

MOTHER GOOSE UNPLUCKED!

By Richard Gremel

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MOTHER GOOSE UNPLUCKED!

A One Act Comedy/ Melodrama

By Richard Gremel

SYNOPSIS: Have you ever wondered how Mother Goose came up with her famous nursery rhymes? Did you know that her rhymes were almost destroyed and never came to be? Mother Goose has just completed her book of rhymes including Jack and Jill rolling down the hill, Mary Contrary in her growing garden, Miss Muffet on her tuffet, and Bo Peep and her missing sheep. And once her book of rhymes is published, they all will become famous. But when Jack B. Nimble finds out that he was left out of the book, he comes up with a plan to goose-nap Mother Goose and destroy her book of Rhymes. Join the rest of the nursery rhyme gang as they go on a wild goose-chasing adventure to rescue Mother Goose and her famous nursery rhymes before she becomes unplucked!

DURATION: 45 minutes

TIME: Present Day and Once upon a time...

SETTING: Mother Goose's Reading Room & Somewhere Very, Very Evil!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 females, 2 males, 3 either)

MOTHER GOOSE (f)The famous author of Nursery Rhymes.
(118 lines)

LITTLE MISS MUFFET (f)Sat on a tuffet. (73 lines)

MARY CONTRARY (f)Sassy and full of puns. (40 lines)

LITTLE BO PEEP (f)A real southern belle. (76 lines)

LAMBY (m/f)One of Bo Peep's Sheep. (35 lines)

WOOLY (m/f)One of Bo Peep's Sheep. (37 lines)

MARVIN (m/f)One of Bo Peep's Sheep. The "black sheep" of the group. (43 lines)

JACK (m)Clumsy. He falls down hills. And brother to Jill. (41 lines)

JILL (f)Sister to Jack. She also falls down hills.
(37 lines)

JACK B. NIMBLE (m).....Becomes the villain of the story, but is
just a little hurt and misunderstood.
(93 lines)

SETTING

SCENE 1: Mother Goose's Reading Room (present day)

SCENE 2: Mother Goose's Reading Room (Long Ago)

SCENE 3: Mother Goose's Reading Room, The Next Morning.

SCENE 4: Somewhere Very, Very Evil (Later that day)

SCENE 5: Mother Goose's Reading Room (Back to the Present)

PROPS

- Nursery Rhyme Book
- Pencil
- Pail of Water
- Shepherd's Crooked Rod
- Foot Stool
- Lunchbox
- Cottage Cheese Container
- Spoon
- Fake Spider
- Fake Flowers
- Watering Can
- Piece of Paper
- Candle

COSTUMES

While the play takes place in the present day and past, the costumes should not reflect a time period. Instead, the costumes should be something pulled straight out of Mother Goose's Nursery Rhyme books. They should be bright and colorful.

PREMIERE PRODUCTION

MOTHER GOOSE, UNPLUCKED premiered at Live Theatre Workshop in Tucson, Arizona. The play was performed with the following cast:

MOTHER GOOSE	Amanda Gremel
JACK B NIMBLE	Connor Griffin
LITTLE BO PEEP.....	Samantha Cormier
LITTLE MISS MUFFET.....	Paige Wellman
JACK	Alexander Hupp
JILL	Julia Hupp
DIRECTOR	Deb Runge
STAGE MANAGER	Aubrey Avery

The Characters of Mary Contrary, Lamby, Wooly, and Marvin were added and performed as part of the Mini Players class at Live Theatre Workshop in 2021.

SCENE 1**MOTHER GOOSE'S READING ROOM – PRESENT DAY**

AT START: *MOTHER GOOSE is entering the stage, while she works on her book of rhymes. We are in her Reading Room. There is a fancy chair, and some other places to sit [like blocks, stools, pillows, or benches] for others to sit on while she reads to them. There are at least two doors, one to lead in and out of the room, and one to lead to the basement. There is also a window that opens. The addition of bookshelves filled with books could help indicate the Reading Room as well. However, the set can be as minimal or elaborate as you would like. Instead of doors, it could just be an exit to the wings. And the window could be pantomimed if need be.*

MOTHER GOOSE: Now, let me see... the clock struck nine and made him whine... no that doesn't sound good. How about the clock struck six, so he picked up sticks. No, that's not good either. *(Looks up and sees the audience.)* Oh, hello! You all startled me. I thought I was here all by myself. Oh, I didn't introduce myself. Well, I am Mother Goose. You may recognize me from my famous book of nursery rhymes. In fact, I was just working on one, but... wait, that's it. One! The clock struck one. Let's see... Hickory Dickory Dock, the mouse ran up the clock, the clock struck one... and down he did run... Hickory- Dickory-Dock! *(Writes it down in her book.)* That is going to be another great nursery rhyme and it is now official because I have written it here in my personal book of nursery rhymes.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET enters with JACK and JILL, and MARY CONTRARY enters close behind.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Mother Goose? Mother Goose? There you are.

