

Contents & Director's Notes

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SUMMARY

Boy, his Gran, their Cat and their Rat live in a little round house in the woods. Although they're poor they're happy most of the time, but each has a secret longing, a wish for something that can never come true. Instead they wish for something smaller: a silver coin, a silk pillow, a dish of cream and a big round cheese. Returning home after the market fair, the four see a round, white moon in the sky. They each think they've found the answer to their wishes! They stretch as high as they can to reach the moon, but of course they can't. Next they see the moon's reflection in a pond and the silly things try to fish it out! Realising their mistake, they go home disappointed. Back at the little round house - mysteriously - they find the answers to all their little wishes lying on the doorstep! They don't know how, but their lives have taken a turn for the better.

Duration: Full version approx. 40-45 minutes; narrated version approx. 30-35 minutes.

CAST LIST (in order of appearance)

NARRATORS (2+)	Scripted for two - or four in the narrated version (on enhanced CD), but may be more.
CHORUS	As well as the songs, the chorus have several spoken lines throughout the narrative. May be dressed as trees and woodland creatures.
CAT	Main character. Wishes he was a tiger, but he's not big, strong, or scary. 'Plays' fiddle during the market fair scene. <i>Group singer.</i>
RAT	Main character. Wishes she wasn't a rat because everyone hates rats. <i>Solo singer.</i>
BOY	Main character. Wishes he had his mum and dad. Kind hearted, helpful and positive. <i>Group singer.</i>
GRAN	Main character. Wishes she still had her husband Dave. Keeps busy to avoid feeling sad. Is caring, warm and positive. <i>Group singer.</i>
HENS (4)	Bullies, who pick on Rat when she collects their eggs. <i>Group singer.</i>
MARKET TRADERS	Involved in the market scene, calling out their wares.
PASSERS-BY	Involved in the market scene, buying from traders.
OWL	Has one spoken line.
POND (6+)	Children to hold long strips of blue material between them in a semi-circle, forming the pond.

DANCERS (Optional)

FIREFLIES	Perform twice, appearing at bedtime.
RATS	Perform in 'No-One Loves A Rat'.
RABBITS, DEER, MICE, BIRDS	Perform in the Woodland Dance.
OWL, FROGS (2+) and FISH (6+)	Perform in Pond Dance.

PROPS

Bucket for Boy, duster for Cat, basket for Rat to 'carry eggs' - all on stage from start.
Oversize handkerchief for Rat and Gran, in pocket from start.
Broom for Rat and ironing board / iron for Gran, opening scene.
Washing line and clothes basket containing washing and pegs for Boy, opening scene.
Torches / light sticks if wanted for Fireflies. Eggs for Hens, in pockets. Fiddle for Cat, hat for Rat.
Trays hung around necks to contain wares for Market Traders; umbrellas for Passers-By
Last scene: oversize penny, round 'cheese', round white cushion and dish of 'cream'.

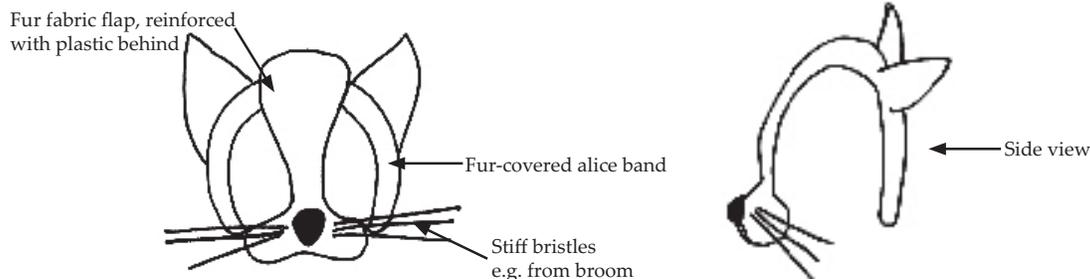
STAGING SUGGESTIONS

If a painted backdrop is used, this should show woodland, which would be appropriate throughout the play (although ideally a town market backdrop would replace the woodland for the market fair scene). However, the chorus may be used to set the scenes, some dressed as trees and woodland creatures where appropriate, others dressed as stallholders and customers for the market fair.

