

SOME-KIND-OF-A WIND-IN-THE-WILLOWS

MUSIC BY GINA LEISHMAN
BOOK AND LYRICS BY DAVID GORDON

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ACT ONE

BASED ON THE ORIGINAL TEXT BY KENNETH GRAHAME

(THE HOUSE LIGHTS GO DOWN/THE AUDIENCE (IN THE DARK) HEARS THE
RECORDED OR LIVE WEASEL, SQUIRREL, STOAT AND FOX CHORUS)

CHORUS:WE ARE YOUR SCAREY WILD WOOD NEIGHBORS
WEASELS AND SQUIRRELS AND STOATS AND FOXES
WE KNOCK OVER GARBAGE CANS - RUMMAGE THROUGH GARBAGE
RUN OFF WITH THE MAIL FROM YOUR MAIL BOXES

HEH HEH HEH HEH - HEH HEH HEH HEH

WE ARE INTRUSIVE AND UNPLEASANT NEIGHBORS
AS YOU GET SLEEPY WE'RE GETTING FRISKY
WE'RE A DANGEROUS CROWD - PLAYING MUSIC TOO LOUDLY
LEAVING BOTTLES BEHIND WHICH WERE ONCE FULL OF WHISKEY

HEH HEH HEH HEH - HEH HEH HEH HEH

WE SQUEAK AND WE SNEAK UP ON OLD LADY RABBITS
STEAL PURSES - UMBRELLAS - KNOCK-EM DOWN FOR CLIMAXES
WE FOLLOW YOUR KIDDIES - PICK POCKETS AND BACKPACKS
STEAL NICKELS AND QUARTERS - WE NEVER PAY TAXES
WE RUN OFF WITH YOUR CAR KEYS - CHEW HOLES IN YOUR TIRES
BELIEF IN BAD KARMA'S OUR TRUE OTHODOXY
WE DO WHAT'S UNLAWFUL - WE DO EVERYTHING AWFUL
WE'RE WEASELY AND SQUIRRELY, STOATY AND FOXY

ALWAYS HERE - WE CAN FIND YOU
KEEP AN EYE OUT BEHIND YOU
DON'T LOOK NOW - WHERE'S YOUR WATCH?
BE AFRAID AND BE WARY
WE'RE NOT KIDDING - WE'RE MEAN AND
WE'RE BAD AND WE'RE SCARY

HEH HEH HEH HEH - HEH HEH HEH HEH
HEH HEH HEH HEH - HEH HEH HEH HEHHHHH

(CURTAIN UP)

SCENE ONE:SPRING, BIRDS FLY HOME, MRS. OTTER NOSES AROUND AND
RAT MEETS MOLE

(TWO BIRDS W/BACKPACKS ENTER SINGING AND DANCING.)

BIRDS:WE JUST GOT BACK
WE GOTTA UNPACK
WE JUST GOT BACK FROM SOUTH-A THE BORDER
TIME TA MOP
TIME TA SWEEP
NO TIME TA SLEEP-GOTTA-GET-THINGS IN ORDER
WINTER WAS GREAT,
SPRING'LL BE SWELL
NOTHING IS NICER THAN COMING AND GOING
WE LOVE BEING THERE
WE LOVE BEING HERE
THE SNOW IS OVER - THE LEAVES ARE SHOWING
THE BREEZE IS BLOWING,
THE RIVER IS FLOWING,
OHHHHHHHHHHHHH
WEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
JUST RETURNED
BAKED AND BURNED
JUST RETURNED FROM A WINTER REST
PICK UP A TWIG
PICK OUT A TREE
GET BUSY BUILDING A BRAND NEW NEST
PICK UP THE MAIL
PAY ALL THE BILLS
TURN ON THE PHONE - SO EVERYONE'S KNOWING
GREAT FUN TO ROAM
NO PLACE LIKE HOME
THE ICE IS MELTING - THERE'S NO MORE SNOWING
THE GRASS IS GROWING
THE SUN IS GLOWING
OHHHHHHHHHHHHH
WEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
JUST GOT BACK
WE GOTTA UNPACK
JUST GOT BACK FROM SOUTH-A THE BORDER
TIME TA MOP
TIME TA SWEEP
NO TIME TA SLEEP-GOTTA-GET-THINGS IN ORDER
WINTER WAS GREAT,

SPRING'LL BE SWELL
NOTHING IS NICER THAN COMING AND GOING...

(THE BIRDS EXIT, MRS. OTTER ENTERS)

OTTER:Well, I'm up and out early. You might ask why. "Why are you up and out so early Mrs. Otter?" Today's the first day of Spring in the year nineteen twenty in our little riverside town named Willow, after the trees don't you know, here in New England. "Oh is it?" Yes it is. Every one is flying in and waking up and I like to know who slept in who's house over the long winter nights and who's flying back with who from who knows where. We love strangers in our town. We welcome them. Someone new to talk about. What's that you say? "Mrs. Otter you are a busybody." Not at all. I'm a body who keeps busy. My husband Mr. Otter says, "you're a born manager my dear," but my dear husband doesn't like being managed and my little otters are grown and out of the house. "You must miss them Mrs. Otter." Oh I do and what's a mature woman with management skills to do? I look after my grandchildren when they visit. Not often enough if you ask me. And I look after my friends. "Do you have many friends and grandchildren, Mrs. Otter?" Indeed yes and what about neighbors? I have a brand new neighbor this year. Came out of the Mole Orphanage. I heard them all call out at the start of winter. "So long Mole. We'll miss you Mole. Send a postcard." I had a peek, didn't I? Yes you did, Mrs. Otter. There he was digging a little home right near the river. All alone, poor little fellow. He must have slept like a log. I've seen neither hide nor hairs of him. My old friend the Rat is another story. Dear Ratty was awfully restless this winter. Poked his head out every other week. "I wish this. I wish that." I heard him. "I wish I had a family," old Ratty said. "I wish I had a son!" Mid life crisis, I suppose. Well, if wishes were horses Ratty might have got somewhere. Oops, there goes a scallop and I haven't had breakfast. (EXITS AS MOLE ENTERS)

MOLE:Winter's over. This is my first Spring out of the Mole Orphanage. Oughta start spring cleaning - oughta buy moth balls for the woolens - oughta this, oughta that. I don't feel like doing what I oughta. It's Spring! I'm restless, I'm ready for an adventure.

RAT:(ENTERS) Hullo, Mole.

MOLE:Oh hullo, Rat.

RAT:Have a good sleep?

MOLE:Like a log. You?

RAT:The birds woke me.

