

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

by Diane Grant

Adapted from *The Wind In The Willows* by Kenneth Grahame

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THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

PRINCIPALS:

Miss Mole - a sensitive, impetuous creature
Miss Ratty - a poet and a born teacher
Miss Otter - a gossip and gadabout
Widow Badger - a stern recluse with a heart of gold
Toad - a feckless and reckless adventurer
Wilhemina (Willy) Weasel - a hustler
The Weasel Twins - Erica and Harriet
Wilmer Otter - not the brightest one in the Otter family

ENSEMBLE AND CHILDREN'S CHORUS – DOUBLING AS:

The Spirit of the Seasons
Father Hedgehog
Mother Hedgehog
Arthur Hedgehog
Annie Hedgehog
Dora Field Mouse
Donald Field Mouse
Jerry Stoat
Jimmy Stoat
Magistrate
Clerk
Jurors #1, #2, and #3
A Washerwoman
The Officer of the Public Safety
Servants, Ferrets, Townspeople, Waiters, Motorcar Drivers, Lawyers, Prison Guards

PLACE: English countryside

TIME 1908

SCENE ONE: *Spring*

LIGHTS UP ON: Mole's house – dark and lowly.

AT RISE: Mole is dusting.

MOLE

(sneezes)

I'm so tired of living underground. It's so dark and there's nothing but dust!

(sneezes again, looks up)

I wonder what's up there in the big world?

Do I dare go up there? I'm timid and not very strong. What if it's too scary? What if I make mistakes? What if nobody likes me?

(sniffs)

It smells so good.

I'm going to do it. I'll be all right. If my glasses don't fall off.

(She sneezes and her glasses fall off.)

LIGHTS DOWN.

LIGHTS UP: The lights are warm and bright, perfect for a beautiful Spring day.

SCENE TWO: *Above ground – Spring*

SETTING: A meadow full of willow trees.

AT RISE: The Spirit of the Seasons cartwheels in, dressed as Spring. She changes the willow by adding fresh leaves, then dances off.

(A family of picnickers, MOTHER AND ANNIE HEDGEHOG, her daughter, enter with a picnic basket and a checkered tablecloth.)

MOTHER HEDGEHOG

Help me put the food out, Annie.

ANNIE HEDGEHOG

I'd just love to. This is such fun.

(They begin to take food out of a picnic basket. FATHER HEDGEHOG and ARTHUR, their son, enter.)

FATHER HEDGEHOG

You'd better have a good time, or else.

ARTHUR HEDGEHOG

I'm not going to.

ANNIE HEDGEHOG

Yummy, Mummy. Cold ham and sweet pickles. My favorites.

ARTHUR HEDGEHOG

Me first, me first.

ANNIE HEDGEHOG

You always get to be first.

ARTHUR HEDGEHOG

Do not.

ANNIE HEDGEHOG

Do, too.

FATHER HEDGEHOG

You've outdone yourself, Mother.

(Suddenly, Mole appears, climbing out of her underground home.)

MOLE

Hello!

MOTHER HEDGEHOG

EEEEK!

FATHER HEDGEHOG

What the deuce?

(Mole comes forward, blinded by the light. She shades her eyes.)

MOLE

Oh, that sun is very bright, isn't it?

ANNIE HEDGEHOG

Ewww. It's a Mole!

MOTHER HEDGEHOG

What are you doing here?

MOLE

I just came up to see the world.
(rushing forward)
I'm very pleased to meet you.

(She steps on the cloth and knocks over a bottle.)

FATHER HEDGEHOG

Look out! Look out!

MOTHER HEDGEHOG

You've spilled the ginger beer!

MOLE

Oh, I can't quite see yet. Sorry, sorry.

(She moves again and steps on a pie.)

ARTHUR HEDGEHOG

You've stepped in the potted meat!

MOLE

Whoops. I didn't see....
(She steps on another plate.)
Oops.

ANNIE HEDGEHOG

And you've put your feet in the ham sandwiches!

FATHER HEDGEHOG

That's it! Pack up, Mother.

