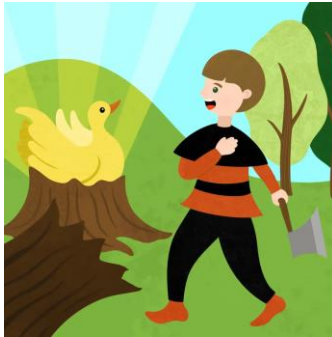




## The Golden Goose

### Readers Theater Play Script and Performance Notes

*AUTHORS: Elaine Lindy & Andrew Matte, COUNTRY: Germany, GENRE: Fairytales*



#### CHARACTERS

NARRATOR  
OVERTON  
MIDDLETON  
SIMPLETON  
ELF  
GOLDEN GOOSE  
INNKEEPER  
AVA  
FAIGA  
UNNA  
FARMER  
MILLER  
WOODCUTTER #1  
WOODCUTTER #2  
PEASANT  
CONTESTANT #437  
PRINCESS  
KING

*If there are performance notes, they can be found on the pages following the script*

## Scene 1 – Forest

[**Stage set:** The stage is divided into three sections. The first section serves as a forest and a riverside. The middle section of the stage is the innkeeper's tavern. The third section of the stage shows a town square. Details for the 2nd and 3rd sections are found later.]

[Scene 1 starts in the forest. Place two to four free-standing trees of different heights. One tree must be built in a way that SIMPLETON can appear to chop it down. This tree is also wider, so that GOLDEN GOOSE can hide behind it. (**See Performance Notes** for set creation ideas.) Offstage, have two props at the ready for the riverside scene - a blue sheet for a river, and a cardboard rock.]

**NARRATOR:**

Hello, everyone. This play is “The Golden Goose.” It's one of the tales of the Brothers Grimm, two brothers from Germany who gathered fairytales. The story is brought to you by *Stories to Grow by*.

[NARRATOR steps forward.]

**NARRATOR:**

Once there were three brothers.

[OVERTON, MIDDLETON, and SIMPLETON enter.]

**NARRATOR:**

Overton.

**OVERTON:**

(waves) Hi.

**NARRATOR:**

Middleton.

**MIDDLETON:**

(waves) How's it going?

**NARRATOR:**

And Simpleton.

**SIMPLETON:**

(waves) Hello.

**NARRATOR:**

And they all had the same job.

**OVERTON:**

*(pulls a cardboard axe from behind his back)* We chop down trees.

**MIDDLETON:**

*(pulls a cardboard axe from behind his back)* Big trees, and we split them...

**SIMPLETON:**

*(pulls a cardboard axe from behind his back)* ...into logs for making houses, planks for making furniture, or just into logs for the fireplace.

**NARRATOR:**

And if there's extra wood?

**OVERTON:**

All the better!

**MIDDLETON:**

We sell it!

**NARRATOR:**

*(looks at the brothers)* They have a flexible revenue model.

[OVERTON, MIDDLETON, and SIMPLETON exit.]

**NARRATOR:**

*(to audience)* Every morning the three brothers headed off to the forest to work.

[OVERTON enters, carrying his axe and a basket of food. He sets down the basket and starts chopping one of the trees. This is not the tree that hides GOLDEN GOOSE.]

**OVERTON:**

*(chants)* This beech tree today *(swings)*, will soon become a table *(swings)*. The beams get notched *(swings)*, the seams get fit *(swings)* till it is strong and stable *(swings)*.

[ELF enters.]

**ELF:**

Decent rhyme.

**OVERTON:**

“Decent”?

**ELF:**

Not too bad.

[OVERTON examines ELF.]

**OVERTON:**

Can I help you with something?

**ELF:**

Well, I happen to notice you have a lunch basket... (*gestures to the lunch basket*)

**OVERTON:**

And if I do?

**ELF:**

Uh, I was thinking maybe you'd share a bit of it with me.

**OVERTON:**

Why would you think that?

**ELF:**

The truth is, I could use a bite to eat.

**OVERTON:**

Do elves like you always make a habit of going up to strangers and demanding a free lunch?

**ELF:**

I'm just asking because I'm hungry. Please?

**OVERTON:**

Well I'm hungry, too. AND I'm working hard this morning. Which is than I can say for YOU. So if you'll excuse me, I have to get back to work.

[OVERTON continues chopping. ELF sighs and exits.]

**OVERTON:**

(*resumes chopping*) This wood will make a chair as light as air (*swings*). To rock away the whole long day (*swings*). (*to audience*) Hmm, the cadence (pronounce: KAY-dence) COULD better.

[OVERTON exits.]

**NARRATOR:**

Meanwhile, Middleton was working in a different part of the forest.

[MIDDLETON enters with a lunch basket and his axe. He sets down the basket and begins chopping a tree. It can be the same tree that OVERTON had been chopping, since the tree stays up and is not "chopped" down.]

**MIDDLETON:**

*(chants)* And a choppa-choppa *(swings)* ONE. And a choppa-choppa *(swings)* TWO. Soon this chopping will be *(swings)* DONE. If this tree doesn't fall on—

[ELF enters.]

**MIDDLETON:**

*(to Elf)* Hey, watch it!

**ELF:**

No problem. I'm staying back.