JACK: Hi Mother Goose.

JILL: Hello Mother Goose.

MARY CONTRARY: 'Sup Goosey!

MOTHER GOOSE: Why hello there, little Miss Muffet, looking lovely as always.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Thank you.

MOTHER GOOSE: And Jill, how delightful to see you.

JILL: Likewise, Mother Goose.

MOTHER GOOSE: How is your head doing, dear Jack?

JACK: It still hurts, but the swelling is going down.

MOTHER GOOSE: Glad to hear. (*Beat*) And how is that wonderful garden of yours, Mary Contrary?

MARY CONTRARY: Growing good. Get it?! It's funny because it's a garden pun.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway... Mother Goose, while we were coming here, we thought we heard you talking to someone else. But I don't see anyone else here. So, who were you talking to?

MOTHER GOOSE: I was just introducing myself to all these folks.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Who? (*Looks out at audience*) Oh, hi. Didn't see you out there.

MOTHER GOOSE: I know, they just sneak up on you. How about you all introduce yourselves to them.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Hello. I am Little Miss Muffet and this is—

JACK: Jack

JILL: And I'm Jill.

JACK and JILL: Hi.

MARY CONTRARY: They're from that well known accident down the hill. You know the one I'm talking about. And I'm Mary. And *contrary* to beliefs, I don't own a little lamb, I grow a garden. See what I did there? *Contrary* to beliefs? I am on a roll today.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway, we come by to see Mother Goose each week and she reads some of her famous nursery rhymes to us.

JACK: It is my favorite thing to do on a lazy afternoon.

JILL: Mother Goose has the best rhymes in the whole wide world.

MOTHER GOOSE: You all are too kind. Well, maybe all these folks wouldn't mind hearing some of my rhymes.

MARY CONTRARY: Then lettuce begin. Get it?! Lettuce?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway, go ahead and read us a few.

JACK: Yeah. I can't wait to hear which ones you have for us today.

JILL: And I am ready to hear them, as well.

MOTHER GOOSE: Well then, *Lettuce* get started.

MARY CONTRARY: Listen, Goosey. The puns are kinda my thing. How 'bout you just stick to the reading.

MOTHER GOOSE: Got it. Oh, here is one of my favorites, “Old Mother Hubbard.” “Old Mother Hubbard went to the cupboard to fetch her poor dog a bone. But when she got there, the cupboard was bare, so then the poor dog had none.”

JACK: What did the dog eat then?

MOTHER GOOSE: What?

JACK: What did the dog eat if he didn’t eat a bone?

MOTHER GOOSE: Well, I never really thought about it. What do you think he ate?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Maybe some dog food.

JACK: Or a can of beans.

JILL: Or some bacon flavored ice cream!

MARY CONTRARY: All this *taco* ‘bout food is making me hungry. Right?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway, how about another rhyme?

MOTHER GOOSE: How about my newest rhyme, “Hickory-Dickory-Dock”?

JACK: Let’s hear it.

MOTHER GOOSE: Hickory-Dickory-Dock. The Mouse ran up the clock. The clock struck one and down he did run. Hickory-Dickory-Dock!

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Great rhyme, Mother Goose. You are always so good at coming up with those rhymes.

MOTHER GOOSE: Thank you. But they don’t always come easy. Sometimes I need just a little help getting an idea for the rhyme.

JILL: That reminds me of the time when you first began creating your book of rhymes.

JACK: Oh yes! Can you tell us that story again, Mother Goose?

JACK and JILL: Tell us! Tell us!

JACK: Please tell the story, Mother Goose!

MOTHER GOOSE: Okay, okay. Gather ‘round. It all started like this... I had just finished-

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Mother Goose, instead of telling us and the audience the story, why don’t we show them.

MOTHER GOOSE: Excellent Idea. Here we go.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: This is the story of Mother Goose, Unplucked!

ALL on stage exit.

SCENE 2**MOTHER GOOSE'S READING ROOM – LONG AGO**

AT START: *MOTHER GOOSE enters the stage working on her rhymes in her book. We are again in the same Reading Room, only this time, it is the past.*

MOTHER GOOSE: Let me see... along came a... hmmmmm... oh, yes that's perfect. *(Writes in her book.)* That looks great. I've just finished my first official rhymes to start my book. I can't wait to share these with everyone. *(Goes to the window and opens it up.)* Hey everyone, I have great news!

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: *(Offstage.)* What did she say, Bo Peep?