(They gather up their belongings. Mole tries to help and Mother Hedgehog grabs the picnic cloth from Mole.)

MOLE

I'm terribly sorry.

ARTHUR

Four eyes, four eyes.

FATHER HEDGEHOG

Come along, everybody.
(exiting, to Mole)
You...interloper!

(They exit. Arthur immediately reappears and gives Mole a raspberry. Exits.)

MOLE

That wasn't a very good start.

(looks at her feet)

Blecccch!

(The Spirit of the Season appears with a butterfly on a fishing line. She drops the line in front of Mole's face. Mole is enchanted.)

MOLE (continued)

Hullo! Aren't you beautiful!

(Mole exits, following the butterfly. WILHEMINA (WILLY) WEASEL, followed by ERICA AND HARRIET WEASEL, THE WEASEL TWINS, appears from behind trees and enters. Willy is a punk. Erica and Harriet, her toadies, are just like her.)

WILLY

Did I see a Mole!?

ERICA

(sniggers)

What's a Mole doing up here?

HARRIET

That's unnatural.

(Willy peers into the ground, looking into Mole's house.)

WILLY

I know why she left. Her place is a dump.

(Erica picks up a rock and holds it above the hole.)

ERICA

(sniggers)

Why don't we help her fix it up?

(She drops the rock into the hole. SFX: The rock hits something hard. Harriet grabs another one and throws it in. SFX: Boink. General laughter.)

HARRIET

Look at this rock. It's enormous.

(She plops it into the hole.)

There she goes.

(SFX: A rock hitting something.)

Boink.

ERICA

Boy, I think you broke something.

HARRIET

(amused)

Oh, no!

WILLY

Gimme a rock.

(Harriet passes her a rock and she throws it into the hole. SFX:
Rock hitting bottom. Willy jumps back.)

Boink! That's how it's done.

ERICA

Give me two rocks.

(She throws two rocks down. SFX: two rocks hitting bottom. She
jumps back.)

Boink! Boink!

WILLY

Gimme the biggest rock.

(She picks up a big rock.)

Help me.

(They throw the rock into the hole. SKX: a Crash.)

ALL

(jumping back)

Boink! Boink!

WILLY

If a thing's worth doing, it's worth doing well.

(All three laugh and snigger. They put their hands together, then
throw their arms in the air.)

ALL

W-E-A-S-E-L-S. Weasels!!!

(They exit.)

Mole reenters, then stops, transfixed. SFX: The Riverbank. We can hear it, chuckling and gurgling.

MOLE

How curious. What can it be?

(Ratty, a Water Rat, enters.)

RATTY

It's a river.

MOLE

Hullo!

RATTY

I'm Ratty. I'm a Water Rat and a poet.

(points off)

That's my boat tied up over there.

MOLE

I'm Mole.

RATTY

That's a darling little fur coat.

MOLE

Thanks. I wear it all year round. So, that's a river.

RATTY

It's *the* River.

(points)

My house is over there. Just above the water line.

MOLE

You really live by this...river? What a jolly life!

RATTY

I'm writing a poem about it.

(takes a piece of paper from her pocket, reads)

The river is brother and sister to me

And aunts and uncles and company.

It's food and drink and naturally, washing..."

(stops quoting, to Mole)

What rhymes with washing? Can you think of anything?

MOLE

(shakes her head, looking off)

What's that big thing in the back of your boat?

RATTY

A lunch basket. I'm having lunch with the widow Badger.

MOLE

Badger?

RATTY

I've made her watercress sandwiches. They're her favorite. We've got

(running the words together)

cold chicken, cold tongue, cold ham, cold beef, pickled gherkins, French rolls, of course, and lemonade soda.

MOLE

(sniffing the air)

I can smell it from here.

(apologetically)

I forgot to eat lunch.

RATTY

When Badger gets here, we'll have a feast.

(SFX: A splash. Otter enters.)

OTTER

Did somebody say, "Lunch?"

RATTY

Otter!

OTTER

Did you hear? There's a Mole above ground, scaring the children. She stomped all over a picnic and stole the ham sandwiches.