**MIDDLETON:**

*(continues chopping)* And a choppa-choppa *(swings)* THREE. And a choppa-choppa *(swings)* FOUR. *(turns around to Elf)* Why are you still here?

**ELF:**

Uh, I have something to ask.

**MIDDLETON:**

What?

**ELF:**

Well, you have that lunch basket. *(gestures to basket)* I assume that you wouldn't mind sharing some of it with me?

**MIDDLETON:**

You assume a lot!

**ELF:**

But—

**MIDDLETON:**

Move it along, elf!

[ELF sighs and exits.]

**MIDDLETON:**

*(calls after Elf)* And don't call me Shirley! *(to audience)* Where was I? Oh yes. And a choppa-choppa *(swings)* FIVE. And a choppa-choppa *(swings)* SIX.

[MIDDLETON exits.]

**NARRATOR:**

The same day, elsewhere in the forest, the youngest brother Simpleton was also chopping wood.

[SIMPLETON enters with a lunch basket and his axe. He sets down the basket and begins to chop a tree. This could be the same tree as before.]

**SIMPLETON:**

I chop for Mr. *(swings on "Ralf")* Ralf the ropemaker, and Mr. *(swings on "Schmidt")* Schmidt the sailor. For Mr. *(swings on "Klein")* Klein the carpenter, and Mr. *(swings on "Theiss")* Theiss *(pronounce: TICE)* the tailor. *(stops chopping and wipes his forehead on his sleeve)* Whew! It's going to be a long, hot morning. Can't wait for my noontime schnitzel.

[SIMPLETON puts down his axe and heads towards his lunch basket.]

[ELF enters.]

**ELF:**

Did someone say "lunch"?

**SIMPLETON:**

That would be me. Schnitzel, actually.

**ELF:**

My favorite!

**SIMPLETON:**

Nothing like those thin slices of meat fried with batter. Hey, how about if you—

**ELF:**

*(holds up hand, discouraged)* Say no more, I get it! I'll be moving on. Don't worry— *(turns around and starts to walk away)*

**SIMPLETON:**

*(calls after Elf)* You don't want any schnitzel?

**ELF:**

*(sharply turns around)* Say, WHAT?

**SIMPLETON:**

I said, you don't want any schnitzel? Why don't you stick around?

**ELF:**

I wouldn't be a bother?

**SIMPLETON:**

What do you mean? I like company.

**ELF:**

Or maybe you think I don't deserve to eat lunch because I'm not working right now, as you are.

**SIMPLETON:**

*(shrugs)* Everyone needs to eat. *(sets down his axe, sits, and pats the spot next to him.)* Come on, have a seat. Something good is even better shared.

**ELF:**

Okay, then. Don't mind if I do!

[SIMPLETON reaches for the basket and hands ELF some food. They eat together.]

**ELF:**

This schnitzel is delicious! How do you get the top so crunchy?

**SIMPLETON:**

Keep it a bit longer under the broiler.

**ELF:**

Good tip.

[They finish eating and SIMPLETON begins to pack up the basket.]

**ELF:**

*(rubs tummy)* Well! *(if the actor can burp/belch on cue, now would be a good time to do it)* That was very satisfying, thank you. But I'd best be on my way.

**SIMPLETON:**

Are you passing by this way again any time soon?

**ELF:**

Probably not. *(leans in)* But I'll tell you what. I have a tip, too.

**SIMPLETON:**

Really? What?

**ELF:**

Down by the river there's a giant old oak tree next to a very large rock.

**SIMPLETON:**

I know the one.

**ELF:**

If you chop it down and look inside, down close to the roots, you'll find something very special.

**SIMPLETON:**

How do you know this?

**ELF:**

*(wags finger)* Ah ah AH! An elf never reveals his sources!

**SIMPLETON:**

Well, thanks again for the tip.

**ELF:**

And thanks for yours!

[ELF signals an "okay" sign holding one thumb to the index finger, then exits.]

**NARRATOR:**

After work that afternoon, Simpleton headed down to the river.

**SIMPLETON:**

*(to audience)* It may be nothing, but it doesn't hurt to check it out, right?

[SIMPLETON grabs the lunch basket and his axe, and exits.]

[While he does so, a stagehand bring two props from offstage: the blue sheet to represent a river, and a large cardboard rock. **(See Performance Notes** for set suggestions.) During this time, GOLDEN GOOSE, if not already in place behind the wide tree, can enter now and stand behind the tree.]



## Scene 2 – A riverside

[**Stage Set:** Same section of the stage as Scene 1. A cardboard tree with a swing, a large cardboard rock, and a river are on stage. GOLDEN GOOSE is hiding behind the tree.]

[SIMPLETON enters.]

**NARRATOR:**

The sun was setting by the time he got to the giant oak tree.

**SIMPLETON:**

Here's the river. (*looks at the widest tree, the one hiding Golden Goose*) And there's the giant oak tree the elf spoke of, no doubt. Okay, here's goes.

[SIMPLETON chops down the tree. (**See Performance Notes** on how to safely construction a lightweight cardboard tree that can be "chopped down.")]

[When the tree is chopped down, GOLDEN GOOSE is revealed inside the stump of the tree. GOLDEN GOOSE wears a yellow costume covered in brown felt to represent dirt. (**See Performance Notes** for costume ideas.)]

