

# Plays for Young Audiences

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

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## *Peter and the Wolf*

Based on the Musical Tale by  
Sergei Prokofiev

Adaptation by  
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Music by  
Hummie Mann

Lyrics by  
Allison Gregory and Hummie Mann

*Peter and the Wolf* was first presented by Seattle Children's Theatre for the 2005-2006 season.  
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CAST:    **5 Actors**

Grandfather/Wolf

Peter

Bird

Cat

Duck/Hunter

SETTING

A big, bright, open playing space will do as the meadow; dark, shadowy "woods" linger to one side. A sturdy, generous, climbing/balancing/swinging/hanging structure , to serve as the tree, will feature prominently in the action of the play.

\*It would be great if the crates that we see at the top of Act One could somehow be incorporated in the action of the play; maybe they collapse and become backdrops and scenery: the gate; a section of stone wall; a bench. Something along those lines would be excellent.

\*Also, ideally, the pond would have a fluid design that would allow it to be picked up by Duck and moved to where ever he needs it, as well as giving the pond itself some kind of visual flexibility.

TIME and PLACE

Some time ago, in a meadow somewhere beyond.

## ACT ONE

### OPENING

*A bright, uncluttered playing space. We see a tree that resembles a jungle-gym standing prominently off center. A single large, plain cargo box or crate sits upstage, in a far corner, in the shadows.*

*\*Note: During all of the box business, whenever possible, snippets of each character's THEME MUSIC from Prokofiev's score should play as each box moves. Additionally, each actor's legs should be costumed in such a way that, when they walk around in the box, the character they are playing is clearly identifiable.*

*Music in; cue #1*

*GRANDFATHER enters and wheels on another large, cargo box (on a handcart or dolly-type platform); it has a single word: PETER, and a drawing or silhouette of a boy, stenciled on the side. Grandfather sets it down, gives it a good pat, and wheels his cart offstage.*

*A quiet moment, then the box marked "Peter" begins to slowly rock back and forth. Now it bounces a couple of steps across the stage.*

*Grandfather returns with another box; this one reads: BIRD. The "Peter" box immediately stops its movement. Grandfather looks at the "Peter" box, now very still. Grandfather deposits the "Bird" box, gives the "Peter" box a suspicious glance, then exits with his cart.*

*The "Peter" box now rises and skips across the stage; the "Bird" box rises and skips along with "Peter".*

*Another box enters of its own accord; this one is marked: CAT. The "Cat" box slinks on, behaving as though it is invisible to the other boxes.*

*Now Grandfather enters, wheeling yet another box, this one reading: DUCK. He glances around the stage at the altered placement of the other boxes— and the addition of the CAT box. He marches around the boxes, admonishing them, trying to get them back to their proper place, then positions the "Duck" box further upstage— near the still box. He exits.*

Almost immediately, "Duck" box rises and waddles down toward the others; "Peter" box hops across the stage; and "Bird" box rises and runs over to "Peter" box, cozily settling in next to it. "Cat" box follows "Bird" box closely, standing stock still whenever "Bird" looks at it.

Now "Duck" box is zigzagging its way across the stage, moving in crazy little circles, having as good a time as a box can have-- until it bumps into the "Bird" box.

"Bird" box reacts indignantly, moving away from "Duck" box-- and knocking into the "Cat" box.

"Cat" box responds by chasing after the "Bird" box-- which frantically scurries to the other side of the stage, hiding behind the "Peter" box.

"Peter" box admonishes "Cat" box, which skulks away-- but now "Cat" turns and goes after the "Duck" box. "Duck" box clumsily races around the stage; "Peter", and "Bird" hurry after them. It is box chaos--except for "Wolf" box, which sits very still, in shadow.

It all comes to a crashing halt as Grandfather enters, claps his hands--or whistles, or some such thing, and, one by one, the boxes open and the other characters--Cat, Bird, Duck, and Peter, emerge.

Lights rise on the box in the shadows; the box turns around and now we see the word "Wolf" stenciled in plain military fashion on the box.

#### Wolf Theme

The others turn upstage and watch as "Wolf" box shakes, horribly. Cat and Bird scramble for cover. Duck panics and spins in circles; Grandfather exits, and, as Peter tries to console Duck, Grandfather returns with HUNTER PUPPET. He is a life-size puppet, outfitted in hunter garb, complete with a rifle, a knife in a sheath, and a heavy rope.

#### Hunter Theme

Grandfather, working Hunter Puppet, approaches, cautiously. He pokes at the box, nudging it with his rifle. There is no response. Hunter nudges it more forcefully. Again, no response.

*Emboldened, Hunter Puppet creeps nearer to the box; he lifts the lid with his rifle. Silence. He slowly lifts the lid higher... All the characters gather around, closer, closer still... straining to see inside the dark, silent box.*

*Hunter Puppet v-e-r-y cautiously looks into the box. Then, brazenly, he pokes his whole head in the box, to the horror of the other characters. Hunter pulls his head out: there's nothing to fear—see, it's empty! Gingerly, he pokes an arm in...and is immediately sucked into the box.*

*The others rush forward and try to retrieve Hunter Puppet, grabbing his protruding feet, pulling this way and that, struggling to yank him free of the box--- to no avail: Hunter Puppet is gone. They search the box, then shake it: a cap, or perhaps a shredded pair of pants, is all that falls out. And the Wolf is nowhere to be found.*

*Grandfather claps his hands or whatever and Peter, Bird, Duck, and Cat begin to disassemble the crates—which will ideally become set pieces and backdrops: a meadow gate; a section of a stone wall; a stand of trees to suggest the woods; a bench, etc.*

