm beautiful."

(We hear a loud knocking on a door, or else a doorbell.)

EDDIE. I'll get that!

MARIE DRESSLER. Don't get me wrong. I love Eddie Foy, but he's never grown up!

(Eddie Foy, still dressed as a woman, leads a woman, Miss Charney, on stage.)

EDDIE. Mrs. Foy, may I present Miss Charney, your children's teacher from the Robert Louis Stevenson School....

(Eddie Foy exits, to change out of the dress.)

MISS CHARNEY. Mrs. Foy, I was hoping we could talk privately. I certainly don't want to embarrass anyone with what I might say.

MRS. FOY. It's all right. Sit right next to me, here on the couch. I'm sure our other guests can talk with each other for a few moments, Say whatever it is you need to say.

BRYAN. Yeah. We're Foys.

CHARLIE. We don't embarrass easily.

MISS CHARNEY. Mrs. Foy, your sons Charlie and Richard, I'm afraid, skip school even more than Bryan used to.

MADELINE. Every kid likes to play hookey.

MISS CHARNEY. And I'm not sure that your kids are learning much of anything. We were studying South America in geography. I asked Charlie to share with the class what he knew about Chile. Can you guess what he replied?

MARIE DRESSLER. I once knew a fellow named Willy,
Whose actions were what you'd call silly.

CHARLIE. He went to a ball
Dressed in nothing at all

ALL OF THE FOY CHILDREN. Intending to represent Chile.

(Eddie strolls back onstage; he's changed out of the dress, and is now back in his usual suit.)

EDDIE. Oh, I taught Charlie that one. The old jokes are still the best, aren't they?

MISS CHARNEY. I don't find that at all funny, Mr. Foy.

EDDIE. Well, I've also been teaching him some of the newer jokes....

MISS CHARNEY. *(Sarcastically.)* I can't wait to hear them.

EDDIE JR. *(To his father.)* And you thought Miss Charney would be a stiff, Pop.

EDDIE. *(Calling over to Harry Houdini.)* Harry, could you keep Eddie Jr. here entertained for a bit, so I can talk with Miss Charney without interruption?

(Gesturing towards Eddie Jr.)

Maybe you could saw him in half, Harry.

HOUDINI. Certainly, Eddie. It will be my pleasure.

MISS CHARNEY. I asked Richard to do a report on George Washington, and he said that you'd entertained Washington's troops at Valley Forge.

EDDIE. Valley Forge? I can't quite recall if I did.

RICHARD. Pop might have been on tour at the time. His producers, the Shuberts, often like to send him out on tours.

MISS CHARNEY. Richard Foy! George Washington lived well over a hundred years ago. I seriously doubt that your father entertained Washington's troops at Valley Forge.

RICHARD. Pop DOES like playing Pennsylvania.

Song-and-Dance Kids by *Chip Deffaa*

EDDIE. Allentown, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, Slatington, Schnecksville... They love me in Schnecksville.

MISS CHARNEY. I tell my students, "Write what you know!" But the Foy kids don't seem to know anything. Although they can be quite creative. Look at this note Charlie once wrote and gave to me, claiming it was from you.

EDDIE. Well, that looks like my signature. If it's a forgery, Charlie did a pretty good job.

CHARLIE. Thank you very much, Pop.

EDDIE. What makes you think I didn't write it?

MISS CHARNEY. Did you read the note? "Please excuse my son Charlie's absence from school on Tuesday. He was in church, celebrating Good Friday."

RICHARD. (*Proudly.*) I actually helped Charlie with that note.

CHARLIE. Us Foy kids stick together in school.

RICHARD. And detention!

MISS CHARNEY. What is to become of these Foy children?

MRS. FOY. We do realize the importance of getting a good education.

EDDIE. Always been a great believer in education, myself. Ah, yes. Years ago, I met this fellow, Old Man Saleeby, who sold apples on Broadway. Came over here from the old country with nothing but one pitiful small sack of apples. I'd always buy apples from him, for luck. Half the days, though, he wouldn't be there. Why? Because he was always taking classes some place, studying how to read, write, and become a good citizen. He took class after class.

MISS CHARNEY. And today?

EDDIE. Miss Charney, have you ever heard of the A & P stores? They're a great big national chain of grocery stores--

MISS CHARNEY. You mean to tell me that that poor immigrant started with nothing but a pitiful sack of apples, got a good education, and today he owns that great national chain of grocery stores?

EDDIE. No, he's still peddling the same old apples at the same old spot. But hardly anyone buys from him anymore. These days, everyone goes to the A & P; prices are so much cheaper; the produce is fresher.

EDDIE JR. Pop always tells him, "Maybe if you'd have tended more to business, instead of spending so much time taking classes, you would have made something of yourself."

MISS CHARNEY. Mr. Foy--

EDDIE. Miss Charney, I do promise to spend more time helping my boys with their studies.