LITTLE BO PEEP: *(Offstage.)* I think she said she has grape shoes?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: *(Offstage.)* Grape shoes? How interesting.

MARY CONTRARY: *(Offstage.)* Grape Shoes? I thought she said eight cues.

LITTLE BO PEEP: *(Offstage.)* Eight cues, that doesn't even make sense.

MARY CONTRARY: *(Offstage.)* I don't know. Goosey is a strange one. And who knows, maybe she is recording lights for a show or something.

MOTHER GOOSE: No, not grape shoes. Or eight cues. I said *Great News*.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET and LITTLE BO PEEP: *(Offstage.)* Ohhhhhh.

MARY CONTRARY: *(Offstage.)* Now that makes more sense.

MOTHER GOOSE: So, gather the others and come on up to hear what it is!

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: *(Offstage.)* Okay, Mother Goose. Be there in a jiffy.

MARY CONTRARY, JACK, and JILL enter.

MARY CONTRARY: Here we are, Mother Goose. I wrangled up Jack and Jill.

JACK: Hi there, Mother Goo...*(Trips and falls.)*

MOTHER GOOSE: Oh Dear, Jack are you alright?!

JACK: Yup. Happens all the time.

JILL: Mother says with the number of times he falls a day, that we should have our own parking spot at the emergency room.

MOTHER GOOSE: He sure is clumsy.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET and JACK B. NIMBLE enter.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Here I am, Mother Goose. I found Jack B. Nimble on my way.

LITTLE BO PEEP: *(Entering with LAMBY, WOOLY, and MARVIN.)*
And here we are, Mother Goose. Hope you don't mind that I brought my sheep. Lamby.

LAMBY: Hi everyone!

LITTLE BO PEEP: Wooly.

WOOLY: Sup.

LITTLE BO PEEP: and Marvin.

JACK: Marvin?

MARVIN: Yeah, I'm the black sheep of the family.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Anyway, I didn't want to lose them.

LAMBY: Don't worry, Mother Goose. We won't be Baaa-d.

WOOLY: Yeah, you'll Baa-rely know we're here.

MARVIN: And if we are, you can bid us baaaa-bye.

MARY CONTRARY: Hey. I make the puns around here. You dig?
Get it?! Dig... like in my garden.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway, don't you have news to share with us?

MOTHER GOOSE: Right! Now, all of you have a seat. I want to share my great news with you.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Well, if it's great news, then it must be great, so I will sit and listen.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Of course, it's going to be great, Jack B. Nimble.
She said that it was *great* news.

JACK and JILL laugh.

JACK B. NIMBLE: It's not that funny.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Go on with your news, Mother Goose.

MOTHER GOOSE: Well, you all know that my last attempt at a profession didn't really work out. People just didn't want to buy jars of Mother Goose's jams and jellies.

MARY CONTRARY: It's not so much that people didn't want to buy jam and jelly...

JACK B. NIMBLE: They just didn't want to buy yours.

MOTHER GOOSE: And why wouldn't they want to buy mine?

LITTLE BO PEEP: Well, because you had very strange flavors like strawberry and lima bean jam.

JILL: Yuck!

LITTLE BO PEEP: Or apple and parsnip jelly.

JACK: Ewwwww!

LITTLE BO PEEP: And the orange spinach preserves were just...

WOOLY, LAMBY, and MARVIN: Baaaa-d.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Exactly.

MOTHER GOOSE: We're getting off topic, let's get back to why I brought you all here. I have a brand new idea for a profession that is going to make all of us very famous.

JACK and JILL: Ooooooooooooo!

LAMBY, WOOLY, and MARVIN: Baaaaah! (*Like aw.*)

MARY CONTRARY: Hey, I make the puns! *Ewe*, hear me?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway. What is your idea, Mother Goose?

MOTHER GOOSE: I'm glad you asked. I have decided to write a book of rhymes.

JACK B. NIMBLE: How is that going to make any of us famous? Book of rhymes, pshht, that's a silly idea.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Now, Jack let Mother Goose finish explaining. We will hear her out, and then we can make harsh judgments.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Sorry, Mother Goose

MOTHER GOOSE: Not to worry. The idea is that I write a book of rhymes that children can have in their nurseries. Their parents can read them the rhymes when they are young, and as they grow, they can begin to read and recite the rhymes themselves. Then they will pass it onto their children. These rhymes will be shared for generations to come. And best of all, I have decided to write the rhymes about the different people in our town, including rhymes for all of you.

ALL: That sounds great... I like that... We are going to be famous...
(*Etc...*)

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Can you share your rhymes with us?

JACK: Yeah, Mother Goose.

JILL: Oh, yes. Do read them.

