

PLAYS FOR
New Audiences

A Division of Children's Theatre Company

The Golden Goose

by Charles Way

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Characters:

Christina

Boris

Dummling

King Conrad

Birgit

Dajona

Fairy King

Fairy Queen

Humble

Meek

Hermit Siebenstien

Witch of the White Mountains.

Prince Charles

NOT LICENSED FOR PRODUCTION

Music. Bewitching music from the fairy world. Enter The Fairy King and Queen, Humble and Meek. Humble and Meek present themselves to the fairy. King brings a large book..

FAIRY KING Once upon a time, in old Europe, in the days when folk and fairy folk lived side by side there was a castle and in this castle, lived a King. *[He turns the page and the King Bops up - it is a popup book.]* There he is. And this King had two daughters, Dajona and Birgit. *[He turns the page and up pop the two daughters.]* Dajona was the oldest, and she was the saddest person whoever breathed. She was so sad she refused to laugh. She would not laugh; she could not laugh. So one day her father, sent out a proclamation, 'The man who makes my daughter laugh will be free to ask for her hand in marriage.' What? What?

FAIRY QUEEN You've started at the wrong place.

FAIRY KING I have not.

FAIRY QUEEN That's chapter two.

FAIRY KING No. No - this is chapter one.

FAIRY QUEEN No my sweet- it's chapter two.

FAIRY KING What?

FAIRY QUEEN The princess who wouldn't laugh- chapter two.

He looks and realizes his mistake and shuts the book snappily. The magical music is repeated.

FAIRY KING Once upon a time, in old Europe. In the days when folk and fairy folk lived side by side. There was a poor cottage.

FAIRY QUEEN Ah. I know it well husband. We have turned the milk sour there many times this past year.

FAIRY KING It is a humble dwelling.

FAIRY QUEEN As you can see. With rough furniture.

FAIRY KING In this poor cottage lived two young men, with their mother. Dummling and Boris. [*He turns the page and up they pop.*] It was so very far into the woods that the King's proclamation which I didn't mention earlier never reached the cottage and it is here that the story begins.

FAIRY QUEEN At chapter one. Now all they need, my lord is life.

Together-they sprinkle/blow golden dust onto the pop up scene. Behind them lights fully rise on the life size scene.

CHRISTINA Where did all this dust come from?

DUMMLING I don't know Mother.

CHRISTINA As if I didn't have enough work to do.

DUMMLING It's all - golden.

CHRISTINA Golden? Don't talk rubbish -dust isn't golden-not round here.

DUMMLING But this is- look- all shiny and golden.

BORIS Do shut up Dummling.

DUMMLING But I'm---

BORIS An utterly stupid person without a sensible thought in his head.

DUMMLING That's not true-

CHRISTINA Yes it is.

DUMMLING Is it mother?

CHRISTINA Well-

BORIS Exactly.

CHRISTINA We are what we are Dummling.

BORIS And you are stupid.

CHRISTINA Boris!

BORIS Golden dust we have now.

DUMMLING But it is---was.

BORIS Duh.

CHRISTINA Stop it! If you keep on at each other- you shall go without supper –
the pair both.

She turns away and Boris pours a cup of water over his own head.

BORIS What on earth—

CHRISTINA What now?

BORIS Dummling poured water over my head.

DUMMLING I never.

BORIS Well who did then?

DUMMLING You did.

CHRISTINA Oh Dummling, what kind of fool would pour water over his own
head?

BORIS Just cos I told you the truth.

CHRISTINA No rain for three months, and here's you throwing water away as if
we had lakes of it to wallow in. Well we don't. Clear it up, now.

DUMMLING But I - it was-

BORIS And no supper for you. That's what you said Mother.

CHRISTINA I know what I said.

DUMMLING Forgive me Mother. Please don't be upset.

CHRISTINA Upset? A woman with two lads to feed, and no husband to help me through this dreadful drought. Do you know what a human being is without water Dummling?

DUMMLING Well - dry. [*Boris laughs*]

CHRISTINA Dry? Are you making fun of me?

DUMMLING No.

CHRISTINA Without water we are dead Dummling, dead.