**SIMPLETON:**

My goodness, what is that? (*peers more closely*) A goose?

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

Squawk!

**SIMPLETON:**

What were you doing inside this tree?

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

Squawk! (*brushes off some of the brown felt pieces*)

**SIMPLETON:**

Aren't you a pretty thing, under all that dirt!

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

Squawk! Squawk!

**SIMPLETON:**

Well, no matter, let's get you out now. And clean you up. (*wipes off the rest of the brown felt pieces*) Would you look at that! Your feathers look like they're made of gold!

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

*(proud)* Squawk!

**SIMPLETON:**

My goodness, no what, really? Real gold...?

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

*(very proud)* Squawk! Squawk!

**SIMPLETON:**

*(thoughtfully)* It must have been awfully stuffy being stuck in there.

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

*(breathes deeply, glad to be in the fresh air)*

**SIMPLETON:**

Come with me! I'll show you the sights of the town. After all that time you've been cooped up, you deserve to have a good time.

[SIMPLETON takes GOLDEN GOOSE by the hand (that's the end of GOLDEN GOOSE's "wing" that covers the actor's arm) and leads him/her slowly in a path back and forth at the front of the stage, in front of all the set pieces. SIMPLETON talks while they are walking.]

**SIMPLETON:**

I bet you'd like the town square. That's where musicians play.

[GOLDEN GOOSE yawns.]

**SIMPLETON:**

Uh, did I mention town that's also where bakeries are, making fresh bread every day?

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

*(excited now)* Squawk!

**SIMPLETON:**

Thought so. *(stops in tracks)* You know, it's getting late. We should probably find someplace to spend the night and go to town tomorrow. *(looks around)* There used to be an inn around here somewhere. I hope it's still here.

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

Squawk! *(shakes)*

**SIMPLETON:**

What's that? Oh, look. You dropped one of your pretty feathers.

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

*(kicks feather toward Simpleton)* Squawk! Squawk!

**SIMPLETON:**

Oh, I get it. You MEANT to drop your golden feather. So I can pay for our room. Is that right?

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

*(nods)*

**SIMPLETON:**

*(bends over and picks up the golden feather)* Well, you are one thoughtful little goose! *(bows slightly to Golden Goose)* Much obliged. You must think something good is even better shared, too, don't you?

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

Squawk! *(rubs head against Simpleton's leg)*

[SIMPLETON leads GOLDEN GOOSE to the middle of the stage, which is where the Innkeeper's tavern is.]

[INNKEEPER enters.]

### Scene 3 – Innkeeper's tavern

[Stage Set: A bed, or simulated bed, is onstage.]

**INNKEEPER:**

This, here, will be your room. I trust it is satisfactory?

**SIMPLETON:**

It's perfect.

**INNKEEPER:**

Very well. The charge for staying tonight is one Thaler (pronounce: THAYH-ler) coin.

**SIMPLETON:**

It so happens I have a feather made of pure gold.

**INNKEEPER:**

*(laughs)* No, seriously. Just one Thaler coin.

**SIMPLETON:**

See for yourself. *(hands Innkeeper the feather)* I trust this will be sufficient.

**INNKEEPER:**

*(holds up feather and is impressed)* Well, WELL! That it will! *(eyes the goose)* So many golden feathers on that goose... Say, are you sure you wouldn't like to stay longer?

**SIMPLETON:**

Quite sure. We're aim to go to town first thing in the morning.

**INNKEEPER:**

I see. Then at least I'll make your one night extra comfortable. If there's anything you need, don't hesitate to ask. Oh, and perhaps we can find a nice safe place for the goose. If you'll just give it to me—

**SIMPLETON:**

That's quite all right. My goose will stay with me. We'll be fine.

**INNKEEPER:**

If you insist. Sleep well.

[INNKEEPER exits.]

[SIMPLETON places the lunch basket next to the bed and settles in. GOLDEN GOOSE settles next to the basket.]

**NARRATOR:**

As you can imagine, news like this is hard to keep under wraps. Who can blame the Innkeeper for happening to confide in his three daughters that their new guest has a magnificent goose with real golden feathers? Later that night after everyone else had fallen asleep, the Innkeeper's eldest daughter, Ava, decided to sneak a peek.

[AVA enters.]

**AVA:**

Hmm. Papa said it was the guestroom on the right. Or was it the one on the left? (*spots Golden Goose*) Aha! (*to audience*) THERE it is! My goodness, Papa was right - the feathers really ARE made of gold!

[AVA moves over to the bed and reaches for the goose.]

**AVA:**

I'll just pet it so it knows it's safe and doesn't wake up its master.

[AVA's hand touches the goose, but she is unable to remove her hand. One tip is for AVA to clutch the goose's costume with her hand. That way, she can simulate the "look" of her hand's being stuck to the goose and can pretend to try to pry herself loose with the free hand. The same technique can apply to each subsequent actor whose hand gets "stuck."]

**AVA:**

What?! Oh no! My hand is stuck to the goose!

[AVA tries to remove her hand, but it won't budge. SIMPLETON stirs but does not wake up. AVA is shocked and scared. She lies down on the floor with her hand still on the goose.]

**AVA:**

Maybe if I just lie here quietly, my hand will come free.