*At last, they are ready to begin.*

*Music out*

*The Players disappear behind the wings.*

*Stage lights dim. Peter appears*

**PETER**

*Early one morning...*

*Music in; cue #2*

**PETER**

*Ahem. Early one morning...*

*A rooster crows and lights rise. Peter swings open the gate, and proceeds through it.*

**PETER**

*Peter opened the garden gate and--*

*PETER'S THEME from the Prokofiev score plays.*

**PETER**

*...Peter opened the garden gate and walked out into the great, green meadow.*

*And now Peter has a butterfly net; he runs across the stage chasing a beautiful butterfly—which is attached to the net. He goes to heroic lengths, climbing on; hanging from; jumping off the tree; scaling the wall-- in his quest to capture the elusive insect.*

*BIRD soars onto the stage and alights on a tree.*

**BIRD**

On a branch of a big tree sat a little bird, Peter's friend.

**BIRD**

Good morning, Peter!

**PETER**

'morning, my friend!

**BIRD**

All is quiet! All is well!

*Bird begins an exuberant and expressive dance that Peter enjoys watching-- and can't help but join in. Maybe Peter shows off a bit; he is full of the energy of youth, a beautiful day and newfound freedom.*

**PETER**

Look at me, Bird. Look at me!

*Perhaps he does a cartwheels; definitely he climbs the wall, bravely balancing as Bird watches.*

**BIRD**

Dear Peter! Be careful.

**PETER**

Watch this--

**BIRD**

Oh Peter! You know how nervous I get. I begin to fret and fray and before you know it--

**PETER**

Look what I can do!

**BIRD** (fanning herself)  
Dear, dear Peter, do take care!

**PETER**  
It's not scary, it's fun!

**BIRD**  
Yes but, oh dear!

Music out

*DUCK enters. He is wearing goggles, swim cap, and, of course, flippers; a towel hangs across his shoulders.*

**PETER**  
Just then, a duck came waddling round.

**DUCK**  
He was glad Peter had not closed the gate.

**PETER**  
Hello, Duck!

**DUCK**  
Hello, dear Peter. Hello, Bird. What a morning!

Music in: cue #3

*Duck prepares to go into the "pond": perhaps he has a toy ducky "test" the temperature.*

DUCK'S SONG OF THE DAY: I THINK I'LL TAKE A SWIM

**DUCK** (singing)  
I think I'll take a swim  
I see the pond looks very nice today  
The water's full of bugs  
Such tasty little bugs  
So chewy and gooey and yummy,  
Delicious little bugs.  
  
Oh what a lovely day!  
Can't think of anywhere I'd rather be  
Than floating in my pond  
And every now and then  
I'd grab me a beak-full of  
yummy delicious little bugs  
  
And everything is right  
I feel so safe and warm

Life couldn't be better  
Surrounded by yummy little bugs.

*Music continues under the spoken text:*

**PETER**

How goes it with you, friend?

**DUCK**

Splendid, splendid.

**BIRD**

Hmmmph. A swim!

**DUCK**

Indeed.

**BIRD**

Have you ever heard of such a thing, Peter?

**PETER**

What's that, Bird?

Music out

**BIRD**

What kind of bird are you if you can't fly?

*With that, Bird "soars" gracefully across the stage.*

**DUCK**

What kind of bird are you if you can't swim?

Music in: cue #4

*With that, Duck glides effortlessly across the pond, and dives beneath the "water".*

CALL YOURSELF A BIRD

**BIRD** (singing)

You call yourself a bird?  
Well I find that quite absurd!  
You're a fish  
that only wishes  
it could fly!

**DUCK**(singing)  
You call yourself a bird?  
That's the funniest thing I've heard!  
You're a fowl that cannot swim  
Don't even try!

**BIRD**  
Fish.

**DUCK**  
Fowl.

**BIRD**  
Fish!

**DUCK**  
Fowl!

**BIRD**  
*Poisson!*

**DUCK**  
*Poulet!*

**BIRD**  
*Canard!*

**DUCK**  
*Coo-coo!*

**BIRD**  
*Sakanah!*

**DUCK**  
*Niwatori!*

**BIRD**  
*Pescado!*

**DUCK**  
*Pollo!*

**BIRD**  
*Riba!*

**DUCK**  
*Da mashnya ya p'titsa*

Music out

**PETER**

They were so busy quarreling that they didn't notice the Cat...crawling toward them, through the grass.

Music in: cue #5  
Sneaky Cat

*Peter puts a finger to his lips, and points to the Cat, who wears a mask or sunglasses as she slinks across the stage. Cat makes her way with great stealth... picking each step with quiet determination, pausing occasionally, except for the ever-twitching tail.*

**CAT** (covertly)

That little bird is busy arguing. I'll just grab her.

**PETER**

Cat continued creeping toward Bird. Peter picked up his handy butterfly net...and quietly stalked Cat-

**CAT**

Who silently stalked Bird-

**PETER & CAT**

Who had no idea how close she was to being a meal.

**PETER**

Look out!

Music out

*The startled animals react immediately:*

*Cat makes a grab for Bird.*

*Bird escapes and "flies" up into the tree.*

*Duck dashes to the pond.*

**CAT**

Drat! Why must you be everyone's friend, Peter?

*Bird and Duck scold Cat from the safety of their perches.*

**DUCK**

You nearly ate my dear friend Bird!

**CAT**

I'm sure I have no idea what you're talking about.

**DUCK**

If it hadn't been for Peter here, well, I think we all know what would have happened!

*Music in: cue #6*

*Duck demonstrates, starkly, exactly what he means.*

**BIRD**

Personally, I find that very offensive!