MISS CHARNEY. As I'm sure your father did, when you were a schoolboy.

EDDIE. Actually, Miss Charney, I never went to school. My father died when I was six, and I went to work--singing and dancing on the street corner for change. When I was old enough, I went out on the road as an entertainer.

HOUDINI. I've known Eddie since long before he was famous. We were dirt poor, barnstorming across the midwest--

EDDIE. With dreams of making it big in New York someday.

HOUDINI. (*To Eddie.*) You and I have done all right, haven't we? You've starred in so many hit Broadway shows. You have fans all over the country. Companies are selling Eddie Foy cigars and Eddie Foy hats.

EDDIE. Coca Cola pays me to endorse it.

IRVING BERLIN. The Shuberts pay him lavishly to entertain in their shows.

EDDIE. For which assorted bookies are immensely grateful.

HOUDINI. I've had the pleasure of watching you rise to the top of your profession.

MARIE DRESSLER. And I had the pleasure of witnessing something even more important.

MARY. What, Miss Dressler?

MARIE DRESSLER. I witnessed the entire courtship between your father and mother. This was almost 20 years ago, in a musical comedy that we were all doing. Out of town, in Chicago.

MADELINE. Before our Mom and Pop were married?

MARIE DRESSLER. Oh yes, children. The character your father was playing was supposed to be falling in love with the character your mother was playing.

EDDIE. A musical-comedy kind of romance.

MARIE DRESSLER. Watching the two of them every night from the wings, I could see—even as they'd sing these silly little stage-show love songs together--that they really were falling for one another.

(SONG #6. "MY MUSICAL COMEDY MAIDEN.")

EDDIE. *(Sings, to Mrs. Foy:)*

OH, MY MUSICAL COMEDY MAIDEN, HOW I LOVE YOU.

MRS FOY. *(Sings, to Eddie:)*

OH MY MUSICAL COMEDY BOY, I LOVE YOU TOO.

EDDIE.

YOUR EYES ARE LIKE MUSICAL COMEDY STARS ABOVE YOU.

MRS FOY.

I'LL MAKE A MUSICAL COMEDY PROMISE
THAT I'LL BE MUSICAL COMEDY TRUE.

EDDIE.

BY A MUSICAL COMEDY MINISTER WE'LL BE MARRIED

MRS FOY.

THEN I'LL BE YOUR CUTE LITTLE MUSICAL COMEDY WIFE.

EDDIE and MRS. FOY.

IN OUR MUSICAL COMEDY FLAT.
WITH OUR MUSICAL COMEDY CAT.
WE'LL SETTLE DOWN
AND LIVE A MUSICAL COMEDY LIFE.

MARIE DRESSLER. Everyone in the cast could see—just from watching him sing to her on stage—this was the genuine article. One night, as we were nearing the end of our run in Chicago, Eddie stopped the curtain calls, and told the audience—

EDDIE. "Ladies and gentlemen, I have a very important announcement to make."

MARIE DRESSLER. I thought: "He's going to propose to her." But Eddie just says.

EDDIE. Folks, I've got the best news in the world. Our show has been such a hit in Chicago, the producers have decided to take it to New York!

(SONG #7. "ALL ABOARD FOR BROADWAY.")

EDDIE.

ALL ABOARD FOR BROADWAY,
THAT'S THE PROMISED LAND!
I'M ALL PACKED, I'VE GOT MY DANCIN' SHOES.

MARIE DRESSLER.

SONG AND DANCE MEN NEVER GET THE BLU-UES.

EDDIE.

ALL ABOARD FOR BROADWAY.
I'LL BE BACK SOMEDAY.
GONNA SEE MY NAME IN LIGHTS.
I'M GONNA RULE THOSE NEW YORK NIGHTS.
I CAN'T MISS THAT BROADWAY TRAIN.
ALL ABOARD FOR BROADWAY,
'S WHERE I'M MEANT TO BE!
I'M LEAVIN' CHI-CA-GO, I'VE PAID MY DUES.
I'LL OWN BROADWAY.

MRS. FOY.

THAT'S NOT NEWS!

EDDIE.

ALL ABOARD FOR BROADWAY.
'S WHERE I'M GONNA STAY.
HIT ME WITH THE BIGGEST SPOTLIGHT!
YESSIR, THAT FEELS JUST ABOUT RIGHT.
I'M TAKING THAT BROADWAY TRAIN.

(To Mrs. Foy, kissing her hand.)

Come on, with me!

(SONG #8. "YOU CAN HAVE BROADWAY.")

MRS. FOY.