LITTLE BO PEEP: I do declare, I'd love to hear your little old rhymes.
Especially the one about yours truly.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Go ahead, Mother Goose. We're all ears.

MOTHER GOOSE: Well, since you twisted my arm, I guess I'll share
the rhymes with you.

LAMBY: Hooray!

WOOLY: I hope she includes us.

MARVIN: Me too!

JACK: Start with ours!

JILL: That sounds like a good plan.

MOTHER GOOSE: Very well. Here's the rhyme of "Jack and Jill". It's
inspired by an incident that happened just last fall... and I don't
mean the season.

ALL look at MOTHER GOOSE with blank stares.

LITTLE BO PEEP: I don't think I follow.

LAMBY: Me either.

WOOLY: Yeah, and we're pretty good at following.

MARVIN: Except when we get lost.

MOTHER GOOSE: I didn't mean the season "Fall" I meant fall as in
fall down, tumble, kersplat!

MARY CONTRARY: How 'bout you just leave the puns to me, Goosey.

MOTHER GOOSE: Never mind, let me just read the rhyme.

JILL: I have an idea. How about Jack and I act out the rhyme while
you read it.

MOTHER GOOSE: Fantastic idea. Now let me see (*Turns the pages
in her book.*) Ah, here we go. "Jack and Jill went up a hill to fetch a
pail of water."

JACK: We do that every day. I don't know why they had to build a well
at the top of a hill, but oh *well*.

MARY CONTRARY: Oh geez!

MOTHER GOOSE: "Jack fell down."

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: (*Sarcastic.*) Big surprise.

JACK: AHHHHHHH! (*Falls down in slow motion.*) I am falling!

MOTHER GOOSE: And broke his crown.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Wait, he broke what?

MOTHER GOOSE: He broke his crown.

LAMBY: His crown?

WOOLY: Was he pretending to be a king or something?

MOTHER GOOSE: No, you see...

MARVIN: Jack, do you even own any crowns...

JACK B. NIMBLE: I believe what Mother Goose was referring to was Jack's head. Crown is another word for the head. She is saying that Jack fell down and broke his head.

MOTHER GOOSE: Precisely.

JACK: Then why doesn't it say that?

MOTHER GOOSE: Well then it wouldn't rhyme.

LAMBY: Rhyme?

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes. I can't say "Jack fell *down* and broke his head", because down and head don't rhyme with each other.

WOOLY: But it would make more sense.

MARVIN: And be easier to understand.

MOTHER GOOSE: Maybe so, but this is a book of *Nursery Rhymes*. Therefore, the words I use need to rhyme.

LAMBY: Oh, you mean like bat and cat. Those two words rhyme.

MOTHER GOOSE: Precisely.

WOOLY: Or like climb, slime, lemon lime, mountain standard time?

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes. Those are all words that rhyme.

MARVIN: So, you used crown instead of head, because crown and down rhyme the same way that climb and slime do?

MOTHER GOOSE: Right. A book of rhymes has to have rhymes in it.

JILL: I get it now. So, he breaks his crown but what happens to me?

MOTHER GOOSE: Well, let's see. "Jack falls down and breaks his crown."

JACK: AHHHH! (*Falls in slow motion again.*) Ouch! My crown. I think I might have broken it.

MOTHER GOOSE: And Jill came tumbling after.

JILL: Look out below, Jack, I'm tumbling after. (*Falls in slow motion.*) AHHHHHHHHHHH!

MARY CONTRARY: Excellent rhyme, Mother Goose. That one is sure to be a *hit*. Get it?

ALL laugh except for MOTHER GOOSE.

MOTHER GOOSE: Really? You laugh at that joke but nothing for my joke about fall?

MARY CONTRARY: Sorry, Goosey. That's why I do the puns.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway, let's move on to the next rhyme.

LITTLE BO PEEP: I sure do hope that it's about little old me.

MOTHER GOOSE: Well, Bo Peep. You're in luck, because it is.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Goodie. I'll act out the rhyme, as well.

MOTHER GOOSE: Alright. Let's see. *(Turns the pages and finds the rhyme in her book.)* This rhyme goes, "Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep".

LAMBY: But she didn't lose us.

WOOLY: Yeah. We're right here.

MARVIN: *(Motioning to himself, LAMBY and WOOLY.)* Clearly.

JACK B. NIMBLE: She knows you're not lost right now. It's just a made-up rhyme. Why don't you play along and act it out.

LAMBY, WOOLY, and MARVIN: *(Look at each other and then back away.)* Okay.

MOTHER GOOSE: As I was saying, "Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep and doesn't know where to find them"

LITTLE BO PEEP: Oh, dear me. I do declare that I have done lost my sheep. Whatever shall I do? I know, I'll go out and search for them. Be back in two shakes of a lamb's tail. *(Goes around, seeking.)* Oh shee-eep?! Where are you?