[AVA tries to get comfortable, comically trying a number of different positions before finally falling asleep.]

**NARRATOR:**

(*looks offstage*) What is this? Someone else is coming, too.

[FAIGA tiptoes in.]

**NARRATOR:**

That is the innkeeper's second daughter, Faiga (pronounce: FAY-guh).

**FAIGA:**

*(to audience)* I'M the one who deserves the golden goose. No one lifts a finger around here except me. *(spots Ava and the goose)* Would you look at that? Ava got here first. She was probably trying to take it all for herself. Well, we'll just see about that!

[FAIGA moves to AVA and taps her on the shoulder.]

**FAIGA:**

Ava, wake up! *(realizes her hand is stuck)* What's this?! I can't move my hand. Ava, wake up - my hand is stuck to you!

[AVA snores.]

[FAIGA sighs and lies down next to her sister.]

**FAIGA:**

This isn't going the way I planned. I'll just have to lie here for now, and figure out what to do in the morning.

[FAIGA goes to sleep.]

**NARRATOR:**

Didn't I say there were three daughters? And right on cue..

[UNNA enters.]

**NARRATOR:**

Unna (pronounce: OO-nah), the youngest.

**UNNA:**

*(whispers)* Ava! Faiga! Are you in here? Why aren't you in our bedroom? You know we're not supposed to disturb the guests.

[UNNA spots her sisters and moves towards them.]

**UNNA:**

There you are! *(to audience)* Both of them, sleeping away. *(studies their odd sleeping positions)* That can't be comfortable. *(taps Faiga's shoulder)* Come on, wake up!

[Like the others, UNNA's hand becomes stuck and is unable to remove it.]

**UNNA:**

Oh no! My hand is stuck!

[UNNA tries to let go of FAIGA, but her hand is indeed stuck. SIMPLETON stirs again but does not awaken. UNNA lies down next to her sisters and sighs.]

**UNNA:**

We're going to be in so much trouble tomorrow! I wish I were back in my own bed. Oh, well!

[UNNA stretches with her free hand, yawns, and falls asleep.]

**NARRATOR:**

Soon, all three girls were sound asleep. (*daughters all loudly snore for two seconds*) And then it was morning.

[SIMPLETON wakes and sits up. He lets out a big yawn and notices the three girls.]

**SIMPLETON:**

Well, lookee here!

[SIMPLETON stands and takes GOLDEN GOOSE's hand (wing). GOLDEN GOOSE stands and all three girls wake up and are pulled to their feet, for they are all still attached.]

**AVA:**

Whoa!

**FAIGA:**

Hey!

**UNNA:**

I was sleeping!

**SIMPLETON:**

Excuse me, ladies. This is quite a surprise.

**AVA:**

Good morning?

**SIMPLETON:**

Well yes. But why are the three of you here?

**AVA:**

Well, we uh—

**FAIGA:**

I mean, uh—

**UNNA:**

What my sisters are saying is, uh–

**SIMPLETON:**

Hm. That wasn't a very helpful explanation. But in any case, I must be on my way. If I could just have my goose back–

**AVA:**

I wish you could, but my hand is stuck to your goose!

**FAIGA:**

And I can't get free of Ava!

**UNNA:**

And I can't get free of Faiga!

**SIMPLETON:**

Well, this is an unusual turn of events! I can't stick around here forever... Ha! Get it? I said stick around... and you're all stuck...

**THE THREE GIRLS:**

*(sigh)* We get it.

**SIMPLETON:**

I really must be going now.

**AVA:**

But we can't get unstuck.

**SIMPLETON:**

I guess you'll just have to come along, then. After all, maybe we will meet someone on the road who can help.

**THE THREE GIRLS:**

*(sigh)* If we must.

**NARRATOR:**

And so Simpleton left the inn. He and...

[SIMPLETON takes GOLDEN GOOSE by the wing (actor's hand) and tries to exit. He takes a few steps but the three girls are pulled behind him, bumping into each other, hands still stuck.]



**NARRATOR:**

... his party of four set off down the road.

[SIMPLETON takes a few more steps toward the front of the stage, followed by the three daughters, each one attached and very clumsy.]

## Scene 4 – Roadside

[**Stage set:** This part can take place at the front of the stage, in front of all of the set pieces, like the end of Scene 1.]

[SIMPLETON is walking slowly, back and forth, in figure eights, with everyone following.]

[FARMER and MILLER enter.]

**NARRATOR:**

Traveling proved to be a bit of a nuisance. In case you've never experienced it, believe me that it's hard to make much progress with three young women stuck to you and staggering behind a goose. Everywhere they went, the townspeople stared and made comments.

**MILLER:**

I say! I've never seen anything like THAT before.

**FARMER:**

Are they all stuck to each other? What's that the young man is holding?

**MILLER:**

(*squinting*) Whatever it is, it's shiny. (*peers more closely*) Well, count my feathers! It appears to be a goose! A goose with golden feathers, yes, I'm sure of it!

**FARMER:**

No way! I want a piece of that action!

[FARMER runs forward and grabs onto UNNA's arm. He immediately becomes stuck. MILLER runs forward as well.]

**MILLER:**

Wait! Don't be greedy!