MOLE

I didn't steal anything!

OTTER

You're the Mole? You don't look scary. In fact, you look kind of puny.

RATTY

Mole, this is my friend....

(SFX. A May-fly buzzes past.)

OTTER

May-fly, may-fly!

(Otter follows it and exits. SFX: A splash.)

...That was my friend, Otter.

(Badger enters.)

And here is Badger! We were just talking about you.

BADGER

What's this about some upstart Mole?

(belligerently)

Who's this!?

MOLE

I'm Mole. I'm really very nice and I'm glad to meet you.

(runs eagerly toward Badger and trips, falling into her)

Oh, sorry. Sorry.

BADGER

She barges in, uninvited. She's a thief and a bumblefoot, too!

(grunts)

I'm off.

(She exits.)

MOLE

(wails)

I'm not a thief! I'm just a...bumble foot! I'm going home.

(She runs to her burrow and looks in.)

Oh, no, my door's blocked with rocks.

RATTY

What's that?

(Ratty joins her and looks in.)

They're really wedged in there. You'll never be able to open it.

MOLE

How could that happen?

(Willy and Erica and Harriet enter.)

RATTY

I have an idea.

(Erica and Harriet look down into the hole.)

ERICA

Look at that. You can't even see the doorknob.

(Willy gives Ratty a card.)

RATTY

(reading out loud)

Home Renovations! Reasonable Rates. WILHEMINA WEASEL, Contractor.

WILLY

You can call me Willy.

RATTY

All right, Willy, you rascal. Go back to the Wild Wood.

(The three weasels snigger and walk off.)

MOLE

I can't go home now. What'll I do?

RATTY

Look here! I've an extra room in the riverbank. I can put you up.

MOLE

It's no trouble?

RATTY

None. You can stay as long as you like. We've got four seasons, up here, you know. Spring, summer, fall, and winter.

MOLE

(teary eyed)

But nobody likes me up here. I'll never make friends.

RATTY

Silly Mole, you've made one friend, already.

MOLE

Who?

RATTY

Me.

MOLE

(delighted, wiping her eyes)

Really? Oh, really? Oh, that's just...splendid.

RATTY

Let's get that picnic basket, shall we?

MOLE

(exuberant again)

I'll take it out of the boat.

(She runs off.)

RATTY

Be careful! Don't pull at it, Moley.

MOLE

(calling, offstage)

I've got it. I've got it.

RATTY

Watch out! You're going to tip over the boat.

MOLE

(calling, offstage)

Oh, no! Oh, no! Help!

SFX: A huge Splash.

RATTY

Oh well, I wasn't really hungry, anyway.

(thinks)

This could be a long year.

LIGHTS DOWN.

LIGHTS UP: A warm summer light.

THE Spirit of the Seasons cartwheels in, dressed in summer clothes. She changes the tree, then dances off.

SCENE THREE: *We meet Toad - Summer*

SETTING: Toad Hall

AT RISE: Toad's servants enter, carrying two pillars. Two servants enter with a chair and tea table. Another follows and puts a tea set on the table. Toad enters through the pillars.

TOAD

Step lively there. It's a gorgeous summer day. Smell the roses. Smile.

(looks about)

Where's the map! Where's my map? Do I have to do everything myself?

(He exits. Ratty and Mole enter.)

RATTY

Toady's full of himself but he's got a heart of gold.

MOLE

I can't wait to meet him.

(Toad enters, carrying a large map.)

TOAD

Ratty! This is splendid!

(spotting Mole)

Who is this?

RATTY

This is my friend, Mole. She's learning about the world up here.

TOAD

Excellent! Another adventurer!

MOLE

What a delightful house.

TOAD

Finest house on the whole river, or anywhere else in the world for that matter.

(Ratty nudges Mole, who smothers a giggle.)

Now, look here. You've got to help me.

RATTY

It's about your rowing, I suppose. You still splash a lot.

TOAD

Pooh! Boating! I've discovered the only genuine occupation for a lifetime.

RATTY

(suddenly suspicious)

What is the map for, Toady?