MOLE:Well, it's Spring. They're happy to be home.

RAT:Never understood this flying south. Why can't they just get under the covers n'stay put? Wanna ride in my boat?

MOLE:I never been in a boat.

RAT:ABSO-LUTE-LY NOTHING IS - POS-IT-IVE-LY NOTHING IS
SO WONDERFUL FEELING - SO AWFUL APPEALING
I SQUEAK - I GO SQUEALING - I'M HEAD OVER HEELING
YA GOT ME CONFESSING I FIND IT A BLESSING
THIS MESSING ABOUT IN BOATS - Ya know there's two things I like
to do.

MOLE:Let me guess.

RAT:Row my boat and make up songs.

MOLE:I guessed. You must think I'm a booby but is this a river?

RAT:Are you a mole? Am I a rat?

MOLE:So I live by the river and you live by the river?

RAT:By it and with it and on it and in it.

MOLE:Ya gonna sing again?

RAT:THE RIVER IS BROTHER AND SISTER TO ME
AND AUNT AND UNCLE AND COMPANEEEE
AND FOOD AND DRINK AND NATURALLEEE...uh...washing. It's my
world. What it hasn't got is not worth having and what
it doesn't know is not worth knowing.

MOLE:You must go lotsa places.

RAT:I don't even mind when floods happen and brown water runs by
my best bedroom window.

MOLE:Do you go lotsa places?

RAT:And I love it when everything dries up and weeds clog the
channels and I can run around finding fresh food and
things people drop outta their boats.

MOLE:You don't go anywhere.

RAT:No.

MOLE:Oh.

RAT:But I love the river because it goes everywhere.
RIVER'S GREEN - RIVER'S BLUEY/CLEAN TODAY - TOMORROW, PHOOEY
WINTER COMES - DON'T MIND DO WE? RIVER FREEZES - INTO PIEZES I
get a new river every day without going anywhere.
Yesterday it smelled like herring. I hate ta travel.

MOLE:Even over there?

RAT:Over where?

MOLE:Over there.

RAT:Oh, over there. No, that's the Wild Wood.
(CLAP OF THUNDER/STAGE DARKENS FOR A STORM
WILD WOOD CHORUS STARTS/STOPS/STAGE BRIGHTENS)
We don't go over there very much, we river livers.

MOLE:Who lives in the Wild Wood?

RAT:The widow Mink. She's very grand. She has a salmon pink tile
bathroom and a burglar alarm.

MOLE:You know her?

RAT:I know her coat. And Badger lives there. He's the widow's
neighbor. Badger wouldn't live any where else, not if
ya paid him.

MOLE:Then what's so terrible about the Wild Wood?

RAT:The weasels, the squirrels, the stoats and the foxes. They
live there too.
(CLAP OF THUNDER/STAGE DARKENS FOR A STORM
WILD WOOD CHORUS STARTS/STOPS/STAGE BRIGHTENS)
It ain't animal etiquette to gossip but...

MOLE:But?

RAT:But the truth is ya can't really trust a weasel or...

MOLE:Or?

RAT:Or a squirrel or a stoat or a fox and that's a fact.

MOLE:A fact?

RAT:YA CAN'T SUBTRACT THAT THAT'S A FACT
A MATTER OF FACT AS A MATTER OF FACT
I SAY WHAT I SAY WITH THE UTMOST TACT
BUT I GOTTA IMPART WHAT I HAVE IN MY HEART
YA CAN NEVER REALLY TRUST EM

MOLE:Ya write these songs down?

RAT:I almost sold one once to the animal hit parade but at the last minute I decided the life of a celebrity was not for me.

MOLE:And what's that out there beyond the Wild Wood?

RAT:Ya mean where it's all dark blue and dim?

MOLE:Yeah, what's that?

RAT:Ya mean where it looks like hills or there's something like the smoke of towns or maybe only clouds drifting?

MOLE:That's what I mean. Beyond the Wild Wood. What's that?

RAT:That's the Wide World. I never been there and I'm never going and you neither if ya got any sense at all. What are you looking at?

MOLE:Somebody wet heading this way.

OTTER:(ENTERS) Hello Ratty. Hello...

RAT:Mrs. Otter. You know my new friend, Mr. Mole?

OTTER:I am pleased to make your acquaintance, Mr. Mole.

RAT:My old friend Mrs. Otter.

MOLE:Glad ta meet ya, maam.

OTTER:I happened to be passing when you moved in last winter. You chose a lovely spot. I hope you won't be bothered by the noise. What a day for tourists, Ratty. They're everywhere. "Scuse me, ma'am," they say with their paws full of maps, "are there any nice shops around here?" "Shops?" I say, "Shops? Shops? This is a residential area." (BADGER ENTERS) Oh hello Badger!

BADGER:No visitors today thanks very much! (EXITS)

OTTER:(TO MOLE) He's so shy! "So Mrs. Otter, who else is out on

the river?" Why ask me? Do I know everything? "Have you seen Toad" you say? "Toad of Toad Hall," I ask? Yes indeed. Toad's out in his brand new canoe; new canoe clothes, new canoe everything but - the same old Toad. Last week it was yachting. Navy blue blazer with gold buttons. He gave the yacht to the Salvation Army.

MOLE:He gave the yacht away?

OTTER:Before that was the house boat. Remember the houseboat, Ratty? He gave the houseboat to the Salvation Army too.

MOLE:He just gave it away?

OTTER:Away. Just like Toad. "I love it to pieces, Mrs. Otter," he says. Toad loves everything to pieces for fifteen minutes. That's what Mr. Otter says. Good old Toad.

RAT:Good old Toad.

MOLE:Good old Toad.

OTTER:Well as long as he can afford all these oops, there goes a scallop! I can't resist a sca...(OTTER EXITS)

RAT:(SHOUTS) Nice running into ya Mrs. Otter. Let's get together next week. (TO MOLE) Well, it's time we started back.

MOLE:Can I row?

RAT:Don't stand up! Oh Mole, oh, ya gonna tip us over. Grab my hand. I'll pull you out. Oh Mole.

MOLE:I must look like a drowned rat.

RAT:You look like a drowned mole, Mole. Ya better come and dry off at my place. I'll build us a nice fire and give ya some dry clothes and -

WE'LL TURN UP THE HEAT - HAVE SOMETHING TA EAT

WE'LL START OUT WITH MEAT - DESSERT WILL BE SWEET

AND THEN WHEN WE'RE REplete WE'LL FIND US A - a seat -I mean a couch but seat rhymes - WE'LL PUT UP OUR FEET whattaya say Mole?