[MILLER grabs a hold of FARMER's shoulder but also becomes stuck. SIMPLETON keeps walking as if nothing is going on.]

**FARMER:**

What's happening here? I appear to be stuck!

**MILLER:**

So am I!

[The lineup comprises SIMPLETON, followed by GOODEN GOOSE, AVA, FAIGA, UNNA, FARMER and last, MILLER.]

[WOODCUTTER #1 and WOODCUTTER #2 enter.]

**WOODCUTTER #1:**

Now THERE'S something you don't see every day.

**WOODCUTTER #2:**

You got that right!

**AVA:**

*(sees Woodcutters)* Hey!

**FAIGA:**

*(waves with free hand, flirtingly)* Yoo-hoo!

**UNNA:**

Help us, please!

**WOODCUTTER #1:**

Maidens in distress! I've read stories about this.

**WOODCUTTER #2:**

Coming, maidens!

**WOODCUTTER #1:**

Ladies, we're on our way!

[WOODCUTTERS run forward. WOODCUTTER #1 touches MILLER and immediately becomes stuck. WOODCUTTER #2 touches WOODENCUTTER #1 and he also becomes stuck.]

**WOODCUTTER #1:**

Whoa! What's going on?!

**WOODCUTTER #2:**

We're both stuck!

**FARMER:**

We're ALL stuck!

[SIMPLETON stops and looks back. GOLDEN GOOSE also stops, and each person consecutively bumps into the previous follower. (If you want to take it a step further, they can all fall down, one by one.)]

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

Squawk!

**FAIGA:**

*(to Woodcutter #1)* Welcome to the line.

[Everyone moves to the town square section of the stage.]

## Scene 5 – Town Square

[**Stage set:** This is the third section of the stage. There is a fountain in the middle of the square. (**See Performance Notes** for how to make a fountain out of cardboard).]

[CROWD MEMBERS #1-#4 and CONTESTANT #437 enter. CROWD MEMBER #1 starts to juggle, CROWD MEMBER #2 starts to dance, CROWD MEMBER #3 hops about on one foot, and CROWD MEMBER #4 makes funny faces. They perform closely together enough so that PRINCESS and KING can enter, unnoticed by the audience.]

[SIMPLETON and the trail behind him enter. SIMPLETON is followed by GOLDEN GOOSE, AVA, FAIGA, UNNA, FARMER, MILLER, WOODCUTTER#1 and WOODCUTTER #2.]

### **NARRATOR:**

Before long, Simpleton came to the town square, dragging his line with him. He noticed a large crowd in the middle of the square.

[SIMPLETON approaches PEASANT.]

### **SIMPLETON:**

Excuse me, but what's going on? Something important?

### **CROWD MEMBER #1:**

*(turns)* I'd say! It's the Princess. All the men of the kingdom are trying to make the Princess laugh.

### **SIMPLETON:**

That's nice of them. Any special reason why?

### **CROWD MEMBER #1:**

You don't know? You must spend all your time in the woods. *(Simpleton nods)*. I see. Well the thing is, our Princess hasn't laughed in years. The King says the first worthy fellow to make her laugh will win her hand in marriage. Look at them all! These nobleman may not get a laugh out of her. But we think it's hysterical watching them try!

[PRINCESS makes her way out of the crowd and KING follows, looking exasperated.]

### **KING:**

Pumpkin! Why the sad face, still?

### **PRINCESS:**

Honestly, father. If there's anything that's NOT funny, it's a bunch of over-privileged men competing to get something for nothing!

**KING:**

Won't you give the next one a teentsy, weentsy chance?

**PRINCESS:**

Why bother? You can't force funny. And no one here is funny.

**KING:**

I know you've seen hundreds of suitors. Just one more, okay? You never know. *(turns to the crowd)* Contestant number 437!

[The crowd shifts. CONTESTANT #437 steps forward.]

**CONTESTANT #437:**

*(stands straight and holds both hands outstretched over head)* Imitation: Fork!

[PRINCESS turns. She sees SIMPLETON and his gaggle in a long line behind him, each one fighting to get loose. They are located just beyond CONTESTANT #437. Together, the line-up all falls down in a heap. PRINCESS laughs. CONTESTANT #437, thinking she is laughing at his imitation of a fork, gloats with pride.]

**CONTESTANT #437:**

I did it!

**KING:**

*(excitedly)* Eh?!

[KING turns to see who has made his daughter laugh. His eyes rest on CONTESTANT #437 and he smiles. PRINCESS moves towards SIMPLETON and pushes past CONTESTANT #437. KING finally sees SIMPLETON.]

**KING:**

*(sadly)* Oh. *(to Contestant #437)* Sorry. Not you.

**CONTESTANT #437:**

*(hangs head in disappointment)* Awww...

[CONTESTANT #437 turns back toward the crowd.]

[PRINCESS runs back to KING.]

**PRINCESS:**

Father! Do you see this young man? He's so funny, with his gaggle of followers!

[PRINCESS looks back at SIMPLETON and laughs again.]

**KING:**

Pumpkin, I said a WORTHY young man. A nobleman from a good family. Not a woodcutter with straw in his hair! What are you thinking?

**PRINCESS:**

Father, you said the man who could make me laugh would win my hand. Those were your very words!

**KING:**

Technically, maybe. But you know what I meant.