GIVE ME A LITTLE COTTAGE, ONE I MAY CALL MY OWN.
IN SOME LITTLE COUNTRY VILLAGE
THAT I MAY CALL MY HOME.
A HUBBY THAT'S TRUE,
AND A BABY OR TWO.
A NICE LITTLE INCOME WE'LL SAY.
IF THAT'S EVER MY LOT,
I'M JUST TELLING YOU WHAT,
YOU CAN HAVE BROADWAY.
IF THAT'S EVER MY LOT,
I'M JUST TELLING YOU WHAT,

YOU CAN HAVE BROADWAY.

MRS. FOY. Eddie, when we finish our run here in Chicago, I'm quitting this show. I'm not going to New York City. No one's given me any reason to go to New York City.

EDDIE. *(To his children.)* I realized that if I wanted to hold onto your mother, I needed to marry her. And I did!

MRS. FOY. I retired from the stage to raise our family. Best decision I ever made.

IRVING BERLIN. Mrs. Foy, don't you ever miss singing?

MRS. FOY. I can do all of the singing I want—singing with my children—right here in our home.

(SONG #9. "IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME"—Second Reprise.)

IRVING.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME,

EDDIE JR.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

BRYAN.

STROLLING THROUGH THE SHADY LANES

MARY.

WITH YOUR BABY MINE.

EDDIE.

YOU HOLD HER HAND ,

MRS. FOY.

AND SHE HOLDS YOURS,

RICHARD.

AND THAT'S A VERY GOOD SIGN

ALL.

THAT SHE'S YOUR TOOTSIE-WOOTSIE

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

(The music continues as underscoring. Everyone on stage freezes in place, except for Charlie, who steps forward to speak to the audience while the music plays under him. When he finishes speaking, everyone comes out of their freeze and finishes singing the song.)

CHARLIE. *(Speaking, over the underscoring.)* When I look back upon my childhood, my happiest memories are of the whole family singing together at home, back when Mama was still with us. My boyhood friends thought I was lucky because my father was a big star, and we knew so many celebrities. But to us Foy kids, he was just Pop, you know, and our friends were just our friends. I WAS lucky, though. Even if I took it for granted at the time. Because there was just so much love in our home.

(Charlie steps back into place; everyone unfreezes, and they all finish the song.)

ALL.

AND THAT'S A VERY GOOD SIGN

THAT SHE'S YOUR TOOTSIE-WOOTSIE,

IRVING. *(Spoken.)* Where?

ALL.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

(Everyone on stage freezes, except for Charlie, who steps forward to speak to the audience.)

CHARLIE. We stayed up so late that night. We had a good dinner, we talked, we sang.

(Charlie steps back; everyone else unfreezes, and the action continues.)

MISS GROUSE. Well, I think it's time for us all to be saying goodnight.

OFFICER McCUNE. It's been a truly memorable evening, Mr. and Mrs. Foy.

EDDIE. You should come around more often.

OFFICER McClAIN. And please don't forget the Policeman's Ball, Mr. Foy. Mark the date on your calendar.

EDDIE. We'll all be there. I'll sing, they'll cheer me on.

MRS. FOY. I love having the whole family together. Nothing is more important.

EDDIE. Coca-Cola may not always want my endorsement. The Shuberts may not always want to star me in shows.

MRS. FOY. But so long as we all stick together, we'll be all right.

EDDIE. We're Foys. Nothing can bring this family down.

(We hear a doorbell, or else a loud knocking on a door.)

Well, maybe I spoke too soon. Madeline, will you see who's at the door, please?

(Madeline exits.)

Who could that be, at this hour?

MRS. FOY. Don't forget, my sister wrote she'd be arriving today.

(Madeline comes back on stage, holding the hand of a woman, who is Mrs. Foy's sister.)

MADELINE. It's Aunt Clara.

EDDIE. Speak of the devil!

EDDIE JR. We've never had so many visitors, as we've had lately.

AUNT CLARA. Well, we want to see your mother, children. You can understand that at a time like this, can't you?

MRS. FOY. How long will you be able to stay, Clara?

AUNT CLARA. *(To Mrs. Foy, softly and compassionately.)* I'm not going to leave you now, sister; don't you worry about that. I promise. I'm here for you, and I'm here for the duration.

MRS. FOY. It's been a wonderful night, but I'm fading now.

AUNT CLARA. Let me help you to your room.

MRS. FOY. Good night, everyone.

(Mrs. Foy and Aunt Clara exit.)

EDDIE. We hope to see you all again before too long. If not here at our home, then at the Policemen's Ball.

Now I've got to get the younger Foys off to bed.... Night, night.

(Charlie steps forward to speak to the audience; the others on stage freeze in place while he speaks.)

CHARLIE. I remember Pop circling the date on the calendar when he had promised he'd perform at the Policeman's Ball. When that night finally came, however, Pop—who'd never before missed a performance in his life--was not performing anywhere.

Our mother died that weekend. She'd been in failing health, but still—it was a great shock for us. My father

was in a daze. All of us wondered what was to become of our family. In the days and weeks that followed, many of our friends offered my father advice.