LAMBY: Here we are Bo Peep!

WOOLY: You found us. Hooray!

MARVIN: Being lost has sure made me hungry, got anything to eat?

MOTHER GOOSE: Hold on there, Bo Peep. You need to hear the rest of the rhyme.

LITTLE BO PEEP: You mean there's more?

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes. "Little Bo Peep has lost her sheep and doesn't know where to find them. But leave them alone and they'll come home, wagging their tails behind them."

JACK B. NIMBLE: That is a wonderful rhyme. I really like the part...

LITTLE BO PEEP: Hold on. I just leave the sheep alone, and wait all by my lonesome, and they eventually just come home?

MOTHER GOOSE: That's right.

LITTLE BO PEEP: I don't go look for them? I just sit... and wait?

MOTHER GOOSE: You just wait, and the sheep come home all on their own. Now who wants to hear the next rhyme?

ALL: (*Except for LITTLE BO PEEP.*) We do!

LITTLE BO PEEP: Wait, wait, wait!

JACK B. NIMBLE: What is it now Bo Peep?

LITTLE BO PEEP: I haven't finished acting out my rhyme yet.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: What?

LITTLE BO PEEP: In order to act out my rhyme, I have to sit and wait for the sheep to come home.

JACK: But you didn't really lose the sheep, Bo Peep. So how can you wait for them?

JILL: Come on. Let's hear the other rhymes.

LITTLE BO PEEP: You two acted out your rhyme, so I'm not budging till my little old sheep come home.

JACK and JILL: Mother Goose?!

MOTHER GOOSE: Bo Peep is right. Go ahead and finish your acting, Bo Peep.

LITTLE BO PEEP: (*Enthusiastic.*) Oh, dear, my sheep are gone. They most surely are lost. However, instead of going to search for them I will just leave them alone and wait for them to come to me... (*Waits and waits.*) All this waiting is rather boring. When are my sheep going to return to their home? I don't think they are ever coming, Mother Goose.

MOTHER GOOSE: Lamby, Wooly, Marvin. You missed your cue.

LAMBY: Huh?

WOOLY: Say what now?

MARVIN: I'm hungry!

JACK B. NIMBLE: When Bo Peep is waiting, you have to come home to her.

LAMBY: Oh. Okay.

WOOLY: Do it again, Bo Peep, and we will come this time.

MARVIN: Will there be food this time?

LITTLE BO PEEP: No.

MARVIN: But I'm hungry.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Can you please stop talking about food and just focus on coming home. I'm sitting here waiting!

MARVIN: Fine. Take it from the top.

LITTLE BO PEEP: (*Enthusiastic.*) Oh, dear, my sheep are gone. They most surely are lost. However, instead of going to search for them I will just leave them alone and wait for them to come to me.

MOTHER GOOSE: (*To LAMBY, WOOLY, and MARVIN.*) Now.

LAMBY, WOOLY, and MARVIN walk over to LITTLE BO PEEP.

LAMBY: Baaa

WOOLY: Hey Bo Peep, we're home!

MARVIN: Is it time for dinner?

LITTLE BO PEEP: Oh, it's my sheep. They have returned home to me. Sitting around and waiting for them paid off after all. Happy day!

JACK B. NIMBLE: Now, we can move onto the next rhyme?

JACK and JILL: Hooray!

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Wait a minute!

JACK B. NIMBLE: What now?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: It says, in the rhyme, that the sheep come home wagging their tails behind them.

LAMBY: So?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: So, you three didn't wag your tails.

LITTLE BO PEEP: That is true.

JACK B. NIMBLE: A minor detail that was easily overlooked but I think we are good to move on and do another—

LITTLE BO PEEP: We need to do it again.

JACK B. NIMBLE: But—

WOOLY: Okay.

JACK B. NIMBLE: But—

MARVIN: From the top! Again.

LITTLE BO PEEP: (*Enthusiastic.*) Oh, dear, my sheep are gone. Wherever...

JACK B. NIMBLE: Can we hurry it up?

LITTLE BO PEEP: Very well. (*Quick and sarcastic.*) Oh, no, my sheep are gone, I will stay here, I hope they come home.

LAMBY: Here we are.

WOOLY: And our tails are wagging. See?

MARVIN: And I'm still hungry!

LITTLE BO PEEP: Oh, my sheep. They have returned home to me.

And look, they are wagging their tails behind them! (*Stands and begins to curtsy as the others cheer.*) Thank you. Thank you.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Now can we move on?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Let's hear the one about me next.