**CAT**

You've got it all wrong.

**DUCK**

I doubt that!

**CAT**

Tell them, Peter. Tell them the truth about the matter.

**PETER**

And what would that be, Cat?

**CAT**

Consider—

*Cat snaps. Music in; cue #7*

*She enacts the following, using garden tools and produce from a basket to portray the characters in her story.*

CAT'S TALE

**CAT** (spoken)

Early one morning, Peter opened the garden gate and walked out into the great, green meadow—and forgot to feed his cat.

*The others begin snapping their fingers to the beat.*

**CAT**

Now, on a branch of a big tree sat a little bird, Peter's friend.

**BIRD**

That's me!

**CAT**

"All is quiet", chirped the bird, happily. "All is well". And it was-- for *her*, because the bird could fly from tree to tree eating all the berries and grubs she pleased. But not the poor cat. Just then a duck came waddling round.

**BIRD**

That's you, Duck.

**CAT**

He was glad that Peter had not closed the gate--that way he could take a swim and hunt for bugs and dive for little fishies in the clear, blue pond in the meadow. Cats hate ponds. When the little bird saw the duck swimming in the pond, she flew over and began to tease him.

**BIRD**

I mean *look* at him.

**DUCK**

What?

**CAT**

"What kind of bird are you if you can't fly"? said the bird. "What kind of bird are you if you can't swim"? said the duck. The spoiled bird and the silly duck quarreled on and on while Peter listened-- forgetting about his starved cat. Weakened by hunger-- and lack of sun light, and weary of Duck and Bird's ridiculous argument, Cat found her way to the meadow and, barely alive...crawled towards her beloved Peter and his friends...hoping for a mere morsel...a crumb...

*Bird has abandoned her safe perch in the tree and is utterly engrossed in Cat's tale, oblivious to any potential danger she might be in.*

**CAT**

Anything, you see...to appease this aching hunger...this fierce feline famine--

**PETER**

Look out!

Music out

*Bird retreats quickly to the tree, just as Cat is ready to pounce.*

**CAT**

Drat again.

*Suddenly, a musical BOOM offstage interrupts the moment.*

**BIRD**

What was that?

**PETER**

I don't know.

**DUCK**

It certainly scared Cat.

**CAT**

Hardly. It would take a lot more than some silly noise to scare this cat.

**DUCK**

Ha, ha, scaredy cat! You'll never catch my friend Bird, not while Peter and I are around!

**BIRD**

You'll not catch my friend Duck, either.

*But Duck has since gone "bottoms up" under the pond.*

*HUNTER/WOLF enters. Music in; cue # 8*

*This is Wolf dressed up exactly like the Hunter Puppet we saw disappear earlier. We don't really know where he came from, but there he is.*

**WOLF/HUNTER**

I missed him! I missed him!

**PETER**

Who?

**WOLF/HUNTER**

I had him cornered. It was just me and him and the silence between us—but then someone yelled "Look out", and when I looked back, he was gone!

**PETER**

Excuse me, sir. Who are you talking about?

**CAT**

Yes, who, pray tell?

**WOLF/HUNTER**

Why the wolf, of course. Directly in range-- close enough to see his thick wolf fur, his beady wolf eyes, and his glistening wolf teeth.

**PETER**

What are you going to do with him?

**WOLF/HUNTER**

I'm the hunter, you whippersnapper, and he's the prey-- the sooner you understand that the sooner you'll know what I'm going to do with him. Aw, you're only a child, you wouldn't know about these things. Come here, son. Closer. Closer.

*Peter approaches Wolf/Hunter, who leans in very near to him. Cat, Bird, and Duck are inexplicably anxious for Peter.*

**CAT**

Uh, I really  
wouldn't try  
to get too--

**BIRD**

Peter dear!  
You're making  
me very n-n-ner--

**DUCK**

Didn't your grand-  
father tell you  
to be care-

**WOLF/HUNTER**

Silence!

The friends fall silent immediately. Music in; cue #9

**WOLF/HUNTER**

You want to know more, Peter?

*Peter, mesmerized, nods slowly.*

BEADY WOLFY EYES

**WOLF/HUNTER** (singing)

Once you've gazed  
Into those beady wolfy eyes,  
And smelled that thick wolfy fur,

Once you've been blinded  
By those glistening wolfy teeth

You'll concur--  
That it's best not to have wolves around here,

Once you've shivered  
From that piercing wolfy howl  
Some night when the moon is hanging high,  
Then, dear Peter, I am sure you'll understand  
That's why...  
(spoken by Wolf)  
Then you'll know something.

*Wolf/Hunter executes an enviable tango, with Peter as his dance partner.*

**PETER/BIRD/CAT/DUCK**(singing)

We have gazed into those beady wolfy eyes,  
And smelled that thick wolfy fur,  
Yes, we've been blinded  
by those glist'ning wolfy teeth,  
so we're sure--  
It's much better without wolves around here!

How we've shivered  
from that pierceing wolfy howl,  
on nights when the moon was hanging high.  
That's the reason, there's no doubt that it is true  
The wolf is not the kind of fellow  
That you'd want to hang around with,  
'cause he's really just a nasty, rotten guy.  
Rotten, nasty guy. The wolf!  
(song ends)

*Wolf/Hunter abruptly prepares to go on his way.*

**WOLF/HUNTER**

There's no time to waste! The wolf is long gone-- no  
doubt on his way to the next meadow full of sheep.  
It's just a matter of time. Just me and the wolf and  
time...