**PRINCESS:**

Why do I need to marry a nobleman, anyway? We already have all the riches we could ever want.

**KING:**

You're missing the point.

**PRINCESS:**

What YOU'RE missing is that NOT being able to choose my own husband is starting to make me very unhappy again. (*frowns and crosses her arms*)

**KING:**

Pumpkin!

**SIMPLETON:**

Your Majesty? Please pardon my intrusion. I did not intend to interrupt your festivities. My humblest apologies.

**KING:**

Quite all right. Now if you'll just be on your way—

[SIMPLETON starts to turn around and his line behind him moves with him.]

**SIMPLETON:**

(*turns back around to face King and Princess, and the line-up jostles in response*) Your Majesty, a thought, if I may?

**KING:**

(*sighs*) Go on.

**SIMPLETON:**

To make up for this (*gestures to the line behind him*) undue disturbance, may I offer something to the Crown?

**KING:**

And exactly what would YOU have to offer the CROWN?

**SIMPLETON:**

A couple of these golden feathers would allow all of us (*gestures around the crowd*) to dine like royalty. Let's have a feast! On me! (*to Goose*) And the goose, thanks to the feathers! (*Goose beams with pride*) Like I always say, something good is even better shared.

**PRINCESS:**

Oh, Father!

**KING:**

He has a goose with golden feathers? And he's offering us a feast?

**PRINCESS:**

Don't you see?! He's the only fellow to ever offer US something. Everyone else only wanted something FROM us.

**KING:**

(*to audience*) I could live with this. (*to Princess*) All right then, let's take him up on his idea for a feast.

**PRINCESS:**

I knew you'd come around! (*running to Simpleton*) We're going to accept your feast. And... I trust you'll accept my hand in marriage.

**SIMPLETON:**

Marry YOU, the princess?

**KING:**

Not so fast. Let's see that golden goose first.

[SIMPLETON holds up the hand (wing) of GOLDEN GOOSE. GOLDEN GOOSE holds up his other hand (wing). All those attached to each other are released. They fall in every direction. Everybody laughs, but none more than PRINCESS.]

**KING:**

This IS something! And you are... Well, you have made my daughter happy. Very well, you have my approval to marry her!

[PRINCESS and SIMPLETON embrace.]

**CROWD MEMBERS #1-#4, and CONTESTANT #437:**

Hurrah!



**SIMPLETON:**

Now, how about that feast!

**CONTESTANT #437:**

If I can't have the Princess, I'll settle for schnitzel!

**CROWD MEMBER #1:**

Paté! (pronounced pat-TAY)

**CROWD MEMBER #2:**

Fig spread with cheese!

**CROWD MEMBER #3:**

Oysters!

**CROWD MEMBER #4:**

I don't like oysters!

**CROWD MEMBER #3:**

Who doesn't like oysters?

**CROWD MEMBER #4:**

Goat cheese?

**CROWD MEMBER #3:**

Now you're talking!

**CROWD MEMBER #2:**

Are we talking spinach soufflé? (pronounce: soo-FLAY)

**CROWD MEMBER #1:**

Of course – this is a feast fit for a king!

**NARRATOR:**

And so a great feast was prepared, with all the trimmings. The entire kingdom was invited. Simpleton moved into the castle, along with his brothers.

[OVERTON and MIDDLETON enter. They each carry a new axe. The newness of the axes can be signified by wrapping the blades in aluminum foil.]

**KING:**

*(still chewing, but speaking to Overton)* Quite the brother you've got.

**OVERTON:**

Yep. Simpleton is a good guy.

**KING:**

He's generous, too!

**MIDDLETON:**

*(holds a new axe upright and gazes at it)* Yep. We each got a new axe.

**NARRATOR:**

And so Simpleton, his new bride, his brothers, and the golden goose – where are you, golden goose?

[GOLDEN GOOSE, who was hiding behind the fountain, squawks and comes out. SIMPLETON goes up and pets GOLDEN GOOSE.]

**GOLDEN GOOSE:**

Squawk! *(drops a feather)*

**NARRATOR:**

*(picks up the feather)* Well, well, isn't that nice? A tip is always appreciated. As I was saying, they all lived happily ever after. And that's the story of the Golden Goose. Because something good is even better shared.

[If you have a curtain, close it now. If you do not, fade the lights. If you have no stage lights, all actors come on stage and bow to the audience.]



## Performance Notes for The Golden Goose

### THREE WAYS THAT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAN UTILIZE THIS PLAY

- 1.** Students can read the play aloud while sitting in the classroom. Ask the readers to skip all bracketed stage directions. You may prefer to rotate your actors to give all students a chance to read the speaking parts.
- 2.** Students can perform the play in the classroom. Clear an area that can be used as the stage. Have the audience sit on the floor in front of the stage. Students in the play can make simple costumes and/or sets as described below. When the scene change, the characters "on stage" simply walk to the back of the room where they wait until their next appearance "on stage."
- 3.** Students can perform the play on stage. Refer to the production notes that follow. Ask the actors to enter from the back of the room and move through the audience as they approach the stage.