TOAD

Aha. Pespicious, as usual, Ratty.

(calling)

Where is the cart?

RATTY

The cart!?

TOAD

The very finest cart that was ever built.

(The servants pull in a gypsy caravan.)

There you are. Now, here's something thrilling to learn about. The real life!

MOLE

The real life?

TOAD

The open road! Have a peek inside.

MOLE

How tremendously exciting.

(She puts her head inside the door of the caravan. Ratty snorts and thrust her hands deep into her pockets.)

TOAD

When we start out this afternoon, we'll have everything we need.

RATTY

Did you say something about *we* and *start* and this *afternoon*?

TOAD

Now, don't argue – it's the one thing I can't stand.

RATTY

I'm not going anywhere in a cart and that's flat.

TOAD

Let's show Mole more of the world.

RATTY

I'm going to stick to my old river. And what's more, Mole's going to do the same.

(Mole sticks her head out of the cart.)

MOLE

You should see the feast in here, Ratty. There are biscuits, potted lobster, sardines, bacon and jam! When do we start?

TOAD

Oh, I like her.

(to Ratty)

Talk about it while I order more tea. Stick in the mud.

(Toad exits.)

MOLE

Did you hear that, Ratty. He likes me!

RATTY

Toad likes everybody.

MOLE

Oh!

RATTY

Except stick in the muds, it seems.

MOLE

Is something wrong, Ratty?

RATTY

No!

(SFX: a faint warning hum like the drone of a distant bee, the Poop-Poop Poop-Poop of the car motor, the sound of a horn, OOGA OOGA.)

What's that?

MOLE

Good heavens.

(Toad enters, running.)

TOAD

I say? Did you hear?

(SFX: The motorcar sound grows louder. The servants enter, screaming.)

SERVANTS

Run! Run for your life! It's a tornado! It's a whirlwind!

MOLE

Oh, dear, oh dear, oh dear.

(A motorcar goes across the stage causing Mole, Ratty, and Toad to leap back. The horn sounds over and over. The car makes a sound like Poop, Poop-Poop. Offstage, the sound recedes.)

RATTY

You scoundrels! I'll have the law on you! I'll take you through all the Courts!

TOAD

(stares fixedly in the direction of the disappearing motorcar, legs stretched out in front of him, sitting in the middle of the stage.)

What a glorious, stirring sight.

(imitating the sound of the car)

Poop-poop.

RATTY

Now, look here, Toad! You'll have to go straight to the police station and complain.

TOAD

Me complain! I'm done with carts forever.

(The servants and Ratty look at each other and shrug.)

FIRST SERVANT

Here we go again.

(Two servants take the cart off.)

MOLE

What are we going to do?

RATTY

Let's go home.

MOLE

But what about Toad? He looks very strange.

RATTY

Oh, bother Toad. He's got another craze and he's useless.

(She starts off and Mole follows.)

And of course, he likes you, Moley. You're very likeable.

(They exit. The disgruntled servants enter and clear the set, grumbling.)

SECOND SERVANT

Rowboats, carts, always something new. And the same old thing for us. Work, work...

SECOND AND THIRD SERVANT

Work.

(Toad sits, legs stretched out in front of him, sitting in the middle of the stage.)

TOAD

Oh, bliss. O poop-poop! Poop-poop! A motorcar! That's the only way to travel!

LIGHT START DOWN.

(Willy, Harriet and Erica enter.)

WILLY

Did I hear someone say, Motorcar?

(produces a card)

My card.

(She hands the card to Toad.)

TOAD

(reading)

Weasel Works. Motorcar Sales. Wilhemina Weasel. Proprietor.

LIGHTS DOWN.

LIGHTS UP: A colder light

SCENE FOUR: *Ratty's Restless - Fall*

SETTING: The Riverbank

AT RISE: SFX: Wind blowing, geese overhead, flying south. The Spirit of the Seasons cartwheels in and changes the tree. She dances off.

Ratty and Mole enter, wearing scarves and hats.

MOLE

(sniffing)

So this is what fall smells like.