(Charlie steps back, and the action resumes.)

- MARIE DRESSLER.** Eddie, you just have to throw yourself into your work now. You're booked to do a year-long vaudeville tour, starting in just a few weeks, aren't you? The show must go on.
- EDDIE.** If I'm away on tour for the next 12 months, who'll be watching the kids here? I certainly won't be able to.
- MISS GROUSE.** Mr. Foy, the orphanage where I volunteer would be perfectly willing to take in all seven of the Foy kids.
- EDDIE.** I don't want my kids going to an orphanage.
- AUNT CLARA.** I could raise the kids—a couple of them anyway. Maybe your sister Bernice could take in some.
- AUNT BERNICE.** If I had to, I could take in one or two of them.
- AUNT CLARA.** I just can't see Eddie raising the kids.
- EDDIE.** Nobody's going to split up my family.
- AUNT BERNICE.** *(To Eddie.)* If you're traveling all over the country, performing in one vaudeville theater after another, someone has to be here, raising the children properly.
- AUNT CLARA.** And Eddie, if I can be forthright: you gamble too much. You're highly paid, but between the card games and the horse races, you never have a dime to your name.
- EDDIE.** I've always provided for my family.
- AUNT BERNICE.** You're a successful entertainer. But—truth be told, now—you never really were cut out to be a parent.
- MISS CHARNEY.** To be honest, Mr. Foy, I can't picture you giving your children the help they need with their homework. Your kids need to stay in school, concentrate on their schoolwork.
- OFFICER MCCUNE.** And Mr. Foy, kids—boys especially--need a father giving them firm guidance.
- EDDIE.** Are you suggesting I ought to retire, stay here and look after the kids?
- DR. O'REILLY.** As your physician, Eddie, I think it might not be a bad idea for you to take some time off from performing; for decades you've worked non-stop. Keep Nurse Moore here on for a while longer, if you like, to help out.
- NURSE.** Give yourself time to mourn. The children will need time, too.
- EDDIE.** Maybe you're right. I'll just stay here at home, and devote myself to my kids.
- C. A. McCARROLL.** If you stay home, I'm afraid you won't have a home for very long.
- EDDIE.** Casey! I didn't even see you come in. Friends, this is C. A. McCarroll—knows me as well as anybody.
- C. A. McCARROLL.** As your lawyer and advisor, I can tell you, Eddie—you have to do the vaudeville tour for the next year. You have an ironclad contract.
- EDDIE.** I don't want to tour any more.
- C. A. McCARROLL.** Eddie, you need to work. You don't have any savings. At all.
- EDDIE.** Well, I have huge expenses—a 20-room house to maintain, seven kids.... I support some of my relatives.
- BRYAN.** Pop's very generous with charities, and causes he believes in.
- MARY.** He'll never turn down a request for a handout.
- CHARLIE.** And sometimes the horses he bets on don't come in.
- C. A. McCARROLL.** If you don't work, Eddie, the bank will soon be taking this home away from you.
- EDDIE.** And if I do work, someone will taking my kids away from me.

Song-and-Dance Kids by *Chip Deffaa*

CHARLIE. *(Stepping forward to talk to the audience; everyone else on stage stands frozen as he talks.)* Kids always hear more than adults imagine. We had just lost our mom, and now we were hearing that maybe we might be losing our home, too. Then George M. Cohan came in—an old family friend. He’d made it to the top as an entertainer. And he was the first one to come up with the idea....

(Charlie steps back, and everyone else unfreezes.)

GEORGE M. COHAN. Eddie, put the kids into the act with you. Do the vaudeville tour as “Eddie Foy and the Seven Little Foys.”

EDDIE. That’s the craziest idea I’ve ever heard of.

C. A. McCARROLL. People paying good money to see the one-and-only Eddie Foy aren’t going to want to see seven ragamuffin kids who’ve never had a singing or dancing lesson in their lives.

GEORGE M. COHAN. *(To the Foy children.)* Wouldn’t you like singing and dancing on stage every night with your Pop?

BRYAN. No way!

RICHARD. Never!

MARY. Not in a million years!

IRVING. Maybe.

EDDIE. It’s unanimous. My kids don’t want to be performers.

EDDIE JR. I can juggle a little.

HOUDINI. *(To Eddie Jr.)* I could teach you a magic trick or two.

GEORGE M. COHAN. If you kids, with your Dad , put together your own act, it will be unique.

IRVING. Song-and-dance kids.

MISS GROUSE. But the Foy children are barely even civilized. They’re like little wild animals.

IRVING, EDDIE JR. *(Making growling or roaring sounds; trying to sound like animals.)* Rawwwwwr.

CHARLIE. Speaking for myself, I’m not an animal. At the Robert Louis Stevenson School, I’m generally considered the Class Clown.