### COSTUMES

- NARRATOR – Simple clothing.
- OVERTON, MIDDLETON, SIMPLETON, and WOODCUTTERS – Slacks or jeans with thermal long sleeve shirts tucked in and suspenders. Boots are preferred but not necessary.  
Optional: Drawn on facial hair or stick-on beards.
- ELF – Slacks, long sleeve shirt, and belt around the waist. A floppy hat.  
Optional: Drawn on facial hair or stick-on beard.



- **GOLDEN GOOSE** – Any yellow or gold clothing, and with the look of being covered in yellow or gold feathers. This can be accomplished in a few ways. If the clothes themselves are made of a fuzzy or feathery material, that can give the look of feathers.

Another option is buying cheap feathers or making them out of paper, then painting or spray-painting them yellow or gold (if they aren't already). Feathers can then be sewn to clothing or attached with craft glue. No need to cover the clothes, just a few feathers here and there.

Note: You will need at least two feathers that are detachable. See Prop Notes for this.

When the **GOLDEN GOOSE** is first discovered in Scene 2, he/she should be covered in bit of brown felt or fabric. It does not need to be attached, as long as it can cling or lay on **GOLDEN GOOSE** in some way.

- **INNKEEPER** – Slacks, button down shirt, unbuttoned vest, and a sash.
- **AVA, FAIGA, and UNNA** – Long skirts and frilly blouses.
- **FARMER and MILLER** – Jeans or overalls and a dirty shirt.
- **PEASANT, MAN #437, and CROWD** – Slacks, long sleeve shirts and vests.
- **PRINCESS** – Long dress and a tiara.
- **KING** – Long robe, dress pants, and a crown.



## PROPS

### Scene 1

- Axes for **OVERTON, MIDDLETON, and SIMPLETON** to chop at the trees. Axes can be made from cardboard and painted or spray-painted gray or silver.
- A basket for **OVERTON, MIDDLETON, and SIMPLETON** to use for food. (**SIMPLETON** carries it for the remainder of the play.)



- Two detachable gold feathers that GOLDEN GOOSE “drops” for SIMPLETON. These feathers could be cardboard cutouts or craft feathers spray-painted gold. Feathers can be attached with Velcro to the GOOSE.

## Scene 2

- Same props as scene 1.

## Scene 3

- Same props as scene 1.

## Scene 4

- Juggling materials CROWD MEMBER #1. These can be real juggling balls or any small round object. If the actor doesn't know how to juggle, they can mess up on purpose, to make a joke out of it, since they are trying to make the PRINCESS laugh. Another option is to use small scarves, since it is easier to “juggle” with those.
- A long scarf for CROWD MEMBER #4 to wave around.
- “New” axes for OVERTON and MIDDLETON, made from cardboard. These should be bigger and shinier than their original swords. You can use glitter to make them really shiny or cover them in tin foil.



## SETS

To make transitions easier, divide the stage into three sections. If you want to make a backdrop, you can paint it to show the three locations, or you can just rely on set pieces. The three locations are:

- 1) The Forest/The riverside, on one side of the stage.
  - 2) The Inn, in the middle of the stage.
  - 3) Town Square, on the other side of the stage.
- **Scene 1** – The Forest. Cut and paint cardboard trees to create the forest. Paper can be glued on for the leaves. Trees can be propped up against/tied to chairs or milk crates.  
One tree needs to be wide enough for the GOLDEN GOOSE to hide behind. This placed towards the front of the stage, away from the other



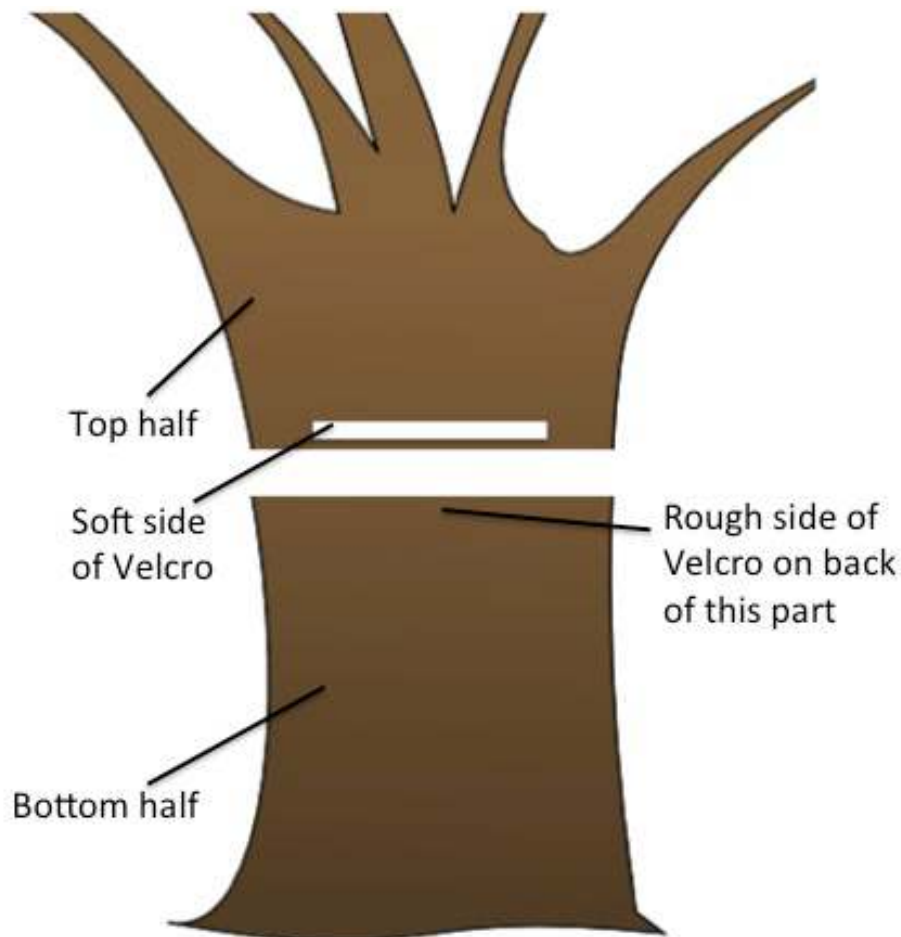
trees. It is the one that SIMPLETON chops down in Scene 2.