MOLE:I say that's the best song yet and this is the best day of my life, Ratty. I was feeling restless, ya know how it is, and I wanted ta have an adventure on my first Spring day and I sure am having one.

I'M SO VERY VERY HAPPY - MY NEW LIFE IS JUST BEGINNING
ON MY OWN - NO SUPERINTENDANT - NOW AT LAST I'M INDEPENDANT

I'M SO VERY VERY HAPPY - EVERY BIT OF ME IS GRINNING
IF THE OTHER MOLES COULD SEE ME

THEY WOULD WISH THAT THEY COULD BE ME

I THOUGHT LEAVING HOME WAS SCAREY

BUT IT TURNS OUT TO BE DREAMY NOW

After we dry off and eat and rest ya think we could visit Mr.
Toad?

RAT:How about tomorrow? Whattaya say?

MOLE:I say okay.

I'M SO VERY VERY HAPPY - PANTING WITH ANTICIPATION
I FEEL SURE I'M ON THE BRINK OF ANYTHING AT ALL I THINK OF
I'M SO VERY VERY HAPPY - USING MY IMAGINATION
REDESIGN ME - OVERHAUL ME - ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS CALL ME
STATUS QUO-ING AIN'T AT ALL ME
GREAT ADVENTURE MUST BEFALL ME - NOW

RAT:I didn't know you write songs too.

MOLE:My first one. I'm learning from you. Is Toad Hall far?

RAT:Not so far and it's never the wrong time to call on Toad of
Toad Hall. Early or late he's always good tempered,
glad to see ya, always sorry when ya go. I'm not
saying he's very clever, mind you, but we can't all be
geniuses can we?

MOLE:Don't you like him?

RAT:Well, he's green! It's hard to take a green animal seriously
and he is a little conceited and his favorite subject
is what he saw and what he ate and what famous picture
star he met at the theater last week who thought he
was the most wonderful toad and much more interesting
to talk to than almost any animal any animal can think
of but besides all that I must say he does have some
great qualities, has our Toady.

MOLE:Could ya say what they are?

RAT:Well, for one thing
TOAD IS RICH AND HIS CUPBOARDS ARE BRIMMING
HIS DISHES ARE FANCY. HIS WINE LIST IS FANCY.
HIS LUNCHES ARE FANCY WITH ALL THE TRIMMING
A KIND OF A THING WHICH I REALLY UH FANCY

MOLE:You used "fancy" four times.

RAT:I know that! C'mon!

(THEY EXIT. THE SUN GOES DOWN, THE MOON COMES UP, THE MOON GOES

DOWN, THE SUN COMES UP. TOAD ENTERS)

SCENE TWO:THE NEXT DAY AT TOAD HALL

TOAD:What a wonderful morning. What a wonderful day for the open road. (RAT AND MOLE ENTER) Hooray, this is wonderful. I was just gonna send a boat down the river for ya Ratty with strict orders to get ya up here right away and here y'are like an answered prayer.

MOLE:What a wonderful house.

TOAD:Well, thank you. Aren't you nice whoever you are.

RAT:Toad meet Mole. Mole meet Toad.

MOLE:Glad ta meet ya.

TOAD:Glad ta meet ya. Best house on the river. Or anywhere else either. Somebody very famous just the other day, now let me think who, on the tippa my tongue.

MOLE:A picture star?

TOAD:That's it! Well, aren't you nice. Somebody just like a picture star was saying "Toad, whatta wonderful house." But let's not talk about me. You are the very animals I wanna see. I need your help.

RAT:If it's about your rowing you're not doing so badly. Ya splash around a lot but with some coaching...

MOLE:Rat can certainly teach you. He's teaching me too.

TOAD:Oh blooey. Rowing? Blooey blooey. Kid stuff. You still do that old rowing? Lemme tell ya nobody who's anybody rows any more. I gave it up - let's see when was it?

RAT:You were rowing yesterday.

TOAD:Was it yesterday? Seems so long ago. No, no more rowing for me. Blooey blooey. I discovered the real thing. I love it ta pieces. I'm gonna love it forever. Wait till you and your nice friend see this dear Ratty. Real life. Travel, excitement, the open road, the dusty highway, villages, cities, in one town and out the other. Here

today and gone tomorrow. The old get up and whatever.

(HORSE AND WAGON ENTER)

RAT:It's a horse and wagon, Toad.

TOAD:A wagon? A wagon, Ratty? My dear Mole, this isn't just a wagon. This wagon is the best kinda wagon. The used car skunk who sold it ta me said it was once owned by a very famous animal.

MOLE:May we take a look inside?

TOAD:"May we take? Isn't he cute? Be my guest.

MOLE:Ratty, look. Tiny fold up sleeping bunks.

TOAD:And a fold up couch and blue and white fold up Japanese disposable kimonos.

MOLE:And a collapsible cooking stove.

TOAD:And collapsible pots n'pans and hooks and book shelves.

MOLE:And a bird cage with a real fake bird in it.

TOAD:For decor! And a chamber pot for you know what. All complete. Whatever ya want. Crackers and sardines, hard boiled eggs, seltzer, a dictionary, the complete Grimms fairy tales and fifty two edible playing cards.

MOLE:Nothing's left out.

TOAD:Nothing's left out fa when we start out this afternoon!

RAT:What?

MOLE:He said...

RAT:I heard what he said. Did I hear what you said Toad? Did you say "we" and "start" and "this afternoon?"

TOAD:Oh Ratty, don't talk stiff and sniffy. Ya gotta come. I can't manage without you so don't argue. Ya don't wanna stick to ya dull old river all ya life, and ya dull old boat and live in ya dull old house? I wanna make ya a sophisticated animal of the world.

RAT:I am as sophisticated as I wanna be thank you very much and I'm not going. I am going to stick to my dull old river and my dull old boat and my very dull old house thank you very much I'm sure Toad, and what's more, Mole's gonna stick too, aren't ya Mole?

MOLE:Of course I am. You bet. No two ways about it. I'll stick ta you Rat. You go your way and I'll go your way. No is no if you say so. But if you say yes it would be yes because it does sound sorta like an adventure...

RAT:Sorta what?

MOLE:Sorta awful. I guess.

TOAD:Why don't we have some lunch and talk it over. No rush. I only wanna give pleasure to you guys. Live for others, that's my motto. A simple lunch. Russian pumpernickel with Switzerland swiss cheese, smoked salmon from Scotland, French champagne mixed with fresh Florida orange juice. Well, Mole, done much travelling?

MOLE:No, I never went anywhere in my whole life.

