



R. Eugene Jackson

Inspired by the Brothers Grimm fairytale

Norman Maine Publishing

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Norman Maine Publishing
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THE ELVES AND THE BOOTEE MAKER

COMEDY. Inspired by the Brothers Grimm fairytale, “The Elves and the Shoemaker.” Granny and Pappy are down to their last \$10. No, wait. They already spent that. They’re totally broke! But when some neighbors send a letter to the North Pole Elves’ Association on their behalf, three quirky elves—including an elf who is an Elvis impersonator—arrive to help Granny and Pappy before a crooked bank manager forecloses on their home. There are numerous opportunities to showcase physical comedy in this delightfully zany play.

Performance Time: Approximately 60-75 minutes.

THE ELVES AND THE BOOTEE MAKER

4



Illustration from Lucy Crane's 1886 edition of "The Elves and the Shoemaker."

Jacob Grimm (1785-1863) and his brother Wilhelm Grimm (1786-1859) were born in a town near Frankfurt, Germany. Jacob and Wilhelm were fascinated with folklore and dedicated their lives to collecting and recording traditional folk stories, particularly German and Scandinavian tales. Throughout their lives, they remained close friends and studied law at Marburg University. Jacob and Wilhelm collaborated in the creation of a German dictionary but are best known for their collection of more than 200 folktales. "The Elves and the Shoemaker" was included in the Brothers Grimm 1812 fairytale collection, *Children's and Household Tales*.

CHARACTERS

(2 M, 7 F, 7 flexible)

(With doubling: 2 M, 5 F, 7 flexible)

GRANNY: A baby bootee and bonnet maker; wears granny glasses and an apron over her patched granny dress; female.

PAPPY: Granny's husband who hates to do chores; wears ragged clothing; the seat of his pants are torn open, revealing funny underwear underneath; male.

JORJEE PORJEE: Elf whose ears are always cold; has pointed ears, wears earmuffs and a green elf outfit; flexible.

ELFISS (ELF-iss, similar to "Elvis;"): Elf who looks like Elvis and likes to sing Elvis songs; has pointed ears, an Elvis hairpiece, and oversized sideburns; wears a green elf outfit; flexible.

BOSS: Jorjee and Elfiss's boss; has pointed ears and wears a green elf outfit; flexible.

MR./MS. PICKLETRICKLE: Banker; wears a dark suit and hat and a wristwatch or pocket watch; flexible.

DICKENS: Mr. Pickletrickle's assistant; well dressed; flexible.

ROBBER: Overly apologetic robber; flexible.

MR./MS. HINDER HANDER PANDER: Salesperson for the Cheap Yarn Company who sells cheap yarn at expensive prices; wears a bulky overcoat over a rumpled suit and carries a briefcase or sample case; flexible.

MR. BELL: Customer who needs his shoes repaired; male.

MARY: Mr. Bell's older daughter; female.

MAY: Mr. Bell's younger daughter; female.

MRS. HAWKINS: Bootee customer; female.

MARTHA: Bootee customer; female.

EDNA: Bootee customer; female.

CLYDE: Bootee customer; wears knee-high socks; female.

Options For Doubling

EDNA/MARY (female)

MARTHA/MAY (female)

Note: For flexible roles, change the script accordingly. Even though the elves are referred to as “little green people,” the only thing green about them are their clothes, shoes, and caps.

Setting

Pappy and Granny's baby bootee shop.

Set

Granny's shop. A shabby but clean shop that is filled with empty and broken shelves and cabinets. At SR is a doorway to other rooms in the house. At SRC is a worktable with a solid front so the audience cannot see under it. UCS is the main entrance with a bell over the door that rings every time the door is opened. A big open window sits in the SL wall, though it must face the audience since much action takes place there.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I: Granny's shop.

Intermission, optional.

ACT II: Granny's shop.

PROPS

Flat crocheted piece 4" x 6" and its skein of yarn and a crochet needle	Sheriff's western hat
Small hammer	Graduation hat (mortar board)
Pair of men's shoes (one shoe is without a sole, while the other shoe has the sole glued crossways on the bottom of the shoe, making a "T" shape	2 Ugly, funny, silly hats or caps
Same as above but shoes are painted blue	Broom
Shoe without a sole, for Pappy	Crocheted bootees and bonnet same color as the original yarn
Granny eyeglasses	Purses for Edna, Martha, Clyde, and Mrs. Hawkins
Splinter of wood (real or pantomimed)	Clock
Earmuffs	\$20 bill (play money may be used)
Old out-of-tune guitar, gaudily painted with a strap	Banana inside a paper sack or wrapped newspaper
Letter in envelope	Briefcase with a variety of balls and skeins of yarn inside
Tote or bag	4 Baseball bats (plastic, colorful)
Spray can and cloth	3 Whistles
3 Different colored balls or skeins of yarn	3 Police hats
Oil can	1 Police nightstick
Notepad	Empty plastic bag or paper sack
Pen or pencil	10+ Opaque plastic bags or paper sacks. One bag contains a pair of bootees
Large, ugly cigar (unlit)	Leaf rake
Banker's hat	Sock
Legal papers	Upright vacuum cleaner
Large bag	Handcuffs

THE ELVES AND THE BOOTEE MAKER

9

2 Identical shirts, one is
torn, for Pappy
2 Crocheted bonnets
3 Pair crocheted bootees
Tangled pile of yarn
3 Sets of \$30
Handkerchief
Lots of cash

Pocket or wristwatch
Crocheted cap large enough
to fit Jorjee (Note: If this
is difficult to find, some
wool caps look crocheted
from the stage)
Small bottle of oil

Special Effects

Doorbell on the front door (Note: Or have someone backstage ring a bell each time the door is opened.)