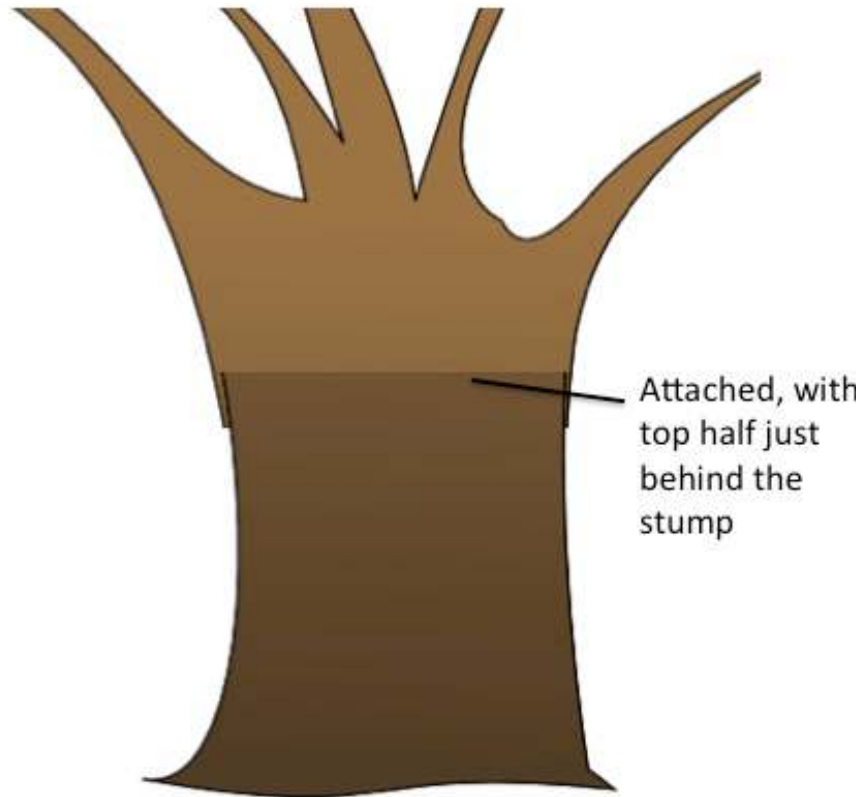
In order to make the tree in a way that it can be chopped down: Use thick cardboard, and cut a tree that is wide, though it doesn't have to be very tall. Then, cut the tree in half, so that you have a bottom stump and a top trunk with some branches.

Use a long strip of strong Velcro to attach the two parts back together. Put softer side of the Velcro on the top of the tree, and the rougher side on the stump. When you attach them together, the top part will be behind the bottom part.

When SIMPLETON strikes hard at the tree, the top part should fall off and back.

See images below:





Another option would be to have a kid play the tree, and when SIMPLETON “chops” (pretend!) the kid can fall bend at the waist, or fall over.

- **Scene 2** — The riverside. As SIMPLETON walks to the front of the stage, two stagehands bring on a large rock made from cardboard and place it next to the wide tree. The rock can be propped up against a chair or milk crate, or you can make a brace out of cardboard on the back. Stagehands also bring on a blue sheet or piece of fabric. They can place the blue sheet on the ground in front of the wide tree, or hold it up behind the action. This represents the river.

If stagehands remain to hold up the fabric, they can exit at the end of the scene.

- **Scene 3** – The Inn. A bed for SIMPLETON. The bed can be as simple as a yoga mat or blanket on the floor, or a chair with an ottoman covered in a



blanket, with a pillow and a sheet on top. Ottoman can be a milk crate, a stool, or anything else for SIMPLETON to stretch his legs out on.

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- **Scene 4** – The Road. This scene can take place in front of all of the other sets. Actors can walk in a line, follow-the-leader style, as SIMPLETON leads them in figure 8s, etc., back and forth one or two times, until it is time to stop at the town square.
- **Scene 5** – Town Square. If you make a backdrop, you can paint it to show a cobblestone road with German houses and buildings all around and a clock tower in the distance. If you don't have a backdrop, you can make a fountain out of cardboard, and place it in the middle of the space.  
See below for German town square images:



## ADDITIONAL NOTES

The train of people following Simpleton is meant to be comical. It works best if they try to stay close together. Let their movements be awkward and clunky, but make sure that everyone is safe.