TOAD:Ohhhh too bad. Never been east of here?

MOLE:No, never.

TOAD:Ya must have been south-a here. Everybody goes south.

MOLE:No, never.

TOAD:Oh dear. How about the north? Never went north, Mole?

MOLE:No. I once walked half a mile in a circle at the orphanage and I ended up back where I started from.

RAT:Okay, okay, Toady. Enough. We'll go. We'll all go.

TOAD:Oh Ratty, I'm sure ya won't be sorry.

RAT:I'm sorry already. Ya have any olives from Greece?

TOAD:No time ta eat now. (MRS. OTTER ENTERS)

OTTER:There you are dear old Toad.

RAT:Wait a minute. Whattaya mean no time ta eat?

OTTER:Hello Ratty, hello Mole.

TOAD:Gotta get on the road. (HE GETS THE WAGON READY)

OTTER:I was just passing by. I said to myself: "Mrs. Otter," I said, "you mustn't stand on ceremony with your old friend Toad." Is that a horse and wagon?

TOAD:If we start now we'll just miss lunchtime traffic.

OTTER:Lunchtime. That's what I said. I said, "Poor Toad'll feel obliged to ask you to lunch. I said "Toad serves a delicious lunch." Looks like a wagon. Going somewhere?

TOAD:We'll stop by your place Ratty and pick up an old bag.

OTTER:An old bag. Yes. "Well," I said, Toad's the best host." I said, "he'd be so hurt if he heard you were in the neighborhood and you didn't stop by - lunchtime."

TOAD:And one for you Mole. Goodbye Mrs. Otter. Tell you all about it when we get back.

RAT:Goodbye, dear Mrs. Otter.

MOLE:We're having an adventure.

ISN'T IT WONDERFUL - I'M A GLOBE TROTTER!

ALL:WHAT AN ADVENTURE! WHAT AN ADVENTURE!

MOLE:REGARDS TO THE ORPHANS - GOODBYE MRS. OTTER!

ALL:WHAT AN ADVENTURE! WHAT AN ADVENTURE!

MOLE/RAT:WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT WE'D BE TRAVELLING TOGETHER?

TOAD:HOME - HOME ON THE ROAD

TOAD/MOLE:AN ELEGANT WAGON! RAIN PROOF AND BEDDABLE!

MOLE:HOPE WE GET LOST

RAT:HOPE THE FOOD'L BE EDIBLE!

(MOLE, RAT AND TOAD WALK IN PLACE W/HORSE AND WAGON
AS LIGHTS AND BACKDROP CHANGE TO TAKE US FROM TOAD HALL TO THE
OPEN ROAD. MRS. OTTER MOVES DWN/STG, TALKS TO AUDIENCE

WHILE CHANGE OCCURS)

OTTER:An adventure. Yes. Well, Mrs. Otter, boys will be boys. A good thing you happened by isn't it? Someone had better keep an eye on Toad's house while he's gone and who might that someone be? Oh, and Ratty's house? Yes indeed. Oh, and dear little Mole's new little hole. Such a lot to do and who else is there to do it? Who, who, who? Can it be me? Mr. Otter always says "I'm sure you know best, my dear." And so I do. Now then - a tiny look in Toad's kitchen. "Don't want any lovely imported food to go bad while dear Toad's out of town do we," I ask myself? "No indeed," I reply, "what a thoughtful and practical animal you are my dear Mrs. Otter."

(SHE EXITS, THE SUN GOES DOWN, THE MOON COMES UP)

SCENE THREE:AT NIGHT ON THE ROAD

TOAD:This is the life isn't it?

MOLE:Ratty. I don't wantya to be unhappy.

RAT:Thanks a lot, Mole, but we gotta stick by Toad. It isn't
safe for him to be out on the road by himself. I'll
keep an eye on the wagon, you go see ta the horse.

MOLE:(TO HORSE) You okay?

HORSE:I've had better times.

MOLE:Ya don't like travelling?

HORSE:Would you like if nobody ever asked where you wanna go?
Giddyap this giddyap that. You'd think an animal
would have more respect for another animal.

(LOUD SOUND OF SPEEDING CAR, CAR LIGHTS, HONKING AND CRASH)

RAT:(SHOUTS) Why don'tya watch where ya going?

MOLE:You okay Ratty?

HORSE:Report the bastard to the A.S.P.C.A.!

RAT:I got your license. I'll take ya to court! I got the license
Toad, Toad? Are you okay Toad?

TOAD:Honk honk. Wasn't that great?

RAT:What?

TOAD:Poetry of motion. The only way to travel. Here today -next week tomorrow. Honk honk outta my way. Yowee.

RAT:Oh, I don't believe this, Toad.

TOAD:And to think I never knew. Wasted years. Blooey blooey. What dust clouds I coulda made. What wagons I coulda side swiped. Honk honk.

RAT:He'll be like this for days now.

MOLE:How far is it to the nearest town?

HORSE:Five or six miles.

RAT:We'll take turns walking and riding the horse.

HORSE:I'll take turns too. I'll ride one of you.

MOLE:But what about Toad?

RAT:Now, listen ta me Toad, soon as we get ta town you'll go ta the police station and make a complaint against the driver of the car.

HORSE:What about me?

RAT:Meanwhile Mole and I will find a hotel and get rooms where we can stay till it's ready.

HORSE:Hey, what about me?

TOAD:Police station? Complaint? Me complain? About that
beautiful vision, that heavenly honking dream carrier?
I'm finished with all other locomotion forever.
Wagons are tedious. And bumpy. And wimpy.
Horses are ludicrous.

HORSE:Hey!

TOAD:They get lame, they get limpy.
I'M TOAD OF TOAD HALL - I'M GREEN AND I'M SMALL
I WANT WHAT I WANT AND I MUST HAVE IT ALL

Rollerskates get rusty - bicycles get stolen
Rowboats are preposterous - they shrink or get swollen
I'M TOAD OF TOAD HALL - I'M GREEN AND I'M SMALL
I WANT WHAT I WANT AND I MUST HAVE IT
BUM BA DA DUM BUM BUM BUM
BUM BA DA DUM BUM BUM BUM - ALL

RAT:Making up songs suddenly seems like an epidemic.

TOAD:DON'T WANT A YACHT - OR A DORY - A TRAWLER
A TOAD'S NOT A TORTOISE - A CREEPER OR CRAWLER
A TOAD IS A JUMPER - HE'S NATURALLY SPEEDY
A TOAD NEEDS A VEHICLE THAT'S FAST - YES INDEEDY!