Sound of chirping birds

A "clunk" sound

Sound of garbage cans falling over

Sound of a vacuum

Sound of a vacuum exploding

Smoke, opt.

Note: Many sound effects may be found online for free.

**"I DIDN'T KNOW
LITTLE GREEN PEOPLE
COULD CROCHET."**

—GRANNY

Act I

(AT RISE: A shabby but clean shop that is filled with empty and broken shelves and cabinets. At SR is a doorway to other rooms in the house. At SRC is a worktable with a solid front so the audience cannot see under it. Atop the table are an approximately 4" x 6" flat piece of colorful crocheted yarn and an attached skein of the same yarn and a crochet needle. There are also a small hammer and two shoes, one without a sole and the other with the sole attached crossways. UCS is the main entrance with a bell over the door that rings every time the door is opened. A big open window is SL, though it must face the audience since much action takes place there. Chirping birds are heard. Next to the window, Pappy, an older man wearing ragged clothes, lounges in a rundown chair, snoring. His feet are propped up on a stool or bench facing the audience. The sole is missing from his right shoe so that his bare foot and toes are clearly visible. He wiggles his toes. Working on a man's shoes at the worktable, Granny wears an apron over her greatly patched "granny" dress. Her glasses are perched low on her nose. She loudly pounds once on the shoe bottom or the tabletop. Pappy jumps out of his chair, but he does not wake up. He continues to snore. She pounds again. He jumps again. She loudly pounds three times in a row. He jumps with each pound. On the last, he falls completely out of his chair.)

PAPPY: (Startled.) What? Huh? Who? What? (Looks around.)
What am I doing on the floor?

GRANNY: I think you were sleeping on it. But look out for the splinters.

PAPPY: Splinters? Why? There ain't no splinters in the...ouch! Owwww! (Jumps and pulls out a "splinter" from his behind. Holds up "splinter." Note: He does not literally fall on the splinter. It is beside him so he can easily reach it or it can be simply mimed by his pretending to hold it in the palm of his hand.) Well, maybe there's one! Dang, that hurt! (Rubs his

behind.) Well, now that I found it, what am I supposed to do with it?

GRANNY: Throw it in the trash.

PAPPY: But, Granny, I'd have to get up to throw it in the trash.

GRANNY: *(Sarcastically.)* Well, my gracious, Pappy, we shore don't want you straining yourself. Why don't you just leave it there on the floor.

PAPPY: But I might fall on it agin.

GRANNY: Yep. You might.

PAPPY: *(Considers.)* Naw. I won't. *(Pappy tosses it on the floor. Granny pounds the shoe several times.)* Granny! Granny!

(Granny stops pounding.)

GRANNY: What, Pappy?

PAPPY: Can't you pound a little quieter? You're jangling my nerves.

GRANNY: Well, if you would get up from there and help me repair this shoe, I could get it done a lot faster.

PAPPY: Yeah, but working jangles my nerves more than your pounding jangles my nerves. *(Starts to pull himself up to the chair and turns his back to the audience. The seat of his pants is torn open, revealing his funny underwear. Granny pounds on her table, which causes Pappy to grunt loudly and lose his grip on the chair. He nearly falls but regains his composure. She pounds again. He loses his balance again. She pounds three times in a row. He half-stands while jumping three times and then clumsily falls over the chair and back onto the floor.)* Ouch! Owwww!
(Pretends to pull a splinter from his backside and holds it up.) It's that dang splinter agin!

(Granny glances at it from a distance.)

GRANNY: Nope. It's a different one.

PAPPY: Well, it hurt just like the other one. *(Sets splinter aside and sits in the chair. Granny pounds harder and louder than before.)* Granny! Granny, will you stop that pounding?! Please!

(Granny puts the hammer down.)

GRANNY: Fine! Fine! I'll stop repairin' this here shoe.

PAPPY: Good. Thank you. *(Finds a restful position and closes his eyes.)*

GRANNY: And we'll starve to death because we don't have any money to buy food.

PAPPY: *(Chuckles, as if he has a secret.)* Well, hee-hee, you don't have any money...

GRANNY: And if you think you still have that ten dollars you hid under your [piller], you're wrong. ["pillow"]

(Pappy quickly sits up.)

PAPPY: What? I don't have my ten dollars? What happened to it?

GRANNY: I found it, and I spent it.

PAPPY: On what?

GRANNY: Food. That was last week.

PAPPY: But I was gonna spend that on myself. I hid it under my piller. How did you find it?

GRANNY: Pappy, who do you think makes up the bed in this house?

PAPPY: Uhhhhh...you?

GRANNY: Right. And who cooks the food?

PAPPY: Uhhhhh...you?

GRANNY: Right.

PAPPY: But I could cook my own food...

GRANNY: But you don't cook your own meals. I cook 'em.

PAPPY: Still...you didn't have to take my last ten dollars.

GRANNY: Let me explain this to you once agin, Pappy. We're broke. We got no money. Not a quarter...not a penny. So I put up a sign outside saying I'm a shoemaker. But I'm not a shoemaker. I don't know anything about making shoes...or repairing them, either.

PAPPY: I got that, Granny.

GRANNY: I'm a bootee-maker, Pappy. I crochet baby shoes and bonnets. *(Picks up the man's shoe from her table, and since it lacks a sole, puts her hand all the way through it.)* Mr. Bell wants me to put a new sole on this shoe, but I don't know how to do that. Besides, I don't have enough leather to make a new one, anyway.

(Pappy crosses to Granny and shows his soleless shoe to the audience.)

PAPPY: Well, you already tore the sole off one of my shoes for him. You cain't have the other one.

[END OF FREEVIEW]