*And he is gone.*

*The friends are all a bit shaken, but put up a good front.*

**DUCK**

Well. I thought he'd never leave. I could use some  
dessert. How are those berries, Bird?

**BIRD**

Delicious. Best of the season I'd say, the very best.

**DUCK**

How about you, Cat?

*But Cat is busy circling the tree.*

**CAT**

Dessert? I haven't eaten my lunch yet. In fact I was just thinking...

**PETER**

Come away from there, Cat.

**CAT**

But I only--

**PETER**

Leave Bird alone.

**DUCK**

Ha ha, cat out of luck! Can't catch a duck, you Cat out of luck!

**CAT**

It's probably not worth the effort, anyway. By the time I get half way up, she'll have flown away.

(addressing Bird)

You're safe this time, my fine, feathered feast.

**BIRD**

Just then Grandfather came out.

*Music in; cue #10*

*Upstage, as if in the distance, we see a MINIATURE FIGURE of Grandfather leaving a MINIATURE HOUSE.*

**PETER**

He was upset because Peter had left the garden gate open and had gone out into the meadow alone.

**CAT**

Without feeding his cat.

**MINI-GRANDFATHER**

Peter? Where have you gone?

**PETER**

Here Grandfather. In the meadow.  
Beautiful day, isn't it?

**MINI-GRANDFATHER**

What are you thinking, boy? Leaving the gate open, with goats and sheep running loose? Where do you think they'd go but in our garden. And what do you think they'd eat but our carrots and cabbage and corn. And who do you think would have to chase the goats and sheep away but your grandmother and me. What if we were to twist our ankles with all that running? And what then would we have left for supper but twigs and nubs and dirt, and tell me, who should be punished for all of this?

**PETER**

But the goats and sheep are off grazing in the east meadow, Poppy. And I helped Baba pick our vegetables and make soup already this morning.

*During Peter's speech, Miniature Grandfather has come around down by the gate. He is now human-size GRANDFATHER.*

**GRANDFATHER**

Alright then, we'll decide your punishment later.

**PETER**

But Poppy...

**GRANDFATHER**

No more arguments. You're too headstrong, Peter! You don't think things through, that's your problem! It's going to get you into trouble one of these days, mark my words.

**PETER**

So you say.

**GRANDFATHER**

I do say! And what of the meadow? It's a dangerous place. If a wolf should come out of the forest, then what would you do? Tell me that.

**PETER**

I would set a trap for him of course.

**GRANDFATHER**

No trap is as strong or clever as the wolf.

**PETER**

Oh but this trap, Grandfather, this trap would be strong. It's easily as clever as any wolf.

**GRANDFATHER**

Is that so?

**PETER**

See, the wolf would be walking by and then a net— no, a cage would fall from the tree—

**GRANDFATHER**

This tree?

**PETER**

This very tree, and it would surround the wolf and then, before he knew what was happening—

**GRANDFATHER**

And how will you get the wolf to walk near the tree?

**PETER**

This tree..?

**GRANDFATHER**

This very tree.

**PETER**

Oh. Well. I would make a path...

**GRANDFATHER**

A path.

**PETER**

Like so...a path of rocks, or bread crumbs-- no, meat! That's it, meat, and it lead to this very tree and when he—

**GRANDFATHER**

No wolf would follow your path, Peter. They're too smart for your traps. He'd figure out what you were up to before you would.

**PETER**

But I could do it, Poppy-- I could catch that wolf.

**GRANDFATHER**

You will go nowhere near the wolf, do you understand?

**PETER**

But Poppy-- my friends are here. Please may I stay? Please?

**GRANDFATHER**

It isn't safe.

*Music in; cue #11*

WHAT IF?

**GRANDFATHER** (singing)

What if  
The wolf should fine you all alone?  
What if  
You couldn't run away?  
What if  
He has a real big appetite?  
You could become that wolfy's lunch some day!

What if  
You slipped and fell and hurt yourself?  
What if  
No one could hear you cry?  
What if  
I searched and couldn't find you boy?  
I couldn't bear the thought that you might die.

What if the sun should fall?  
What if a dam should break?  
And cause a torrid flood?  
What if the earth should quake?  
What if stampeding camels  
should go racing past?  
I worry Peter you would never last!

And what of spiders, snakes and grizzly bears?  
Mad elephants, and crocodiles in pairs?  
There's quicksand, sunburn, pirates,  
dogs with fleas!  
You've got to think of all these things--

Beware!

(spoken text)

Listen Peter  
Hear me well,  
Or you will perish  
They'll ring the bell  
For the child who never cared,  
For the boy who was never scared.

Music out

**BIRD**

And Grandfather locked the gate, and led Peter home.

*Grandfather and Peter exit.*

**CAT**

Without. Feeding. The cat.

*We see the two FIGURES in MINIATURE upstage, heading for the little house.*

**MINI-GRANDFATHER**

You're a big boy now. You should know better than to play alone in the meadow!

**MINI-PETER**

But Poppy...

*And they disappear into the tiny house.*

**DUCK**

Now what? It's just the three of us.

**BIRD**

Oh dear, Peter's in trouble now.

**CAT**

Just like the last time he disobeyed his grandfather.

**DUCK**

Who could forget that. Peter had to haul the hay, shear the sheep, and pickle the pickles—before lunch!

**CAT**

Did someone say "lunch"? How exciting.

**DUCK**

What's so exciting about that?

**MYSTERIOUS VOICE** (Wolf offstage)

Is it excitement you want?

**DUCK**

Actually it is, Bird.

**BIRD**

What?

**DUCK**

I said, actually--

**BIRD**

I heard you. Why are you telling me?

**DUCK**

I don't know, maybe because you asked.