HORSE:A horse should not have ta listen ta stuff like this!

TOAD:ISN'T SPEED WALKING SILLY? I DON'T HAVE THE WILL FOR IT
A SLED IS TOO SLIPPERY AND YA GOTTA HAVE A HILL FOR IT
I ONCE USED A SKI - IT JUST WASN'T ME - I GOT IT FOR FREE
Because I never paid the bill for it.

ALL:You never paid the bill for it?

TOAD:I'M TOAD OF TOAD HALL - I'M GREEN AND I'M SMALL
BUT LET ME START SPINNING THAT OLD STEERING WHEEL
I WAS MEANT TO BE DRIVING - DEPARTING - ARRIVING
A HORSE IS NO MATCH

HORSE:Hey!

TOAD:A HORSE IS NO MATCH

HORSE:Hey!

TOAD:A HORSE IS NO MATCH FOR AN AUTOMO -
BUM BA DA DUM BUM HONK HONK
BUM BA DA DUM BUM HONK HONK - BEEELE!

HORSE:I guess I know when I'm not wanted. (EXITS)

RAT:Oh Toad!

TOAD:Oh Rat. My best friend. I'm so grateful. If you hadn'ta come I might notta gone and I wouldn'ta seen that swan, that sunbeam, that thunderbolt! I might never have heard the holy honk honk or smelt the aroma of gorgeous gasoline. Honk honk honk. (EXITS)

RAT:I give up. When we get ta town we'll go to the train station and see if we can get a train home tonight.

MOLE:Yes, Ratty.

RAT:And if you ever catch me saying yes to Toad again just knock me over and jump up and down on me until I change my mind or go into a coma, whichever comes first.

MOLE:Yes, Ratty.

RAT:I know exactly what Toad's gonna do first thing tomorrow morning.

MOLE:Yes, Ratty.

RAT:Up to town by the earliest train and order the biggest, flashiest, most expensive yellow open top automobile with purple leather seats.

MOLE:Yes, Ratty.

RAT:And the loudest honking horn he can find, and he will make sure the car he buys is just like the car some famous animal picture star drives only bigger and he will have T. O. T. H. printed in gold on the door.

MOLE:What's T.O.T.H?

RAT:Toad of Toad Hall - HE'S SPOILED AND HE'S SILLY
NARCISSISTIC AND BLIND TOO - HE'LL NEVER CHANGE WILL HE?
DOES WHAT HE HAS A MIND TO - TILL HE GETS HIS FILL
HE'S GREEN AND HE'S SMALL - HE'S TOAD OF TOAD HALL
HE WANTS WHAT HE WANTS AND HE MUST HAVE IT
BUM BA DA DUM BUM BUM BUM
ADD MOLE:BUM BA DA DUM BUM BUM BUM

BUM BA DA DUM BUM BUM BUM - ALL!

(RAT AND MOLE/WAGON EXIT, SUN COMES UP, WIDOW ENTERS, MUSIC
CONTINUES/TRANSFORMS FOR WIDOW)

SCENE FOUR: MID APRIL/WIDOW MINK IS LONELY/MRS. OTTER'S HUNGRY

WIDOW: April Fool. More fool me. Might as well still be winter
for all the social life I have. But I can't complain.
I'M A RICH MINK'S WIDOW - I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED
HE LEFT ME WELL PROVIDED FOR WHEN PROVIDENCE DIVIDED US

HE WAS MATURE WHEN WE WERE WED - I WAS SHY AND YOUNG AND
PURE

I WAS POOR BUT I WAS BLOND (A BLOND MINK COAT IS QUITE
ALLURING) HE WAS CHARMING AND SEDUCTIVE - HE PROPOSED - C'MON
DEAR HURRY

WE WERE MARRIED - VERY HAPPY - VERY HEALTHY - WITHOUT
WORRY

I'M A RICH MINKS WIDOW - I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED

WE LOVED TO NIBBLE ON EACH OTHER
CALL EACH OTHER BY PET NAMES
I CALLED HIM POOCHY - CALLED HIM HUNK
HE CALLED ME FOXY PUSSY CAT
I BRUSHED HIS COAT - I CUT HIS NAILS
KNIT A SWEATER AND A HAT
HE LOVED TO EAT - I LEARNED TO COOK
I DIDN'T MIND WHEN HE GOT FAT
I DIDN'T GUESS WHEN HE GOT FAT
THAT HE WOULD HAVE A HEART ATTACK

I COULD CALL HIS NAME A MILLION TIMES BUT I'D NEVER GET HIM
BACK

MY POOR DARLING - MY SWEET POOCHY - THE PAIN TESTED MY
ENDURANCE

I WAS WORRIED - WAS I POOR? NO! HE WAS SMART - WE HAD
INSURANCE

I'M A RICH MINK'S WIDOW - I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED...

OTTER: (ENTERS) Oh, dear widow Mink, I was just passing and I
said to myself "Mrs. Otter, don't you stand on
ceremony with your old friend the widow. She'd be so
hurt if you were in the neighborhood and you didn't
drop by. But it's tea time," I say, "the widow will
feel obliged," I say, "but perhaps she'd like to hear
the news," I say. Did you hear about Toad? Gone on a
trip. Took Ratty along. And our new neighbor Mole?

He's with them. A horse and wagon. Can you imagine?
"Mrs. Otter," I say to myself, "Dear widow Mink is
alone in the wild wood with nobody to talk to." She
must miss Mr. Mink. She must be so lonely. Specially
at tea time. (NO RESPONSE) Especially then. (NO
RESPONSE) Yes. Well. I suppose I'll be on my way. I
suppose I'll make do with yesterdays bread. Toasted.
Or pick up a donut. Or something. Such a pleasure,
widow. Hello to Mr. Badger. If you see him. (EXITS)

WIDOW:I'M A RICH MINK'S WIDOW - I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED
EXCEPT THE MAN I LOVED AND I MISS HIM EVERY DAY

I DREAM OF HIM - I TALK TO HIM - I PRETEND SOMETIMES HE'S
HERE

I KNOW FULL WELL I'M MAUDLIN - THE WIDOW'S CRYING IN HER
BEER

WHO CAN TAKE A HUSBAND'S PLACE? MISTER BADGER? WHAT DID I
SAY? OH DEAR -

I SEEM TO HAVE A THING FOR THAT OLD BACHELOR CROSS THE WAY

I KNOW HE'S GRUMPY - KINDA SHY
STAYS BY HIMSELF - OH WHATTA GUY
HE'S NO KID - HE'S NO GREAT CATCH
BUT I AM TIRED OF NEVER HUGGING
TIRED OF HAVING THE WHOLE BED TO MYSELF
TIRED OF BUYING JUST ONE ARTICHOKE -