(shivers)

Brrr.

RATTY

(with melancholy, dramatically)

These are the grey and chilly days of fall.

MOLE

Grey and chilly.

RATTY

(looking up)

The geese are flying south. Good-bye, geese.

(SFX: The geese call. Ratty sighs. She waves. DORA, A FIELD MOUSE enters, carrying a basket.)

DORA

Here's old Ratty and Mole! Come and lend a hand, Rat. Don't stand about idle!

RATTY

You're moving already?

(Mole helps with the basket and she and Dora exit. DONALD, A FIELD MOUSE, enters, carrying two baskets and a hatbox. They are heavy and he puts them down.)

DONALD

Winter's coming, Ratty.

(He exits, carrying one of the baskets. Dora and Mole reenter.)

DORA

The best apartments get picked up so quickly nowadays.

RATTY

Don't go, Dora. We could have a picnic in the woods.

DORA

Not today.

(She and Mole take the second basket by the handles and exit.)

Thank you, Mole.

(Donald reenters, mopping his face with a bandana.)

DONALD

Why don't you sit down? In an hour or two, we might be free for a chat.

(Ratty, snorting contemptuously, sits on a hatbox, and crushes it.)

DONALD

Do you mind?

(Ratty stands up. Donald takes the hatbox and exits.)

RATTY

If people would be more careful, they wouldn't put their hatboxes where people can sit on them.

(Mole reenters.)

MOLE

You look quite upset, Ratty. Maybe, you should sit down.

RATTY

I like standing.

LEAVES BEGIN TO FALL.

MOLE

Are you all right, Ratty?

RATTY

I'm just a little bit sad. The cold wind's blowing, everybody's going. You'll be leaving, too, I guess. Going on to new adventures.

MOLE

Well, if it's all right, I was rather hoping to spend Christmas here with you.

RATTY

You were?

MOLE

What's it like?

RATTY

(sighs, still melancholy)

Some think it's rather jolly.

MOLE

How do you celebrate?

RATTY

You put up a Christmas tree and string it with lights.

MOLE

What else?

RATTY

You give presents and you get some. And you visit. There's singing and then there's Christmas dinner...

MOLE

Dinner?

(SFX: a Splash. Otter enters.)

OTTER

Did someone say, "Dinner?"

MOLE

Christmas dinner, Otter.

OTTER

...Mmmmm. My favorite topic. ...Chestnuts, stuffing with sage...currant cake...I'm so glad I found you.

Did you hear the news? Everybody's talking about it. Toad's going into the Wild Wood. He says he's going to buy a large, new motorcar.

MOLE AND RATTY

Oh, dear!

(Mole, Ratty and Otter exit.)

LIGHTS COME SLOWLY UP:

SCENE FIVE: *Toad buys a Motorcar – Fall*

SETTING: The Edge of the Wild Wood

AT RISE: An strange twisted tree, filled with autumn leaves, enters. It sits in place and the arms of weasels, stoats and ferrets appear.

(Toad enters. SFX: A crow caws. He jumps.)

TOAD

Oh, Toad, you are lost at the edge of the Wild Wood. What makes you think you could find a motorcar here?

(He pulls out Willy's card and looks at it. Harriet Weasel appears and hangs a sign on the tree. A LARGE ARROW says THIS WAY TO THE MOTORCARS. Toad spirits lift.)

Ho, ho, I am on the right road. What a clever Toad I am!

(We hear a snigger from behind the tree. Toad follows the arrow.)

Soon, I'll be Toad the Terror, King of the Road.

(Willy enters.)

WILLY

Hullo. Who's this?

TOAD

Miss Weasel? Of Weasel Works?

WILLY

Have we met?

TOAD

I'm Toad.

WILLY

Toad, Toad, Toad you say?

TOAD

You gave me your card.

(hands it to Willy)

I'm here to purchase a motorcar.

WILLY

Oh, you're looking for a motorcar.

TOAD

You do sell motorcars?

WILLY

(looking at the card)

We do, sir, but we do not sell to just anybody.