DUMMLING I know that - I just didn't want to say.

CHRISTINA When your father were alive the fields were full of food. Now what do we have? Dry bread and moldy cheese. [*Boris leans forward to take Dummling's plate.*] You leave his plate alone.

BORIS But you said—

CHRISTINA I know what I said. You are not the master here Boris.

BORIS One of these days I'm going to leave this hovel and go on a really big adventure - a really big one - the size of this - table. And I'm going to meet a princess and marry her - and, and, and have lots to eat. What are you smiling at?

DUMMLING I had the very same dream. That one day I would be king.

BORIS No you didn't.

DUMMLING Yes I did.

BORIS You're lying again, just to be like me.

DUMMLING No I'm not.

BORIS Besides there's no country on earth would ever have a king with a face like yours. I've have seen better looking cowpats.

DUMMLING What, in the mirror?

CHRISTINA Oh Dummling, how could you be so spiteful?

DUMMLING Hey?

BORIS Because he's ugly mother -that's why. It's damaged his character.

DUMMLING But I'm not ugly - am I?

CHRISTINA Well...

BORIS Exactly. I'll be the best looking King this country ever had. And a thousand times better than the one we've got now.

CHRISTINA Boris.

BORIS Its true Mother - our King can't even feed his own people.

CHRISTINA It's hardly his fault it hasn't rained. I'll have no more talk against our King you'll have us hanged for treason.

BORIS He'd have to hang the whole country mother - for everywhere I go people speak against him.

CHRISTINA Well I don't. Poor man.

BORIS We should rise up brother - and cut off their heads.

CHRISTINA Boris! You have no idea what you're saying.

BORIS And then mother - if you could choose; which of your sons would make the better king? Go on for fun. For the good of the country – me or Dummling?

CHRISTINA Oh Boris - you know the answer.

BORIS Yes, and I'd make a great King an all, strong as an ox and free of spots. Unlike you Dummling...

DUMMLING I haven't got spots. I haven't. [*Boris laughs and gives him a mirror.*] Where did they come from?

CHRISTINA It doesn't matter Dummling.

DUMMLING But why doesn't Boris have spots?

CHRISTINA Because, spots don't choose a handsome face, it's well known, but of no importance - one day they will just vanish. I promise.

BORIS And I heard an old woman in the village say spots only land on the faces of cowards.

CHRISTINA Now that's enough. How can you two prattle on so when we are only one meal away from the grave? [*Silence*]

DUMMLING One day mother, there'll be food again, and plenty of water, and wine too, and you'll be happy, we'll all be happy.

BORIS Oh yes - and one day folk will walk on the moon.

DUMMLING Maybe they will, one day.

CHRISTINA Well I have had as much of your argurmentearing as I can stomach. Boris I have job for you.

BORIS But Mother - you know how much I hate jobs - and it's so hot.

DUMMLING I'll do it Mother.

CHRISTINA No Dummling. I don't want you cutting your hand off - like your father did. It wasn't easy you know being a one handed carpenter. Boris -take the axe and go into the woods and chop down a fine oak tree and bring it home upon your shoulders, and we will use that tree to make a new door - and new roof - and some walls. Can you do this?

BORIS Of course I can do it - I can do anything - I haven't got spots.

CHRISTINA Father was such a fine carpenter. You remind me of him Boris – so tall, handsome and brave. But the house he built with his own hands - hand - will not survive another winter. Take this with you into the woods.

BORIS What is it?

CHRISTINA A little something, to keep you going.

BORIS But Mother - this is a fine cake, and the last of the wine.

CHRISTINA I have been keeping it aside - especially for this day.

BORIS What's so special about this day Mother?

CHRISTINA [Firmly] The day you begin 'work'.

BORIS Work - what's work to someone like me – but –

CHRISTINA What?

BORIS You know how I feel about the woods.

CHRISTINA But you are older now.

BORIS But the woods are full of - wood - that hide all manner of creatures.

CHRISTINA But Boris - I can see by your 'spotless face' that you are brave and will overcome whatever confronts you. Remember the rhyme I taught you - when you were little.