MISS GROUSE. Living next to the Foys is like living next to a circus, with animals and clowns—

MADELINE. And acrobats! I can do splits.

OFFICER McCUNE. *(To Eddie.)* You’re forgetting one other thing, though—the law!

OFFICER McCLAIN. So many states have passed tough new child-labor laws lately, forbidding kids from working.

C. A. McCARROLL. Yeah. And these new laws specifically forbid kids from working on stage.

OFFICER McCUNE. And you have organizations like the Society to Prevent Cruelty to Children making sure the laws are enforced.

OFFICER McCLAIN. If you put seven kids, all under the age of 16, on the stage, you’re sure to be arrested--

OFFICER McCUNE. Fined--

OFFICER McCLAIN. Maybe even jailed.

C. A. McCARROLL. A tough judge could declare you an unfit parent, take away your kids.

EDDIE. What am I to do? What’s going to happen to my family?

C. A. McCARROLL. I don’t know about your family, Eddie. But in three weeks, you’re going to honor your contract. You’re going to show up—by yourself—and launch the tour at Keating’s Variety Arts Theater, at Brighton Beach.

EDDIE. I think we’d better call it a night.

MARIE DRESSLER. We'll show ourselves out.

(Blackout. We hear the banging of a gavel: Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang..... As the lights come up, we see it is Eddie Foy wielding the gavel, in the parlor of the Foy home. His children are seated, looking at him.)

EDDIE. I call to order this official Foy family meeting. We need to discuss the future of our family. In less than three weeks, I'm going out on a nationwide vaudeville tour. And you're all going with me, and joining the act.

MADELINE. I'm not going to perform.

RICHARD. Me, either. Not now. Not ever.

CHARLIE. Don't we have to discuss this first, Pop?

BRYAN. And put it to a family vote?

EDDIE. Oh, we're going to discuss this all right. And then we're going to go out, all together, on a year-long tour. Doing an act as a family. Which we'll write as family.

CHARLIE. You'll be outvoted, Pop!

MADELINE. Seven to one.

EDDIE. Yeah? Well, in this particular case, my vote will count seven times as much as usual.

EDDIE JR. We could be arrested, Pop!

IRVING. Thrown in jail!

EDDIE. Well, I've talked it over with Harry Houdini, and George M. Cohan. We're sure lucky to have friends like that.

IRVING. If we get arrested, will Houdini bust us out of jail?

EDDIE. He says he'd be willing to serve as a character witness. Tell the judge we've all got good character—each and every one of us.

EDDIE JR. Aw, perjury's against the law, Pop.

RICHARD. And Mr. Cohan? Will he be a character witness, too?

EDDIE. He says he'll be willing to put on a free show, at whatever prison we might be sent to.

IRVING. Wow.

EDDIE. Now all we have to do is put together an act. You'll be song-and-dance kids.

RICHARD. We can't do it!

EDDIE. Haven't I taken you to see the best dancers in vaudeville--Youngstone, Gray, Sauter, and Moore. What do they have that you don't have?

THE FOY KIDS. Talent!

EDDIE. So, maybe you're not dancers. Maybe you'll wow audiences with your original songs and sketches.

RICHARD. Pop, we don't know anything about writing songs, or skits.

EDDIE. Just write what you know.

EDDIE JR. We don't know anything. Ask anyone.

IRVING. People say us Foy kids are just like animals.

EDDIE. Frankly, that seems a bit unfair to the animals.

CHARLIE. People say we'll never amount to anything.

EDDIE. And you believe them?!?

CHARLIE. *(To his siblings.)* Watch it! Pop's going to give us one of his pep talks.

Song-and-Dance Kids by *Chip Deffaa*

EDDIE. Charlie my boy, when I was growing up there was a scrawny little kid in my neighborhood named “No-Pants O’Gara.” He came from the poorest family in the neighborhood—barely had any money for clothes. And was none too bright. Everyone always said to him: “No-Pants O’Gara, you’re never going to amount to anything.”

CHARLIE. And what became of him?

EDDIE. He never amounted to anything.

MARY. Really?

EDDIE. Well, today he’s a Congressman. Lives up in a big house in Devon-on-the-Eddy. And represents our district. But had he worked hard, like I did—had he shown some initiative--No-Pants O’Gara *could* have become a song-and-dance man. The most important and satisfying job on earth.

EDDIE JR. I don’t want to become a song-and-dance man.

EDDIE. All it takes is confidence. When I was growing up, there were these two identical twin brothers--Siamese twin bothers--who lived down the street from me; born and raised in Chicago. And the one brother just had so much confidence.

IRVING. What was his name?