**MYSTERIOUS VOICE** (Wolf offstage)

Then it is excitement you shall have.

**DUCK**

What kind of excitement do you mean, Bird?

**BIRD**

I did not say anything about excitement!

**DUCK**

Cat, did Bird or did Bird not say I could have excitement?

**BIRD**

I was just sitting here, minding my own feathers!

**CAT**

Oh brother, is this going to be another ridiculous argument between you two?

**DUCK**

All I'm saying is--

**BIRD**

He said that I said--

**DUCK**

...when she asked me I  
gave an honest--

**BIRD**

...something that I did  
not say at all and--

**MYSTERIOUS VOICE** (Wolf offstage)

Enough.

*The three look at one another, a little confused by that last  
bit. Music in; cue #12*

NO NEED TO BE AFRAID

*Wolf/Hunter appears. He is dressed as before, but perhaps a  
little more "wolf" is showing.*

**WOLF/HUNTER**

There's no need to be afraid anymore: the wolf  
is dead!

**DUCK** (spoken in rhythm)

Wolf-?

**CAT & BIRD**

Dead-?

**HUNTER/WOLF**

There he was, with his thick wolf fur, his beady wolf  
eyes, his glistening wolf teeth...slinking through the  
forest (as I knew he would be)...  
on his way to make a meal of sheep in the east  
meadow, when I, quiet as a shadow, crept up behind the  
crafty creature... and without breaking so much as a  
twig, raised my trusty rifle and took aim. It was then  
that the handsome and cunning wolf, sensing his life  
was in danger, began to run, this way and that, trying  
to throw off my aim. But my rifle stayed true...and I  
put an end to that nasty wolf, once and for all.

Music out

**BIRD**

Hip-hip hooray! Hooray for Hunter!

**CAT**

Well, I suppose. But unlike certain "water-fowl", I  
was never all that frightened of the wolf.

**DUCK**

You think *I* was scared? Ha! All I had to do was stay in my pond and I'd be safe as pudding!

**WOLF/HUNTER**

Is that so? What of you, Bird? I don't suppose you have any fear of wolves?

**BIRD**

Me..?

*Bird glances nervously at the other two.*

**BIRD**

No, never, not a bit! Bring 'em on!

*Bird gamely assumes a rock 'em sock 'em pose and hops about, throwing a few punches; then she speaks discreetly to Wolf.*

**BIRD**

Don't tell my friends this...but actually, I'm very relieved you're here. I am a nervous creature. Feel my heart. See how fast it's beating? And that's when I'm not afraid!

**WOLF/HUNTER**

So you're unafraid now?

**BIRD**

Oh no, I'm *always* afraid. I'm just less afraid now than if there was an actual wolf standing right next to me. I am more terrified of wolves than anything—except maybe cats. Cats, wolves. Very scary.

**WOLF/HUNTER**

Your secret is safe with me.

**DUCK**

Tell me, Hunter, what did you do with the wolf after you killed him?

**WOLF/HUNTER**

I ate him.

Music in; cue #13.

**DUCK**

You...ate him?

**WOLF/HUNTER**

In one. Big. Gulp. Like so.

*Wolf demonstrates, barring huge, glistening white teeth.*

**DUCK**

You can stop now.

*But he can't. The stage suddenly darkens— as if a storm were brewing overhead. Something is clearly upon them. As the music grows in intensity, they nervously glance around, trying to finger the source of their growing fear. Bird escapes to the tree; Duck frantically zips around the pond.*

**DUCK**

What-what-whaaat's going on here?

**BIRD**

A storm must be brewing.

Cat sniffs the air, her body crouched and still.

**CAT**

That smell doesn't smell like a storm.

**DUCK** (sniffing)

What-what-what's it smell like?

*Wolf has shed the Hunter's clothing; he now wears his own long, gray coat.*

**CAT**

Hmmm. It smells like...like...

*Bird is the first to see the very "wolfish" looking Wolf.*

**BIRD**

A...woo...wooo...wooooo...

**CAT**

What are you whining about?

*Duck circles the pond, sniffing.*

**DUCK**

I can't smell anything.

**BIRD**

A wooooooo... A wooooooo!

**WOLF**

Come closer, Duck.

**BIRD** (Shrill)

WOOOOOOOOO!

**DUCK**

You know I'm just getting over a cold, and my nose is still a bit-

**WOLF**

Take a nice, deep whiff.

**CAT**

I know what it smells like!

*Bird can no longer breathe at this point and gestures soundlessly at Wolf. Duck and Cat turn to see the grinning villain.*

**DUCK & CAT**

The Wolf!

Music out. Duck and Bird shout at Cat from their safe havens.

**DUCK**

Look out, Cat!

**BIRD**

Run, Cat! Hide!

**CAT**

In a twinkling, the cat climbed up the tree!

Music in; cue #14

*Cat frantically claws at the tree, slipping and sliding and making no headway whatsoever.*

**CAT**

With that, the cat hurried up the tree!

*She hurls herself at the tree, trying like mad to escape the calmly approaching Wolf.*

**CAT**

After some effort, the cat escaped up the tree!

*She turns to see Wolf, who offers her a leg up. She moves to accept, thinks the better of it, then--*

**CAT**

Yikes!

**BIRD**

Just then, Bird yanked Cat by the scruff of the neck and they scrambled...up...the tree..!

**DUCK**

In his excitement, Duck jumped right out of the pond!

Music out

**BIRD**

Oh dear.

**CAT**

Oh my.

**WOLF**

Oh joy.

**DUCK**

Uh oh.