TOAD

I would have you know that I am a very well-known, distinguished Toad!

HARRIET

Many are distinguished but few can afford to buy.

ERICA

Can you afford a motorcar, Mr...um...Toad?

TOAD

Have you not heard of Toad Hall? The finest mansion in these parts, dating from the fourteenth century but with every modern convenience and up to date sanitation?

WILLY

It sounds impressive, Mr. Toad. It's on the riverbank?

TOAD

It is.

ERICA

(makes a note on a pad)

Such a grand house must be well-fortified.

TOAD

Indeed, not. I'm a gentleman and my door is always open.

HARRIET

Well, sir, gentlemen is what we deals with.

WILLY

(calling)

Bring in the motorcar.

(SFX: The motorcar with the horn OOGA, AOOGA. The motorcar enters. The driver gets out and gives Toad her goggles, then exits.)

You'll be needing those.

(Toad puts the goggles on.)

HARRIET

You look a born driver, sir.

WILLY

Would you like to kick the tires?

(Toad demurs, then gives one a little kick. Willy dangles the keys.)

ERICA

Well, hop in.

HARRIET

See how she feels.

(Toad hesitates.)

TOAD

Hop?

WILLY

It's as easy as climbing on a horse.

(Toad takes the keys and climbs into the car with a boost from Willy and Erica and Harriet.)

ERICA

How well he hops up there.

WILLY

Start the motor!

(to Erica)

You dumb bunny. Turn the crank.

(Erica turns the crank. SFX: Crank, the car starting.)

TOAD

Oh, joy! Oh, delight! Oh, motorcar!

(The sounds dies down.)

May I ask, Miss Weasel, what do you charge for such a glorious vehicle?

WILLY

The price is so ridiculously low, I must whisper it in your ear.

(Willy whispers into Toad's ear. Toad clasps his heart.)

ERICA

And of course, you'll want to buy gas, too.

TOAD

How much is gas?

(Erica whispers in his ear. Toad staggers again, almost faints.)

WILLY

Price is no object, Mr. Toad. Feel the wind in your face, see the wide world flying by.

TOAD

It must go seventy miles an hour. I'll take it!!!

(He takes money from his waistcoat and gives it to Willy. Harriet and Erica turn the crank again.)

WILLY

Drive on! Soon, you'll be doing seventeen.

(Toad accidentally puts the car in reverse, then drives off.)

HARRIET

Will it really go seventeen miles an hour?

WILLY

If the engine doesn't fall out.

ERICA

Could it?

WILLY

It has before. In fact, something like that happened to my last sucker, I mean, customer.

LIGHTS DOWN.

SCENE SIX: *Christmas is coming – Winter*

LIGHTS UP: SFX – the River, cold and clear

SETTING: The Riverbank

AT RISE: The Spirit of the Seasons, dressed in winter clothes, cartwheels in and adds snow to the tree, then dances off.

Ratty and Mole, wearing scarves, mittens, earmuffs, and caps enter.

RATTY

Listen to the river. It's running too fast for boats, today.

(Mole sniffs the air.)

Snow's coming.

MOLE

My first Christmas in the big world! Let's make a jolly log fire in the hearth.

RATTY

And put out some sardines and perhaps some captain's biscuits.

MOLE

Then, we'll string the tree!

(Ratty yawns.)

RATTY

Could we do that tomorrow?

MOLE

We could start tonight, couldn't we? And finish tomorrow?

RATTY

Moley, I'm ready to drop. Sleepy is simply not the word.

MOLE

You've been asleep two or three times since supper.

RATTY

It is the off season, Mole. No animal is expected to do anything in the winter.

(Offstage, we hear children chattering and laughing.)

Who's that?

MOLE

It's the field mice! They're back for Christmas!

(The CHILDREN'S CHORUS enters. It is made up of field mice and Annie and Arthur Hedgehog.)

DORA

(holding a lantern)

Stay together, stay together.

RATTY

Merry Christmas, everybody.

DONALD

Where's young Arthur? Here, come on, we're waiting.

(Arthur reluctantly joins the end of the row. Mole looks closely at Arthur.)