"THEY'RE TWO FOR A DOLLAR, LADY."
NO THANKS - I ONLY NEED ONE
ONE LAMBCHOP - ONE APPLE TURNOVER
ONE TICKET TO THE PICTURES

I'M STILL BLOND - I'M NOT SO YOUNG
BUT I'M WELL BUILT AND NOT BAD LOOKING
THERE'S MY HOUSE - MY BANK ACCOUNT
MY STOCKS AND BONDS AND THERE'S MY COOKING
I'M LONGING FOR A MERGER AND I SEEM TO WANT THAT CODGER
IN FACT I'LL MAKE A WAGER THAT I'LL SOON BE MRS. BADGER

I'M A RICH MINK'S WIDOW WHO HAS EVERYTHING I NEED
A VERY RICH MINK'S WIDOW WHO HAS EVERYTHING INDEED
Oh dear, another lonely night.
I'M A RICH MINK'S WIDOW WHO HAS EVERYTHING I NEED -
EXCEPT HIM!

(SUN GOES DOWN, MOON COMES UP)

(WIDOW EXITS. MOLE AND RAT ENTER)

SCENE FIVE: APRIL IS ALMOST OVER - COULD WE VISIT BADGER?

MOLE:Hello, Ratty.

RAT:Hello, Mole. Mrs. Otter told me she bumped into you in the middle of April when she bumped into me.

MOLE:Told me she bumped into you too. Have you bumped into Badger lately? I still haven't met him.

RAT:Oh, Badger'll turn up some day or other and then I'll introduce ya.

MOLE:Couldn't we ask him to dinner, or something?

RAT:He wouldn't come. Badger hates invitations.

MOLE:Well, suppose we go and call on him?

RAT:Oh, I'm sure he wouldn't like that at all.

EIGHT OR NINE IS BREAKFAST TIME
DON'T VISIT THEN YOU MUST AGREE
IF WE WAIT TILL NOON I HAVE A HUNCH
HE TAKES LUNCH LIKE YOU AND ME
AND WHAT IS MORE AT FOUR OR THREE
BELIEVE YOU ME HE HAS HIS TEA
SEVEN OR EIGHT IS DINNER TIME
SO NO ONE VISITS THEN YA SEE

MOLE:This sounds like Mrs. Otter.

RAT:ALL IN ALL AND ALL IN ALL
IT'S BETTER IF HE VISITS ME
IT'S BETTER IF WE WAIT - THEN HE
CAN COME AND VISIT ME. Not a bad little song, huh?

MOLE:Ya sure can plunk out a tune for every occasion, Ratty, even for no occasion at all.

RAT:It isn't exactly animal etiquette to say so but someone seems ta have got up on the wrong side-a his bed today.

MOLE:Oh, I'm sorry Ratty. I get so restless in the Spring.

RAT:I know what you mean. Been feeling very peculiar myself since our expedition with Toad. Like a kinda itch. But Badger lives in the middle of the Wild Wood and did ya hear the weather report? Used ta be "Spring was Spring" but not anymore. Whatever became of April showers? A freak snowstorm they say! And it's almost May! (EXITS)

SCENE SIX: LOST IN THE WILD WOOD

MOLE:There's no reason a perfectly smart mole like me can't take a perfectly nice walk on my own and find Badger's old house on my own and knock on his door and introduce myself all on my own instead of always listening to other animals telling me the silly old fashioned rules of small town life about when a mole can go calling on somebody or what time of day or when you can't or don't or absolutely should not which is only really perfectly made up by animals and maybe even Badger even thinks it's rude of me since I'm the new guy in town who -

(CLAP OF THUNDER/STAGE DARKENS FOR A STORM
WILD WOOD CHORUS STARTS/TWO FOXES ENTER W/BAG OF SNOW TOSS SNOW
AT MOLE/SPIN HIM/TRIP HIM/WHILE HE SPEAKS)

he has undoubtedly heard all about from Mrs. Otter - who seems to be able to go wherever she wants whenever she wants and here I am not calling on him to say hello in all this long time and maybe it's the absolutely perfect right thing for me to do and won't he be glad to meet someone new on a night like oh I'm more and more lost and the snow is making it harder and harder ta see and oh Ratty I shoulda listened to youaaachooo.

RAT:(ENTERS SHOUTING) Mole! MMMMMMMole, where arrrre you?

(THE TWO FOXES RACE OFF/STAGE BEGINS TO BRIGHTEN)

MOLE:I'm heeere Ratty. Is thaaaat really youuuu?

RAT:It's reallllly meeee.

MOLE:I hope ya notttttt gonna say IIIIII told ya so.

RAT:I'm not gonna say I told ya so but IIIIIIII told ya so.

MOLE:Where am IIIIIIII?

RAT:Look ta your rightttt. Whattaya seeeeee?

MOLE:Treeeeeees.

RAT:Look ta your left. Whattaya seeeeeeee?

MOLE:Treeeeeees.

RAT:Turn around. Whattaya seeeeeeee?

MOLE:You! I see you, dear old Ratty!

RAT:(TURNS AROUND) Oh Mole. I'm glad to see you safe!

MOLE:You're a real friend to come out looking for me in this weather. I shoulda listened to you, Ratty.

RAT:YOU CAN TRUST ME - Mole
 I'M ONE RAT THAT YOU CAN COUNT ON
 NO AMOUNT TOO BIG TO BANK ON
 DON'T NEED THANKS - I DON'T NEED PAY YOU
 CAN BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY YOU
 MAY BE SURE I WON'T BETRAY YOU - Mole

YOU CAN TRUST ME - Mole
 I'M NOT FICKLE - DO YA GET ME?
 IF YOU LET ME I'LL BE STEADY
 ALWAYS READY - WHAT THE HELL - YOU
 TRIP OR STUMBLE - LET ME TELL YOU
 I'LL UNFALL WHAT E'ER BEFELL YOU
 ARE YOU BUYING WHAT I SELL YOU? Mole

YOU CAN TEST ME - I'M FULLA GOOD SUGGESTIONS
 ANSWER ANY KINDA QUESTIONS - I'M NOT HIDING AN AGENDA
 I'M SO GLAD WHEN I CAN LEND A HAND
 GO ON AND TEST ME - I'M THE "HONEST ABE" OF RODENTS (PAUSE)
 SORRY NOTHING RHYMES WITH RODENTS - I SAY "SORRY" WHEN I
 BLUNDER
 I JUST WANT FOR YOU TO UNDER-STAND

YOU CAN TRUST ME - Mole
 I'M THE FRIEND A FRIEND DEPENDS ON

MOLE:YOU'RE THE FRIEND A FRIEND RELIES ON

BOTH:THOUGH TIME FLIES - I'M FAITHFUL - FEAR NOT
 NO SURPRISE - ME DISAPPEAR? NOT
 ON YOUR LIFE - I'LL STILL BE HERE - WHAT
 LUCK - IT'S CLEAR I WON THE JACKPOT
 YOU CAN TRUST ME - I WON'T HURT YOU - MOLE! RAT!