JACK B. NIMBLE: I sort of thought we could do—

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: I want to hear how you rhyme with my name.

Let me guess. Little Miss Muffet met Jimmy Buffet?!

MOTHER GOOSE: Well, no.

MARY CONTRARY: Little Miss Muffet had tea and crumpets.

MOTHER GOOSE: No, but that is a very good rhyme.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Little Miss Muffet had a turkey and stuffed it?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET sticks her tongue out at JACK B. NIMBLE.

MOTHER GOOSE: I don't think so. Can I just tell you the rhyme I wrote now?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Very well.

MOTHER GOOSE: (*Reading from her book.*) "Little Miss Muffet sat on her tuffet,"

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Oh, let me act out my rhyme. So, "Little Miss Muffet", well that's me. "Sat on her tuffet". Well, I'll just sit... (*Goes to sit.*) Or maybe I can sit... (*tries to sit somewhere else.*) no... I've got it, I'll just... (*Tries to sit one more time in another spot, then stands up.*) Mother Goose, what in the world is a tuffet?

JILL: Maybe it's a fancy chair.

JACK: Or maybe it is a patch of green grass.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: I sure hope it's what Jill said. I don't want to grass-stain my dress.

MOTHER GOOSE: Well, both Jack and Jill were very close in their guesses. A tuffet can be a small mound of grass, like a tuft or it can be a small fancy footstool.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Where did you learn that, Mother Goose?

MOTHER GOOSE: Where everyone learns everything... the Internet.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Since it's my rhyme, I'm going to choose that my tuffet is the footstool. Now, "Little miss Muffet, sat on her tuffet."
(*Sits on the stool.*) Done. What comes next?

MOTHER GOOSE: "She Sat on a tuffet, eating her curds and whey"

LITTLE BO PEEP: What a coincidence. I just happen to have some curds and whey right here. (*Pulls out her lunchbox.*)

WOOLY and LAMBY: You do?

MARVIN: I knew you were holding out!

LITTLE BO PEEP: Sure. I packed it in my lunch for today.

JACK B. NIMBLE: What is curds and whey, anyway.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Well, curds and whey are formed in the cheese making process when the curds, or solids of the milk, separate from the whey, or liquid part of the milk. Both can be used in the making of cheese. But put them back together and you get (*LITTLE BO PEEP opens her lunchbox and pulls out a container that says...*) cottage cheese.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Yummy!

JACK B. NIMBLE: You could have just said, cottage cheese. We didn't need the entire cheese making process.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Well, I'm sitting on my tuffet and eating my cottage cheese. Is that it?

MOTHER GOOSE: Nope. There's one more part left. "Along came a spider"...

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: A Spider?! I hate spiders.

MOTHER GOOSE: "And sat down beside her." (*JACK B. NIMBLE pulls out a fake spider and begins to place it near LITTLE MISS MUFFET.*) And frightened Miss Muffet away.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Sp... sp... SPIDER!!!! AHHHH!!!! (*Runs all over the stage while LITTLE BO PEEP tries to stop her.*)

JACK B. NIMBLE is laughing very hard.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Muffet... Muffet!

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: There's a spider! Run, while you still can!

LITTLE BO PEEP: (*Grabs LITTLE MISS MUFFET.*) Muffet. Get a hold of yourself.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Thanks, I needed that.

JACK B. NIMBLE: *(Still laughing.)* I really liked that rhyme, Mother Goose. Especially the part about the spider.

MARY CONTRARY: Hey Goosey. Can we do my rhyme next?

MOTHER GOOSE: Sure, Mary. Will you act it out?

MARY CONTRARY: You bet.

MOTHER GOOSE: *(Turns to another page in her book.)* "Mary, Mary quite contrary, how does your garden grow?"

MARY CONTRARY: That's simple. Through a scientific process called photosynthesis!

JACK B. NIMBLE: That doesn't rhyme.

MOTHER GOOSE: That's because I wasn't finished. How about the rest of you help Mary act hers out.

ALL: Okay. *(ALL take on the role of the flowers in the garden.)*

MOTHER GOOSE: "Mary Mary quite contrary how does your garden grow?" *(MARY CONTRARY begins to act out watering her "flowers" and as each flower is said, ALL OTHERS act out growing.)* "With silverbells and cockleshells and pretty maids all in a row."

MARY CONTRARY: Wow, that rhyme really grows on you. See what I did there?

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway—

JACK B. NIMBLE: -Now that we've heard everyone else's rhymes. Can we please hear mine next?

MOTHER GOOSE: Alright. Let me see...*(Turns through pages of the book.)* Old Mother hubbard... Humpty Dumpty... Old King Cole... Oh, no.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Oh no?! What do you mean, "Oh no"?