Wolf approaches, standing between Duck and the pond, a huge grin on his face. He moves the pond even further away from Duck.

**WOLF**

It seems the pond is there and you...are here.  
How delightful. Now, what shall we do?

*An enchanting dinner bell rings.*

**WOLF**

Ah, meal time!

*Wolf produces a napkin, shakes it out, and then ties it neatly around his own neck-- like a bib, as Duck remains, frozen with fear, standing before him.*

**WOLF**

Perhaps we could dine together?

Music in; cue # 15

*A small café table-- already set-- and one chair appear.*

*Wolf is seated and peruses the menu.*

**WOLF**

Now then, let's see what's on the menu.

*As he holds it up, we see a large hole in the menu—so that Wolf is actually looking through it and directly at Duck.*

**WOLF**

Hmmm, it all looks so delicious...but I understand the duck is particularly good tonight. Very tender, very fresh. Exactly how I like it. Will you join me?

**DUCK**

Actually, I've already eaten.

**WOLF**

But you must.

*But Duck is backing away, trying to reach the pond.*

**DUCK**

I'll call you, we'll do lunch.

*Wolf lunges past Duck and blocks his way; smiling broadly.*

**WOLF**

Hello, lunch!

Music out

THE CHASE

*This is a series of musical "set-ups" rather than a single event. The transitions between each vignette should be fluid and spare—making the separate sections "of a piece". While the tone of each section is not necessarily panic and pursuit, we should always, ultimately, return to the intensity and obsession of the chase.*

Music in; cue #16

*•Duck makes a mad dash for the tree swing, pursued by Wolf; they execute a sort of teeter-totter pas de deux en l'aire.*

*•Duck is "running" (in place); Wolf "runs" after, then overtakes and surpasses Duck, who drops back and is now, effectively, chasing Wolf. They both stop and play a quick game of Paper, Scissors, Rock. Duck wins, shakes Wolf's hand "good game", and runs offstage.*

•Cat holds up a sign: it reads "STOP. Duck & Wolf comply. Now Bird holds up a sign: it reads "GO". They do. The game proceeds apace, with additional signage that might read: "FAST" and "SLOW"; "HIGH" and "LOW".

\*The ticking of a METRONOME might figure in here.

•Duck and Wolf engage in a game of "hide and seek", taking turns being "it", counting, hiding, etc. When one of them cheats, the other calls them on it; they compliment one another on finding particularly good hiding spots, etc.

•At some point, the music runs out, and CAT and BIRD imitate the underscoring, vocally and/or with clapping.

•Duck flees the stage. Then we see a MINIATURE DUCK upstage, running in the distance, passing the tiny HOUSE, then a MINIATURE FOREST and MOUNTAINS.

Wolf naturally goes after Duck, exiting and then appearing as MINIATURE WOLF upstage. The two tiny figures crisscross the stage; now the TAJ MAHAL, EIFFEL TOWER, KREMLIN, SPHINX, and SPACE NEEDLE, sail past. Cat and Bird become "tourists", donning sunglasses and maps, reacting to the "sights".

•Duck runs back onstage, life-size, pursued by life-size Wolf. They race across the stage and exit.

As we know he must, Wolf eventually captures our friend Duck. Duck, once more in MINIATURE, enters upstage and appears to have eluded the predator. However, a large SHADOW OF WOLF'S HEAD appears to grow against a sheet or scrim upstage. The huge jaws open and the hapless Duck disappears—in one gulp, into the gaping maw of the wolf.

Wolf burps loudly, then re-enters, noisily smacking his lips.

**BIRD**

You horrid creature!

**WOLF**

What-?

**BIRD**

You ate our friend.

**WOLF**

Oh, that. Yes, well...

Perhaps Wolf looks, momentarily, sheepish.

**BIRD**

How *could* you, Wolf?

**WOLF**

I was hungry.

*Then Wolf simply turns and coughs into his hand— expelling a single feather, which floats to the floor.*

Music out

**CAT** (spoken)

And now, this is how things stood.

Music in; cue # 17

The cat was sitting on one branch--

**BIRD**

The bird on another.

**CAT**

The cat was lower..

**BIRD**

The bird was higher.

**CAT**

Hello, the cat was in danger.

**BIRD**

The bird was not.

**CAT**

The cat could get eaten!

**BIRD**

The bird...could not.

Music out

**CAT**

This is not fair!

**BIRD**

Now you know how it feels!

**CAT & BIRD**

And a life or death struggle ensues!

*Bird and Cat engage in a brief flurry of fighting.  
They regard one another breathlessly from their perches.*

**CAT**

The cat was sitting on one branch...

**BIRD**

The bird was on another branch...not too close to the cat.

**WOLF**

And the wolf walked round and round the tree..

**WOLF/CAT/BIRD**

Looking at them with greedy eyes.

*Wolf circles the tree, occasionally making sudden, sharp moves,  
as if to scare the other two off their perches.*

*Peter enters. Play-on; cue #18*

**PETER**

Peter, without the slightest fear, had watched all that was going on from behind the closed gate.

*Armed with a slingshot, he climbs onto the wall-- unseen by Wolf, who is busy sharpening his teeth.*

**PETER**

Psst, over here...

**BIRD**

Hooray, Peter's here, we're saved!

**PETER**

Sssh. I don't want him to hear.

**BIRD** (whispering)

Hear what?

**PETER**

My clever plan. It has to be a secret.

**WOLF**

I can hear you.

*Cat mimes throwing a ball very far away.*

**CAT**

Fetch!

*Wolf runs offstage, after the "ball".*

**PETER**

Now, which one of you wants to be the one to help?