BADGER:Who is it? Who is it badgering a badger on a night like this?

RAT:Oh, Badger, let us in, please. It's me, Rat, and my friend Mole. We lost our way in the snow.

SCENE SEVEN: A VISIT TO BADGER AND MOLE CATCHES COLD

BADGER:Lost in the snow! And in the Wild Wood too! And at this time of night! Whatever happened to April?

MOLE:That's what you said Ratty. It was all my fault sir. I made a fool of myself and Ratty rescued me.

BADGER:I always say it's nobody's business to say anything about anything anybody else does and who can throw the first stone and all's well that ends well.

MOLE:Very kind of you to say so, achoo!

BADGER:Bless you. I always say so.

MOLE:Thank you.

BADGER:Well now you're here, here you are. I always say that. How's old Toad doing?

RAT:Bad ta worse. Another smash up last week.

BADGER:Oh dear, how many is that?

RAT:This is the seventh automobile. His garage is piled up, literally piled up to the roof with bits and pieces and none of em bigger than your hat.

MOLE:Achoo!

BADGER:Bless you.

MOLE:Thank you.

RAT:Toad's been in the hospital three times.

MOLE:And traffic court! He pays fines every time!

RAT:Toad's rich but he's not a millionaire. If only he'd hire some decent steady well trained chauffeur type animal and pay him a good salary. But no! He insists on driving himself and he's the world's worst driver. He's gonna get killed or ruined. One or the other.

WIDOW:(CALLS OUT) Hello?

BADGER:Oh dear, the widow!

WIDOW:(ENTERS W/BIG POT) I saw your light on.

BADGER:Oh, dear, what a big pot.

WIDOW:I thought you boys might like some of my famous hot
chicken soup. The late Mr. Mink used ta love it.

BADGER:Much obliged Widow Mink but I always say charity begins
at home and a man's home is his castle and I always...

WIDOW:I'll call you Badge and you call me Minky.

MOLE:I'm Mole and this is my friend...achoo!

RAT:You can call me Ratty.

WIDOW:I think I better feel your forehead, Mole. (SHE DOES) Oh,
dear, I think you have a fever. You try, Badge.

BADGER:I'm much obliged I'm sure Widow Mink but...

WIDOW:Just put your paw on your friend's head, Badge.

BADGER:Well, yes, I do think Mole has a fever, Rat.

WIDOW:He'd better stay the night. I'll pop in tomorrow with
some hot oatmeal and golden raisins and camomile tea.
Mr. Mink always liked oatmeal and raisins and tea
when he was under the weather.

MOLE:I'm so sorry Ba...baa...baaachoooo!

RAT:If you don't mind Badger, maybe it is better for Mole to
spend the night.

WIDOW:I think it'll be a coupla days, don't you Badge?

RAT:I'll go home Mole and get you some pajamas and...

WIDOW:Oh, ya don't have ta do that Ratty, dear. Mole can wear Mr. Mink's silk pajamas and a nice warm flannel robe.

MOLE:Thank you very mah...maaahhh...maaaachooo!

WIDOW:Don't mention it. I'll leave you boys now. Ya needn't wash the pot, Badge. I'll pick it up first thing in the morning when I drop off breakfast and we can have a chat then about what ya think ya might like for lunch. Maybe, some of my lovely zucchini frittata. Mr. Mink was crazy about my zucchini frittata. Sleep tight, you two, don't let the bed bugs bite.

RAT:Goodnight Badger. Goodnight Mole. (WIDOW AND RAT EXIT)

MOLE:I think she likes..ahhhhchooooyou!

BADGER:Bless you.

MOLE:Thank you.

BADGER:I hope you'll be comfortable here Mole.

MOLE:Oh yessir. I am by nature and birth and breeding an underground animal and your house suits me to a tee.

BADGER:Isn't that lucky!

MOLE:Ratty and I are becoming great friends but he does live right next to the river and he keeps the windows open.

BADGER:Isn't that unlucky! Well, one animal's uh something is another animal's uh something else and to each his own or something and I have ta say it's not my business to say anything about the way anybody else chooses to live but for myself, I have ta say I couldn't live that way.

THERE'S NO SECURITY - PEACE OR TRANQUILITY TIL YOU'RE UNDERGROUND

NOONE CAN GET AT YA - NOONE CAN HURT YA WHEN YOU'RE UNDERGROUND

GOTTA LOCK YOUR DOORS N'WINDOWS N'BUY WINDOW SHADES N'CURTAINS HIDE YOUR MONEY UNDER A MATTRESS EXCEPT WHEN YOU'RE UNDERGROUND

MOLE: WE CAN DO ANYTHING FASTER - WE'RE ENTIRELY OUR OWN
MASTER WE DON'T HAVE TA ASK PERMISSION TO BUILD A
NEW ADDITION

OTHER GUYS NEED APPROVAL FROM THE STATE OR THE CITY
THEY NEED CONTRACTORS N'CARPENTERS N'PLUMBERS MORE'S THE
PITY

BOTH:WHEN WE WANT A BIGGER HOUSE WE DIG ANOTHER ROOM
OUR HOUSE FEELS TOOOO BIG - WE STUFF UP A HOLE
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING'S BETTER THAN HOME SWEET HOME
FOR A MOLE OR A BADGER - A BADGER OR A MOLE

MOLE:And things go on all the same overhead and ya don't bother about 'em.

BADGER:Exactly. Look at Rat. A couple of feet of flood water and he's got ta move into a hotel and what about Toad? What about a fire?

MOLE:Suppose the roof blows away?

BADGER:What if a window get's broken?

MOLE:What if the roof blows away?

BADGER:And the chimney could fall down.

MOLE:And the roof could blow away!

BADGER:And suppose there's a draft? I really hate a draft.

MOLE:Oh, I really hate a draft. Ahhhchooo!

BADGER:Bless you.

MOLE:Thank you.