EDDIE. Uh, Jumpin’ Jack Sprack. Yes. And he wanted to be a tap dancer, even though he only had one leg. He had a wooden leg, you know, which he used to whittle on when he was nervous; it was quite small. But every day he’d look in the mirror and tell himself, “Someday, Jack Sprack, you’re going to be the greatest tap-dancer in the world. And the best-dressed, too.” He was very poor back then, used to make all of his own clothes out of duct tape and crepe paper. But that brother had confidence. His twin brother, alas, had no confidence.

EDDIE JR. Were they really Siamese twins?

EDDIE. The genuine article—born and raised in Siam.

CHARLIE. I thought you said they were born in Chicago.

EDDIE. Well, the one brother was. Yes. The other brother, however, was born in Siam. And do you know what became of those two Siamese twin brothers?

IRVING. Today the confident brother tours everywhere as the greatest and best-dressed one-legged tap dancer in the world.

CHARLIE. And the other brother is stuck—still living at home, poor fellow, with his boring old father.

EDDIE. (*Nodding sagely.*) Yes, yes; that’s the moral. There’s a very good lesson in there for all of us.

RICHARD. Pop, we’ll never make it in show business.

EDDIE. You start small, but dream big. If you start small, you can work your way up to anything. I’m friends with Ibrahim and Wazzim, the world’s greatest sword-swallowers. You think they were always the world’s greatest sword-swallowers? No! They started small—swallowing salad forks, soup spoons, pen-knives. Maybe an occasional light-bulb for variety. Worked their way up! Today they’re great stars. Extremely happy... except for occasional bouts of indigestion. OK, now we’re going to sit down and write ourselves some cute little songs for the act. Maybe you’re not Irving Berlins. Not yet! But I bet you can write some fine songs.

BRYAN. We don’t know *anything* about writing songs.

EDDIE. And you think any of those professional songwriters do? Why, they just make stuff up. Make stuff up! You kids are good at making things up, aren’t you?

RICHARD. No!

EDDIE JR. Never!

IRVING. Fibbing is a sin, Papa.

EDDIE. And we are born sinners, every one of us. I have faith in you children.

MADLINE. What if we can't do it? What, if in three weeks, we're not nearly ready to perform as an act?

EDDIE. Then I will to tour the country by myself for the next year. Perform in vaudeville theaters as a "single."
And Lord knows what will become of our family, then.

BRYAN. But how are we ever gonna create songs and jokes, Pop? And put together an act?

EDDIE. It's not as hard as you think. What was Mama's favorite song?

CHARLIE. "In the Good Old Summer Time."

EDDIE. Well, I was present when that song was written. It happened right on Brighton Beach, in Brooklyn—right where we're going to be making our vaudeville debut. There were these two songwriters I knew, and this is how they always worked. We'll act it out. Okay, I'll be the first songwriter, and Bryan, you'll be the partner.

(Speaking to Bryan, but affecting a different voice; he is now pretending to be the songwriter.)
OK, partner, we're going to create a song together. I'll start it off. Then when you hear whatever little phrase I've thought up, you come up with the next phrase—just anything to follow it. And then I'll add the next bit, until we've got a complete song. Ready?

(SONG #10. "IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME."--Third Reprise.)

EDDIE.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME,--

Now you sing something, anything.

BRYAN.

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

EDDIE. You don't have to repeat exactly what I've suggested, partner. Now see if you can come up with something new to follow what I sing next—just sing whatever pops into your head

STROLLING THROUGH THE SHADY LANES--

BRYAN.

--WITH YOUR BABY MINE.

EDDIE. Perfect!

YOU HOLD HER HAND --

BRYAN.

--AND SHE HOLDS YOURS,

EDDIE. That's logical.

AND THAT'S A VERY GOOD SIGN.

THAT--

BRYAN.

--SHE'S YOUR TOOTSIE-WOOTSIE,

EDDIE. Where?

EDDIE and **THE FOY CHILDREN.**

IN THE GOOD OLD SUMMER TIME.

EDDIE. And kids, that's exactly the way they wrote that song—each one taking turns, making up the song bit by bit as they went along.

IRVING. Wow!

EDDIE. Even a child could do it.

IRVING. I'm a child.

EDDIE JR. I'm an animal. Rawr!

EDDIE. And didn't that song become the biggest hit in many years? I was there when they wrote it, just like that, on the boardwalk in Brighton Beach.

IRVING. Papa, is that really a true story?

EDDIE. Ah, yes, Babykins. Almost every word of it. Quite a bit of it, actually. Look, kids, as long as we work together, we can't possibly fail.

IRVING. Unless we're really terrible.

EDDIE. Now we're going to make up some good songs and jokes of our own... Bryan, can you start playing a vamp on the piano?

(Bryan starts playing.)

Now I'll start our song. I'll make up a phrase or two. Then I want one of you to contribute the next phase or two. Then let someone else add the next bit, and so on until we've got a song.

(SONG #11. "STORIES ADAM TOLD TO EVE.")

EDDIE.