BORIS No. Yes.

DUMMLING Good luck brother. [Exit Boris]

CHRISTINA What?

DUMMLING Do I not remind you of father?

CHRISTINA No.

Act One, Scene Two: The Woods

The woods. Very light 'Fairy music' can be heard. The Fairy King and Queen watch Boris, but Boris cannot see them or Humble and Meek.

BORIS [Sings] Do not be afraid of the woods.

HUMBLE & MEEK La la la!

BORIS Hello - anyone there? Hello. Who's there? [Sings] The woods are full of wood, And its good.

HUMBLE & MEEK La la la!

BORIS Who's there? [Sings] The beasts and the birds, Would think you quite absurd, If you really were afraid of the woods.(Said) That's better.

FAIRY KING Good Morning.

BORIS [Yells in fright] I have an axe. I have an axe. Where are you – show yourself?

A light rises on the Fairy King, so that Boris now sees him. He steps back. The Fairy Queen watches - invisible to Boris.

FAIRY KING Don't be afraid. I'm not a wolf, nor a bear, just an old soul in search of company.

BORIS I never saw you there - and I must have walked right by you.

FAIRY KING You were busy singing. 'Do not be afraid of the woods.'

BORIS Yes - thank you! What do you want anyhow?

FAIRY KING It's been a dry season.

BORIS So?

FAIRY KING And I'm thirsty.

BORIS Aren't we all old man.

FAIRY KING And you have a wine sack there and a nice bit of cake I shouldn't wonder, in your pocket. Your mother makes a good cake.

BORIS How do you know that?

FAIRY KING Just a little wine and cake is all I ask.

BORIS But if I give you my cake and 'my' wine I shall have little left for myself, so be gone, and leave me be.

FAIRY KING As you wish.

BORIS Aye, as I wish, now go, before I cleave your head in two. *[He lifts the axe, and the Fairy King vanishes.]* A thief - that's what you are - were. One oak. That's all I have to do.

He raises his axe and then a high-pitched note is heard. Hands come out from the tree and the roots and grab his feet. He cries out and then watches in terror as the axe is removed from his hands by someone he cannot see [Humble and Meek] and lifts itself into the air before coming down on his leg.

Act One, Scene Three: The Cottage

Boris enters, his leg wrapped in a bloody bandage.

DUMMLING Brother, back so soon?

CHRISTINA Good lad - where's the wood?

BORIS The wood? *[Boris collapses]*

CHRISTINA Boris?

DUMMLING His leg is all bloody—

CHRISTINA Oh Boris.

DUMMLING A nasty gash - and some strange looking scratches too.

CHRISTINA [*Slapping his face*] Boris. Boris.

BORIS The woods. The woods are alive - and closing in - closing in.

CHRISTINA Do something Dummling.

DUMMLING Yes Mother.

BORIS The trees had hands, and eyes and the music - and the hands - and the axe was taken from my hands - oh the hands-- [*Dummling throws water in his face. Silence.*] Dummling! You see mother, you see -throwing water over me for no reason.

DUMMLING I was only trying to—

BORIS What?

DUMMLING Help.

BORIS You'll need help when I get hold of you - that's if I ever walk again.

CHRISTINA Stop it! You Boris -have had too much wine to drink.

BORIS No mother I-- [*She lifts the wine sack - it's empty*] I only had a little on my way home - to give me strength. Oh mother - will I live?

CHRISTINA Aye - live to avoid another days work. The woods indeed. Well if a jobs worth doing it's worth doing yourself. Give me the axe.

DUMMLING But let me go. I know the woods well.

CHRISTINA Don't argue with me. What kind of Mother gives an axe to a Dummling? Look after your brave brother. Tend to his leg.

DUMMLING Yes Mother. [*Exit Christina*]

BORIS Fetch me a mug of water brother. [*He throws it in Dummling's face*]
 There see - clever me got you back. Now you may tend to my leg.

Dummling touches the wound and Boris yells out. The cry can be heard by Christina who is now entering scene four. Humble and Meek prepare to guide her toward the Fairy King.

PURCHASE PERUSAL FOR FULL SCRIPT

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