MOTHER GOOSE: Let me check one more time. *(Turns through pages of the book again.)* Yep. Still: oh, no.

JACK B. NIMBLE: What's the matter, Mother Goose? Did you mess up on the rhyme? Nimble is not the easiest name to Rhyme with. But hey, you did rhyme with Muffet so... it can't be that hard, right?

MOTHER GOOSE: No, I didn't mess up on your rhyme, Jack B. Nimble. It looks like I've forgotten to write you a rhyme altogether.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Are you sure?

LITTLE BO PEEP: Are you positive?

MARY CONTRARY: Are you positively sure? Or is it surely positive? I'll just go with, are you certain?

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes. I'm sure, positive, and certain. There is no rhyme about Jack B. Nimble in my book because I forgot to write a rhyme about him.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Forgot? About me? This is the worst!

MOTHER GOOSE: I'm sorry Jack. I thought I had written for everyone in our town. But, not to worry. We can write one now.

LAMBY: Where do we begin?

JILL: Let's begin with his name. Jack B. Nimble.

MARY CONTRARY: Jack B. Nimble wore his...

JILL: Thimble.

MARY CONTRARY: Okay. Write that down Mother Goose.

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes. That sounds good. (*Writing in her book.*) Jack B. Nimble wore his thimble while...

LITTLE BO PEEP: Knitting his grandma a sweater.

MOTHER GOOSE: Now we are onto something! (*Still writing.*) And with extra time...

WOOLY: He knitted a hat, quite sublime...

MARVIN: Which made the whole outfit better?

LITTLE BO PEEP: What a delightful rhyme! Now you act it out Jack B. Nimble.

JACK B. NIMBLE: That rhyme is not delightful, it's ridiculous. No one will remember that rhyme and it's definitely not true. I don't even know how to knit.

MARVIN: Don't worry Jack. We can teach you to knit.

MARY CONTRARY: Yeah. They're wooly good at it. Get it? Because they're sheep?

JACK B. NIMBLE: I don't want to learn how to knit, just so it can fit with a dumb ol' rhyme.

MOTHER GOOSE: Okay, I'll admit that rhyme was a little rough. But it was just our first try. Let's all try to give it another go.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Alright, but please don't make it about knitting sweaters for my grandma.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Jack B. Nimble... played...

JACK: The cymbal!

JILL: See, Nimble isn't that hard to rhyme with. We've already come up with two possibilities.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Jack B. Nimble played the cymbal... In a rock n' roll band.

JACK B. NIMBLE: I'm liking it, so far. I do like to rock!

LAMBY: When the song ended...

WOOLY: The crowd thought "how splendid"...

MARVIN: So they gave them a stand... ing... ovation?

MOTHER GOOSE: Well, that doesn't exactly rhyme.

MARVIN: I've got others. When the song ended, the crowd thought "how splendid" even though the song was quite blaaand. See that rhymed.

LITTLE BO PEEP: But it wasn't very nice.

MARVIN: What do you mean?

LITTLE BO PEEP: You called his rock music bland, as in, boring.

MARVIN: Oh. Bland means boring? Whoops. Sorry Jack B. Nimble. I'm sure your rock music isn't boring at all.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Forget it. We are never going to write a good rhyme for me.

MOTHER GOOSE: We just need to think about it some more.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Sure. Mother Goose is just in the process of writing her book of nursery rhymes. We have plenty of time to think of one for you.

LITTLE BO PEEP: Yeah. And once we do, we can send off the book and we will all become famous.

MOTHER GOOSE: Actually, we don't have *a lot* of time. I promised my publishers that I'd have the book to them by tomorrow afternoon.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Tomorrow afternoon? We'll never have a good rhyme written by then.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: We just need a little more time to think about it. But I'm sure we can come up with a rhyme.

LITTLE BO PEEP: How about we all go sleep on it and we can try again in the morning. I always think better after I've counted my sheep.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Good thinking, Bo Peep. We'll reconvene back here in the morning and write Jack B. Nimble the best rhyme ever.

JACK: Let's get going right now. *(Goes to leave but trips and falls.)* That's okay. I always think better with a concussion.

JILL: Don't worry. I'll make sure he gets home without a scratch.

JACK and JILL exit.

LITTLE BO PEEP: I'll be going, as well. You coming sheep?

LAMBY: You bet.

WOOLY: And we are wagging our tails behind us.

MARVIN: I'm not wagging my tail until you feed me!

LITTLE BO PEEP: See you all in the morning.

LITTLE BO PEEP exits with LAMBY, WOOLY and MARVIN.

MARY CONTRARY: And I better go tend to my garden. Seed you later. Get it? I'm so punny.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET: Anyway... keep your head up, Jack B. Nimble. We will think of a great rhyme for you. I know it.