I WENT INTO A BUTCHER SHOP, A PLACE I REALLY DREAD--

MARY.

"GIVE ME A POUND OF DOG MEAT," TO THE BUTCHER MAN I SAID.

THE BUTCHER MAN CALLED ME ASIDE, AND WHISPERED IN MY EAR.

CHARLIE.

HE SAID, "MARY, SHOULD I WRAP IT UP, OR WILL YOU EAT IT HERE? "

MARY. Stop right there! If Charlie goes on like that, I'm quitting this act. I'm quitting this whole family.

EDDIE. Ah! Passion! Genuine emotion! A performer's greatest ally! Use it in the act, Mary! OK, Foy children, let's keep this song going. Who's next? Who's got an idea? Anyone?

MADLINE.

MY BROTHER CHARLIE BOUGHT HIMSELF SOME WOOLEN UNDERWEAR,

EDDIE JR.

HE WANTED SOME PROTECTION FROM THE DAMP AND CHILLY AIR.

MADLINE.

HE SENT A LETTER TO ME, AND IT TOOK AWAY MY BREATH.

HE WROTE:

CHARLIE.

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THIS WOOLEN UNDERWEAR HAS TICKLED ME TO DEATH.
ARRRRGGGHHHH!

And that was the last that anyone ever saw handsome young Charlie Foy. He snuck off by himself, and didn't have to be in the Foy family act anymore. Today he owns a large, nationwide chain of grocery stores.

EDDIE. Don't stop now, Charlie! You're inspired. You must never stop when inspiration is hitting you. Give me the next line of the song! Right away! Don't even think--

CHARLIE.

MY LITTLE SISTER MARY, SHE HAS CAUSED US ALL TO WEEP--

EDDIE. Good!

IRVING.

THE WHOLE NIGHT LONG POOR SISTER, SHE KEEPS WALKING IN HER SLEEP.

EDDIE. I like it!

CHARLIE.

IF UNCLE BILL COULD DO THE SAME WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO FRET.

EDDIE.

HE'D BE UPON THE POLICE FORCE OF DEAR OLD PITTSBURG YET.

EDDIE. See? THIS is how you write a song.

IRVING. And I can make up jokes, Daddy..

EDDIE. You probably inherited my wit. Tell me a joke, Babykins.

IRVING. Knock knock.

EDDIE. Who is there?

IRVING. Little Sethy.

EDDIE. Little Sethy who?

IRVING. Little Sethy the goat!

EDDIE. Uh-hmm.... "Little Sethy the goat" is not funny.

IRVING. Yes he is. Little Sethy is actually a very funny goat. You just have to get to know him better, Daddy.

EDDIE. I mean, that joke doesn't really work, Babykins. There's no surprise. A joke has to have an element of surprise.

IRVING. Knock knock.

EDDIE. Who is there?

IRVING. Madame Tetrzinni.

EDDIE. Ah! The famous opera singer. Now we're getting somewhere. OK, I'll bite.

Madame Tetrzinni who?

IRVING. Little Sethy the goat!

(Pleased with himself.)

Didn't I surprise you, Daddy?

EDDIE. Babykins, that joke of yours might need a little more work. A joke has to pay off. It's got to be funny.

MARY. How would you tell a joke about a goat, Daddy?

EDDIE. Something like this... Bryan, work with me.

(To Bryan, going into a comedy routine.)

Ah, say, young man. I have a goat at home, and his name is Little Sethy. And every morning, I feed that goat

Song-and-Dance Kids by *Chip Deffaa*

two pounds of nails and a tomato can.

BRYAN. Every morning you feed your goat two pounds of nails and a tomato can? Can't that diet hurt him?

EDDIE. Well, the nails won't hurt him...

THE FOY CHILDREN. ...but the tomato can!

EDDIE. See, THAT'S a joke. It's a play on words--"tomato can." Tomato can. Get It?

IRVING. Uh-huh.

EDDIE JR. But Irving's joke is funnier, Daddy

BRYAN. Are you thinking what I'm thinking, Pop? Maybe we're not really cut out to be entertainers.

CHARLIE. Maybe Miss Charney is right.

RICHARD. Maybe we need to stay in school, concentrate on our schooling.

MARY. And leave all the entertaining to you.

BRYAN. I hate to admit this, Pop, but I actually kind of like school.

CHARLIE. I like sitting up on that big rock behind the school, in the winter--my throne!-- and throwing snowballs at everybody walking by.

EDDIE JR. New Rochelle is our home. I don't want to go on tour.

MARY. Maybe you should just do that vaudeville tour by yourself, Pop.

EDDIE. Hey, we don't give up that easily. What are we?

EDDIE JR. We're animals. Rawwwwwrrrrrr.

IRVING. Rawwwrrrr... The circus is coming to town.

EDDIE. We're FOYS--that's what we are! And us Foys stick together. No matter what!