COSTUME SUGGESTIONS

Gran	Long red / yellow striped socks or tights. Floral print dress with apron for opening scene. Glasses. Hair in a bun if possible. Lace-up shoes. Overcoat (pref, yellow with one large button). Multi-coloured scarf – remove for the dance at the market.
Boy	Blue trousers, white polo shirt, green coat, yellow or red scarf. Lace-up shoes.
Fireflies	Gauzy fabric suspended from arms. Yellow leotards/tights.
Traders	Long white aprons over black trousers and plain long-sleeved shirts/jumpers. Flat caps and fingerless mittens, perhaps.
Passers-By	Ordinary clothes, light-weight coats, scarves.
All animal / bird characters	Head-band based masks or face-paint – facial expressions should be visible and mouth unobstructed (see illustration below).
Cat	Orange, beige or muted yellow outfit or leotard
Rat	White outfit.
Rat Dancers	Boy rats: bright bow-ties. Girl rats: rose between teeth.
Hens	Red/brown feathery body-suits padded at the front. Tights. Yellow beaks attached to head-band mask.
Frogs	Green leotards/tights, facepaint large white eyes, & long, wide mouth.
Fish	Blue/silver leotards/tights, matching face paint with dark, round eyes and large, oval dark mouth.

ANIMAL MASKS Avoid masks which obstruct the mouth. Below is a suggested style. It is important to reinforce the face 'flap' with cardboard, to prevent it from flapping too much! An alternative is simply to have ears on a headband and use face paint.



Special Note: Cat, Rat, Boy and Gran are on stage for most of the play. For simplicity, directing notes do not provide every move for these characters. To avoid an overly static performance, they should flow around the other performers at the director's discretion.

Director's Overview

	SONG	OFF WE GO TO A HOUSE	◉ Track 1 / 18
We meet Gran, Boy, Cat and Rat, doing their chores. Lit by Fireflies, they go to sleep.			
Optional.	DANCE	FIREFLY DANCE	◉ Track 2 / 19
Gran gives the others jobs to do. It's Rat's job to collect eggs, but she's very scared of the Hens, who don't want her to take their eggs away. She wishes they liked her.			
	SONG	NO-ONE LOVES A RAT	◉ Track 3 / 20
The Hens send Rat packing, without any eggs.			
	SONG	DON'T SHOW YOUR FACE	◉ Track 4 / 21
On her way home, Rat is wondering how to tell Gran that she hasn't got any eggs. She cheers up when the Woodland Creatures dance around her.			
Optional.	(D) DANCE	WOODLAND DANCE	◉ Track 5 / 22
Optional.	INCID.	WOODLAND EXIT MUSIC	◉ Track 6 / 23
We learn the secret wishes of all four main characters. Cat wishes he was a tiger, Rat wishes she wasn't a rat, so people would like her. Gran wishes she still had her dear husband and Boy wishes he had a mum and dad. Meanwhile, supper has to be found. Boy suggests they eat a chicken instead of eggs, which Rat thinks is a great idea!			
	SONG	THEY SENT RAT ON HER WAY	◉ Track 7 / 24
Just as the Hens are busy congratulating themselves on having sent Rat away, Boy arrives. Oh dear! Whenever he shows up, it means chicken for supper. Suddenly they're keen to share their eggs! At bedtime, the Fireflies reappear.			
Optional.	DANCE	FIREFLY DANCE	◉ Track 8 / 25
Gran, Boy, Cat and Rat feel glum. They think about their secret wishes again.			
	SONG	WISHING, WANTING	◉ Track 9 / 26
But those wishes are too big. Instead, they wish out loud for little things: Cat - a dish of cream, Rat - a big round cheese, Boy - a silver penny, Gran - a silk pillow. Back in reality, they need food from the market, but have no money. They go busking!			
	(D) SONG	LET'S GO TO THE MARKET	◉ Track 10 / 27
	SONG	PASTRIES AND PIES	◉ Track 11 / 28
When they have no luck they set off home, tired and hungry.			
	INCID.	WISHING, WANTING	◉ Track 12 / 29
Suddenly the moon comes out from behind the clouds. Seeing it, each thinks they see the thing they wished for! The silly things stretch up to try and reach the moon.			
	SONG	REACHING THE MOON	◉ Track 13 / 30
They fall down in a heap and give up, sadly continuing on their journey home. In the woods there is a pond full of fish and frogs, who dance under the moonlit sky.			
Optional.	(D) DANCE	POND DANCE	◉ Track 14 / 31
Next they see the moon's reflection in the pond, and again they think their wishes have been granted! Silly things, they jump into the water!			
	SONG	FISHING FOR BITS	◉ Track 15 / 32
Having failed again, they trudge back home, still wishing and wanting.			
	SONG	WISHING, WANTING (reprise)	◉ Track 16 / 33
At home, something magical has happened! On the doorstep are a silver penny, a silk pillow, a big round cheese, and a dish of cream. Mysteriously, their lives have taken a turn for the better! Their <u>big</u> wishes will never make them feel so bad again.			
	SONG	SOMEONE WATCHING OVER ME	◉ Track 17 / 34

(D) = Dance ideas provided (p. 21-25)