**BIRD**

Me, me, me! The smallest is always first.

**CAT**

Says who?

**BIRD**

That's just the rule.

**CAT**

I have never heard that rule. It's the oldest who goes first.

**BIRD**

Smallest!

**CAT**

Oldest!

**PETER**

Quiet!

**CAT**

What is this plan you speak of, Peter?

**PETER**

I'm going to set up the perfect trap.

**BIRD**

Good thinking, Peter!

**CAT**

How does it work, this trap?

*Music in; cue #19*  
THE PERFECT TRAP

**PETER**(singing)

I'll build the perfect trap,  
I'll get it right this time!  
Not like I've tried before,  
I've got a new design.  
And with this plan I cannot fail!  
Here, listen, I'll explain:

*Peter reveals a complicated miniature contraption-- or he pulls down or unravels a chart/set of plans and drawings.*

**PETER**(singing)

You drop the marble, let it roll  
Right down the chute into the hole  
Then this fork flips and hits the spoon,  
Which then releases this balloon  
That pulls the lever, drops the sand,  
And that will stretch the rubber band.  
The board will flip up once or twice,  
This door flips open, out come mice.  
The mice chew here all 'round and 'round,  
They eat right through, the rope drops down.  
The wolf is caught, he'll howl out loud,  
And I'll have made my grandpa proud!

My trap was meant to be,  
And nothing can go wrong.  
I'll follow all my plans,  
And build it very strong.  
This perfect trap has got to work,  
The wolf is not that smart..  
Is he?

Cat and Bird consider the plan in silence, then:

**CAT & BIRD**(singing)

You drop the marble, let it roll.

**PETER**(singing)

Right down the chute into the hole.

**CAT & BIRD**(singing)

Then this fork flips and hits the spoon.

**PETER**(singing)

Which then releases this balloon.

**PETER/CAT/BIRD**(singing)

That pulls the lever, drops the sand  
And that will stretch the rubber band  
The door will flip up once or twice,  
This door flips open, out come mice!

**BIRD**(spoken)

It's brilliant Peter, really it is!

**CAT**

How do we get the wolf to go near the trap?

**BIRD**

Ooh, good question. How, Peter?

**PETER**

We *lure* him.

**BIRD**

We *lure* him.

**CAT**

How?

**BIRD**

Yes Peter, how?

**PETER**

I don't know!

Music out

**BIRD**

I don't- You don't know?

**PETER**

And after we've captured him, we put the wiley fellow  
in a pillow case, and then we tie it off and I sling  
the bag over my shoulder-

*Peter demonstrates with the gusto of the uninformed.*

**BIRD**

But Peter...

**PETER**

And we march into town!

**BIRD**

But Peter—

**PETER**

And when anyone asks what have I got there, I say "oh this? Just a wolf is all". Of course they shake their heads in disbelief and admiration at our heroic feat!

*Wolf enters, returning from his fool's errand.*

**WOLF**

Fetch? Very funny.

**PETER** (whispering)

Now, Bird!

**BIRD**

But Peter--

**PETER**

Fly over and circle 'round the wolf's head.

*This stops Bird dead in her tracks.*

**BIRD**

Excuse me—?

**PETER**

Flutter about near his nose so that he can smell you. That's sure to get his attention.

**BIRD**

But-but-but—

**CAT**

I love this plan! He-he-he-he-heee-he!

**WOLF**

I've had enough of your games.

**PETER**

You have to get him to follow you, Bird.

**BIRD**

But-but-but-

**CAT**

*You're the lure!*

*Cat is really in hysterics now.*

**BIRD**

But there's no trap!

**PETER**

No problem—I have a slingshot.

Peter produces a very ineffectual-looking slingshot.

**BIRD**

Maybe you should think this through a little more.

**PETER**

Once you get the wolf's attention, you'll fly away--

**CAT**

What's left of you!

**PETER**

Then I'll pop him! Ready, Bird?

*But Bird can't answer because she's momentarily blacked out.*

**PETER**

You're not afraid, are you?

**BIRD**

Yes!

**PETER**

I need you to be brave just now. I'll be right here with my trusty slingshot. Go on...

*Bird gazes at the Wolf, then takes a timid step.*

**CAT**

Take care he doesn't catch you. He-he-he!

Music in; cue #20

*Bird, utilizing a PUPPET of herself (a puppet on a fishing pole would be useful here), dangles it before the wolf.*

**BIRD**

Here Boy. Over here...

**WOLF**

What's this? An *hor d'ove*, for me?

*Wolf grabs the puppet and tosses it. Bird tries to "lure" him to her.*

**BIRD**

M-m-my...what big eyes you have.

**WOLF**

The better to see what I'm eating.

**PETER**

How the bird worried the wolf.

**BIRD**

How he wanted to catch her!

*Bird dodges Wolf, narrowly escaping his grasp.*

**PETER**

But the bird was clever. And try as he might, the wolf simply couldn't do anything about it.

Music out

**WOLF**

Do you actually believe that?

**PETER**

Excuse me-?

**WOLF**

Do you really think I couldn't—if I truly wanted to, catch that puny bird? I mean really, Peter, *look at me*. If I were even slightly interested I could inhale her like an olive-pit and all!

**CAT**

Oh yeah? Why didn't you, then? Answer me that.

**BIRD**

Uh, Cat...can you please not be so curious?

**WOLF**

My dear Cat, I was simply having sport with your feathered friend here. I never intended to end the tiny creature's life. Perhaps one day, if my life is in danger, Bird will return the favor and spare me.

*Without changing his focus, Wolf addresses Peter.*

**WOLF**

Peter, am I to assume that sling-shot is for me?