IRVING. Uh-huh.

EDDIE. We're going to put together the best family act we possibly can.

IRVING. Even if we're terrible.

EDDIE. We've got to at least try. Right? Well, kids, I'm kinda tuckered out.

BRYAN. You're going to bed, Pop?

EDDIE. Maybe I'll play a little solitaire before turning in. I've got a lot to mull over.

BRYAN. OK, all Foy kids--up to my room! We can stay up a little longer and work on the act. I got some ideas.

RICHARD. Me, too!

IRVING. Maybe we could teach Little Sethy to tap dance

BRYAN. OK, everybody.... Let Pop get his rest now.

RICHARD. Pop, if try our very hardest but we still can't quite pull it off, you'll just do the tour by yourself, right?

EDDIE. Yeah.

RICHARD. To tell the truth, I'm worried, Pop. We're not entertainers.

BRYAN. But we have to think positive! And for the next three weeks, we're doing nothing except working on our act. What are we?

EDDIE JR. Animals!

(The children exit. Eddie Foy, looking rather deflated now that the kids are gone, gets a pack of cards, and begins laying out the cards, as if to play solitaire. Then he stops, and goes to the telephone.)

EDDIE. *(Speaking into the telephone, somberly.)* Operator, please connect me with Mr. Irving Berlin, the Hotel Astor, New York City... Irving, it's Eddie. I'm so discouraged. Since Mrs. Foy died, I can't even sleep. In

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less than three weeks, I have to start the new vaudeville tour. Yeah, I know I told you I was going to put my kids in the act. But I can't imagine them ever being good enough to appear on a professional stage... I know, I know; we have to try. I'll keep encouraging them to work on the act. I'll tell 'em: "Write what you know!" But they're just kids--what do they know? If by some miracle they can eventually get it together, I'll let them perform with me. But my hunch is, it will only be me--not the kids--doing this final vaudeville tour. And then I think I'll retire. My heart's just not in it anymore. Come to the opening night, Irving, and please bring friends. I'm going to need all the moral support I can get... Night, Irving. You take care...

(SONG #12. "ALL BY MYSELF.")

EDDIE.

ALL BY MYSELF IN THE MORNING,
ALL BY MYSELF IN THE NIGHT;
I SIT ALONE IN MY COZY MORRIS CHAIR,
SO UNHAPPY THERE,
PLAYING SOLITAIRE.
ALL BY MYSELF I GET LONELY
WATCHING THE CLOCK ON THE SHELF.
I WISH I COULD REST MY WEARY HEAD ON SOMEBODY'S SHOULDER.
OH YEAH.
I HATE GROWIN' OLDER
ALL BY MYSELF.

(END OF ACT ONE.)

34 additional pages in ACT TWO

ABOUT THE AUTHOR...

ASCAP/Deems Taylor Award-winner **Chip Deffaa** has written eight books dealing with music and popular culture, including "Blue Rhythms" and "Voices of the Jazz Age," both published by the University of Illinois Press. And this is his ninth published play.

For 18 years, he covered entertainment--including jazz, cabaret, and theater--for "The New York Post." He has written for magazines ranging from "Down Beat" to "Entertainment Weekly."

He is a member of the Dramatists Guild, the Stage Directors & Choreographers Society, the Drama Desk, ASCAP, the American Theater Critics Association, the Jazz Journalists Association, and NARAS.

He has written and directed in New York five different musicals about master showman George M. Cohan--the most recent being the one-man show "George M. Cohan Tonight!," produced Off-Broadway by the Irish Repertory Theater. The George M. Cohan Project originated at the Chip Deffaa Invitational Theater Festival, held at the Chashama Theaters on 42nd Street, New York City.

Deffaa has written some 20 plays in total, including "The Fanny Brice Story," "Yankee Doodle Dandy," "The Seven Little Foys," "Irving Berlin and Co.," "Theater Boys," "The Johnny Mercer Jamboree," "Mad About the Boy," and "One Night with Fanny Brice." All of Deffaa's shows are available for licensing.

Deffaa also has written liner notes for countless albums, including ones by such Grammy Award-winning artists as Miles Davis, Ruth Brown, Diane Schuur, Benny Goodman, Tito Puente, Ray Brown, and the Count Basie Orchestra. And he has hosted his own radio program, "Rhythm is Our Business."

Deffaa is a graduate of Princeton University, where he was an editor of the "Tiger" magazine. He has been a trustee of the Princeton "Tiger" magazine for 25 years.

Deffaa is profiled in Marquis' "Who's Who in the World," "Who's Who in America," and "Who's Who in Entertainment."

He is represented by Peter Sawyer, President of the Fifi Osgard Agency, 110 W. 40th St., Suite #704, New York, New York 10018, tel. (212) 764-1000 For further information, please visit: www.ChipDeffaa.com.