LITTLE MISS MUFFET exits with MARY CONTRARY.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Well, I guess all I can do now is hope they come back with something good.

MOTHER GOOSE: I'm sorry Jack, I really am. But we can't give up. I know we will figure out a rhyme. Goodnight.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Goodnight, Mother Goose.

MOTHER GOOSE exits.

JACK B. NIMBLE: I can't believe Mother Goose forgot all about me. She has that excellent book of rhymes and now her rhymes, and all the rest of the town are going to be famous. Everyone that is, except for me. Oh well. (*Starts toward exit, hesitates.*) On second thought, not oh well! If I can't be famous then they shouldn't be either! But how do I make that happen? Hmmm... I've got it. Nope actually that won't work. Think Jack, think. Use that nimble brain of yours. Get it? Nimble, because I'm Jack B... Oh wait, there's no one else here. Ughh... You're getting distracted. You can do this. You can think of an evil plan. I'm sure it will be much easier than thinking up a rhyme, which none of them could do. Which is why I am in this situation and having to think of an evil plan. Which I'm not doing right now, instead I'm just babbling. Wait! That's it! The perfect evil plan. I will kidnap Mother Goose and destroy her book of

nursery rhymes. Then just like me, no one will become famous. It's a foolproof plan. Mwahahahaha (*Evil laugh that leads into a cough. Then recover and evil laugh more.*)

MOTHER GOOSE: (*Entering.*) Hello? Oh, Jack B. Nimble, I thought you'd left. What are you doing here? And were you just maniacally laughing?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Sorry. I was about to leave when an idea came across my mind. And by maniacally laughing do you mean this? (*Evil laughs which leads into a cough and then recovers and laughs more.*)

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes, that's what I heard.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Then yes. Yes, I was maniacally laughing.

MOTHER GOOSE: Why?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Let's just say, my idea was so brilliant that it just wouldn't be right to end it without an evil laugh.

MOTHER GOOSE: Was it an idea for your rhyme?

JACK B. NIMBLE: You could say that it deals with my rhyme.

MOTHER GOOSE: Oh goodie! Can I hear it?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Okay. Jack B. Nimble was very sad when he had no rhyme. So, he developed a little plan to kidnap Mother Goose and destroy her book of rhymes. That way no one would know that the rhymes exist and no one, not her or the rest of the town that her rhymes are about, would become famous.

MOTHER GOOSE: (*With fear.*) Oh my! (*Beat.*) I'm not sure you were paying close attention when we talked about creating rhymes. I don't think a single thing, you just said, rhymed at all.

JACK B. NIMBLE: That's because it wasn't a rhyme at all. It was me discussing my evil plan to kidnap you and ensure that no one becomes famous since I can't become famous! And I will do that by DESTROYING. ALL. YOUR. RHYMES! So now do you understand?

MOTHER GOOSE: I'm not really sure I follow. Could you put it in a rhyme?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Don't you get it, Mother Goose? I'm going to kidnap you and destroy your book of nursery rhymes.

MOTHER GOOSE: I'm still not comprehending.

JACK B. NIMBLE: I am not being... *good* so I'm going to take you into the... *woods*. Where I will use my... *time* to destroy your book of *rhymes*! Got it?

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes, I believe I do. Great rhyming by the way.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Ugghhhh!

MOTHER GOOSE: But I just have one question. Why do you want to destroy the book of nursery rhymes?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Really? After my three explanations and my rhyming and you still don't understand why?

MOTHER GOOSE: Guess not. So... why?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Because, if I destroy your book of rhymes then no one knows that they ever existed. And if they never exist then they don't become famous. And if they don't become famous, then you, and the rest of the town, are just like me, the person without a rhyme written about him. Get it?

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes

JACK B. NIMBLE: Got it?

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Good.

MOTHER GOOSE: Yes. Now that I understand, I have just one more thing to say.

JACK B. NIMBLE: What is that?

MOTHER GOOSE: AHHHH!!!! Help, please, anyone, help. I'm about to be kidnapped. Help!

JACK B. NIMBLE: Quiet down. Someone might hear you.

MOTHER GOOSE: I know that's the point.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Whatever. (*Grabs MOTHER GOOSE.*) Now, let's get moving.

MOTHER GOOSE: Where are you taking me?

JACK B. NIMBLE: Huh... I... hadn't really thought of that yet. But believe me when I say, it will be somewhere *evil*. Very, very *evil*. (*Evil laughs, coughs, laughs.*)

While JACK B. NIMBLE laughs, MOTHER GOOSE quickly writes something in her book, rips out the page, and throws it on the floor.

JACK B. NIMBLE: Now, come on.

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