**PETER**

What-- oh, this?

*(Assuming a fierce hunting pose)*

Actually, I'm going to capture you, Wolf!

**WOLF**

No fooling? And what of the other wolves?

**PETER**

What "other wolves"?

**WOLF**

You do know wolves run in packs, right? If you trap me, you'll have to contend with them. I dare say they will be rather upset with you.

*Wolf gestures around the stage, pointing out where other wolves are lurking.*

**WOLF**

Did you not consider that, Peter?

**PETER**

Of course I did. I mean, no.

**WOLF**

The meadow is a dangerous place. You've got to think these things through, my boy.

**PETER**

But I—

**WOLF**

It could get you in trouble one of these days, mark my words.

**PETER**

That's what my Grandfather always says.

**WOLF**

Where do you think I learned it from?

**PETER**

My Grandfather-?

**WOLF**

My grandfather.

**PETER**

You have a grandfather?

**WOLF**

Of course. He's always saying "Think it through, Wolfy. Look before you leap. That sort of thing. And dog-gone if he isn't right!

*Peter regards Wolf from atop the wall.*

**PETER**

Would you really eat me?

**WOLF**

Why don't you jump down and we'll see?

**BIRD**

Don't listen to him!

**CAT**

He's an animal!

**PETER**

Have you ever eaten a kid?

**WOLF**

Not yet. I hear they're stringy-like celery. But--

*Music in; cue #21*

"WHAT US WOLFY'S DO/ THE CELERY SONG"

**WOLF**(singing)

Sometimes, just a piece of celery  
really hits the spot.

**PETER**

Yuck!

**WOLF**(singing)

Sometimes that stringy piece of celery's  
The only thing you've got.

**PETER**

Oh...

**CAT**

Tell me about it!

**WOLF**(singing)

But let's say you hadn't had a morsel  
Since Tuesday of last week—  
And your prospects look bleak  
For something else that you could munch on.

Soon you're really feeling hungry,  
And your stomach aches.  
Then your eyes begin to blur,  
You hallucinate on steaks, and cakes.  
And though I'd rather have a burger  
With a super side of fries,  
If I only had a choice, celery sticks  
or little boys, I don't think  
I'd order vegetarian.

*(Wolf performs a slick soft-shoe)*

**WOLF**(singing)

When a wolf is really famished,  
His instincts pull him through.

**PETER/BIRD/CAT**(singing)

Oh my goodness!

*Wolf makes a grab for Peter; Peter pulls away.*

**WOLF**(singing)

Peter, dinner could be you!

*Wolf tries again; Peter slaps him away.*

**PETER/BIRD/CAT**(singing)

Hey Wolfy, how about spaghetti?

**WOLF** (singing)  
That's just what us Wolfy's do!

**PETER/BIRD/CAT** (singing)  
Try some tuna salad.

**WOLF** (singing)  
I'm not thinkin' right or wrong,  
Just telling you what's true:  
That's just what us wolfy's do.

Music out. *Wolf drops his head and weeps.*

**WOLF**  
It's not as though I have a choice in the matter..

**PETER**  
There, there, Wolf. Don't be sad.

*Wolf looks up at Peter with sorrowful eyes.*

**WOLF**  
Ever since "Little Red Riding Hood", it's  
always 'Look-- a big, bad wolf'! Everyone is afraid of  
me. No one wants to be friends with a wolf-- except  
maybe another wolf.

**PETER**  
I would.

**WOLF**  
Aw, you're just saying that.

**PETER**  
No, I'd be your friend.

**CAT**  
Okay, Peter, that's enough.

**BIRD**  
*Enough!*

**CAT**  
That's too close.

**BIRD**  
*Too close!*

**WOLF**

You aren't afraid of me, are you Peter?

*A musical boom sounds offstage.*

**HUNTER** (offstage)

Over there-- he's after the boy!

*Music in; cue #22*

*Wolf races offstage as a HUNTER runs onstage.*

**HUNTER**

Are you alright?

**BIRD**

Actually, my throat  
is kind of dry and--

**CAT**

My pads are shot from  
climbing this annoying--

**HUNTER**

I meant the boy.

**BIRD**

Naturally.

**CAT**

Of course.

**PETER**

I almost had him.

**HUNTER**

That wolf is strong-- much stronger than you, Peter!

*Hunter sits down, unburdening himself of a thick, coiled rope.*

**HUNTER**

Yes sir, he's a smart one, that wolf is. Smarter than  
all three of us!

**PETER**

Four, sir.

*Wolf howls in the distance, startling Hunter.*

**HUNTER**

What was that!

**PETER**

The wolf, sir.

*Music in, cue #23*

*Hunter springs up and calls to an offstage band of comrades.*

**HUNTER**

This way, comrades, we've got him now! We'll finish him by nightfall. Tally-ho and away we— ouch, my toe!

*Hunter exits...leaving behind his rope.*

**BIRD**

Surely Hunter will get Wolf. Then we'll be safe, won't we, Peter..?

*Wolf howls offstage.*

**PETER**

I've got to do it myself. I've got to catch that wolf.

**CAT**

It's much too dangerous, Peter. You heard your grandfather. He said very clearly: you have to stay away from the--

*Peter charges offstage; Wolf howls again.*

**CAT & BIRD**

Wolf!

**BIRD**

Oh dear.

*A musical boom sounds offstage; Bird picks up the forgotten rope.*

**BIRD**

Hunter's rope!

**CAT**

Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

**BIRD**

I think so.

**BIRD & CAT** (calling off)

Wait for your friends, Peter!

*And the two friends run offstage with rope in hand.*