MOLE

Have we met before?

(Arthur giggles, then coughs.)

DONALD

Sssshhh. One, two, three....

SONG: *O Christmas Tree*

CHILDREN'S CHORUS

(singing)

"O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy leaves are so unchanging.
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy leaves are so unchanging.
Not only green when summer's here,
But also when it's cold and drear.
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Thy leaves are so unchanging.

RATTY

Come in, and get warm.

DORA

I thank you, Ratty, but it's getting dark and we have many more calls to make.

(Arthur groans.)

DONALD

One, two, three.

(The chorus exits, singing the last verse of *O Christmas Tree*. Mole brushes away a tear.)

CHILDREN'S CHORUS AND RATTY AND
MOLE

(singing)

O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Much pleasure thou can'st give me.
O Christmas Tree! O Christmas Tree!
Much pleasure thou can'st give me.

(Arthur reenters and gives Mole a raspberry. Exits. Ratty yawns.)

RATTY

I'm simply dead beat and that's a fact.

(She exits. SFX: a Splash)

OTTER

Whew. That water's freezing!

MOLE

Hullo, Otter.

OTTER

Did you hear about Toad? He's smashed his latest motorcar!

MOLE

His latest?

OTTER

This is the seventh. He's been in the hospital....

MOLE

...the hospital!

OTTER

...Three times.

MOLE

We must do something. He'll get himself killed!

OTTER

If anybody can stop him, Badger can, but I don't think she knows.

MOLE

I'll go and tell her.

OTTER

Badger lives in the Wild Wood. You can't go there alone. Let's see what Ratty says.

(She exits.)

MOLE

(calling)

Don't bother her, Otter. There's no time to waste.

(She exits. Otter enters.)

OTTER

(alarmed, calling)

Mole! Mole!

LIGHTS DOWN.

SCENE SEVEN: *Mole and Otter look for Badger – Winter*

SETTING: The Wild Wood

SFX: the moaning of the wind

LIGHTS UP: DIM AND EERIE – NIGHT IS FALLING

AT RISE: Dark and twisted trees, fill the stage.

(Mole enters. An owl calls, followed by a cackle.)

MOLE

Don't start imagining things! There's nothing to see.

(Mole looks about, trying to determine which way to go, singing to keep up her spirits. Ferrets and stoats peer at her from around a tree.)

"O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree...."

(A stoat runs past.)

I did see that.

(A stoat whistles, a ferret hoots and caws)

It's only the leaves falling.

(A stoat taps her on the shoulder, a ferret taps her on the other shoulder.)

Hullo! Hullo? Who's there?

(A ferret runs past. Mole whirls about.)

EEEEK! What was that?

STOAT

Get out of here, you fool, get out.

(Another ferret jumps out at her.)

FERRET

Boo!

MOLE

I'll never get out of here. Help!!!

(The ferret chases her. She runs away and trips.)

Oh, my leg!

(She crawls behind a tree. Ratty and Otter enter.)

RATTY

Moly, Moly, Moly! Where are you? It's me – it's Ratty!

(There is a feeble cry in the distance. Otter moves toward it, looks down and sees Mole's glasses, picks them up.)

OTTER

Moooooooly!

(Mole's frightened face appears around the tree.)

MOLE

(shivering)

Ratty. Otter. Is it really you?

OTTER

O Mole, you donkey.

(She gives Mole her glasses)

RATTY

Otter told me where you were going.

(Mole puts on her glasses.)

MOLE

I've been so frightened!

RATTY

Let's have a look at that leg. You've cut your shin, sure enough. Wait until I get my handkerchief, I'll tie it up for you.

(looks down)

What did you fall over?

MOLE

(picks up a sign)

This. It must have fallen off the tree.

(Otter reads it and does a little jig.)

OTTER

Hooray! Hooray-oo-ray-oo-ray-ray! It's a door sign. Look!

MOLE

(reads, then shouts)

BADGER'S PLACE!!!

ALL

We're safe. It's Badger's place! Merry Christmas!

END OF ACT ONE