BADGER:No, it's not my business to say but I couldn't live that way.

MOLE:At least not all the time.

BADGER:Up and out of doors is good enough for roaming around and good enough for going to work and ta see a play once in a while but underground is where I wannna come back to. Underground is my idea of uh home!

BOTH:IF YOU WANT A BIGGER HOUSE YOU DIG ANOTHER ROOM
YOU'RE HOUSE FEELS TOOOO BIG - YA STUFF UP A HOLE
IT'S DRYER WHEN IT'S WETTER
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WEAR A SWEATER
REALLY SUITS US TO THE LETTER
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING'S BETTER
POSITIVELY NOTHING'S BETTER BETTER BETTER BETTER BETTER
FOR A MOLE OR A BADGER - FOR A MOLE OR A BADGER
FOR A BADGER OR A MOLE

SCENE EIGHT: MIDDLE OF MAY - MOLE STARTS FOR HOME

BADGER:Happy middle of May, Mole.

MOLE:I didn't mean to stay so long. Thank you so much for
taking such good care of me.

BADGER:What're friends uh for I always say. It's my pleasure.

WIDOW:(ENTERS) It was our pleasure, wasn't it Badge?

BADGER:There was enough pleasure for both of us.

MOLE:I gotta go now. I have ta get to my Spring cleaning. I have
ta pick up moth balls on the way home.

BADGER:My best wishes ta Ratty when ya see him.

WIDOW:And mine. You boys must drop by for some of the borscht
with coriander and chives that I do this time of year.
I'm famous for my borscht with coriander and chives.
Mr. Mink never got enough. Goodbye, Mole. (HE EXITS)

BADGER:Goodbye.

WIDOW:What will we do without our little Mole, Badge?

BADGER:I'm sure you'll think of something. I have rather a lot
of uh something I have to do now. I always say "he
gets on best with uh women who best knows how to get
on uh without them." Was that borscht with chives?

WIDOW:And coriander and a great dollop of sour cream.

BADGER:Ah yes. Well, uh uh uh g'bye.

(HE EXITS, RE-ENTERS)

When did ya say that uh borscht might be ready?

WIDOW:I have some on the stove right now, Badge.

(THEY EXIT TOGETHER)

SCENE NINE:MOLE MEETS TOAD

(TOAD ENTERS IN CAR, MOLE ENTERS ON FOOT)

TOAD:Hello Mole. Hop in and I'll take ya for a spin.

MOLE:Oh Toad, I've never been in a car before, but are you sure ya oughta be driving? Rat says...

TOAD:Never mind what old Ratty says, ya want a ride or not?

MOLE:I guess I can put off Spring cleaning a little longer. And I do so want an adventure, so why not? (GETS IN)

TOAD:Honk, honk. Outta my way everybody!

MOLE:Is this your new car?

TOAD:Well, not exactly.

MOLE:Not exactly new?

TOAD:Not exactly mine!

MOLE:Oh, Toad.

TOAD:Well, my car was in the shop for repairs and I saw this other car parked...

MOLE:Somebody else's car?

TOAD:And it was red and I wanted ta see how a green toad like me might look in a red car so I got in just ta see myself in the mirror don't ya know but I hadda wonder, didn't I, if this kinda car starts up like my kinda car and then, I hardly know what happened, I just couldn't help turning the key in the ignition...

MOLE:Somebody else's car with the key in the ignition?!

TOAD:Which somebody else oughtn'ta left there so it's kinda somebody else's fault too, don't ya know!

MOLE:Oh toad!

TOAD:And after that it was all like a dream, poop poop, honk honk and there you were and here we are...

(POLICE SIREN)

MOLE:And here come a police horse!

(OFFICER HORSE ENTERS)

OFFICER:Pull over. Where's the fire?

TOAD:I wasn't doing more than...more than...

OFFICER:More than what?

TOAD:More than I was supposed to, was I Mole?

OFFICER:Where's your registration?

TOAD:I don't need a registration. I only need a registration if the car is mine. This is a borrowed car so I don't..

OFFICER:Might I be bold enough to ask if he or she from whom you borrowed this vehicle is aware of the so called borrowing and has been formally introduced to the so called borrowers?

TOAD:Don't you get snippy with me. You might be a police horsiffer but I am a tax payer. You don't know who you are talking to. I, sir, am...

OFFICER:In trouble! You two follow me. My sister-in-law Judge Horse will be mightily glad to meet you when your case comes up before her - in a few weeks!

MOLE:Weeks! A few weeks! Oh Toad.

(OFFICER HORSE TRANSFORMS ONSTAGE TO JUDGE HORSE)

SCENE TEN: EARLY JUNE IN THE COURTROOM W/JUDGE HORSE

JUDGE:Order. The first case of the day in this month of June is the state versus Toad and Mole. The only difficulty in this otherwise clear as crystal case is how can we possibly make life awful enough for this incorrigible rogue Toad and his ruffian partner in crime Mole, now cowering in the dock before us.

MOLE:Oh, your imminence, we are innocent. Tell him Toad.

JUDGE:The evidence is clear. First, stealing a valuable vehicle; second, driving at a reckless speed; and third, worst of all, talking back to my brother-in-law.

MOLE:I am so very morally sure we've learned our lesson. If Toad wasn't struck dumb I'm sure he'd say so.

JUDGE:So, the question is, what's the stiffest penalty we can impose for each of these offenses? Without, of course, giving the prisoner the benefit of any doubt, because undoubtedly there isn't any. Let's see, stealing, five years, speeding, five years, and sassing the police? Ten years. That makes...

MOLE:Twenty years your horseship.

JUDGE:Each! Jailor Horse! Take them away!

(JUDGE HORSE TRANSFORMS ONSTAGE TO JILL, THE JAILOR HORSE)

MOLE:Mercy, I'm just a poor innocent mole looking for adventure. Toad, say something! Say anything! Mercy.

JILL:Follow me, boys.

(JAIL BARS APPEAR AS JILL EXITS, MOLE AND TOAD REMAIN)

SCENE ELEVEN: TOAD AND MOLE IN JAIL IN JULY

MOLE:Toad. It's July. Ya ever gonna say anything again?

TOAD:This is the end of everything. At least it's the end of the career of Toad, which is the same as the end of everything.

MOLE:Oh Toad, don't say that!

TOAD:No more popular and handsome Toad, no more rich and hospitable Toad, no more sweet, sophisticated and worldly Toadster. How am I ever gonna get outta here?

MOLE:Oh Toad, Ratty will find us.

TOAD:They are sure ta wanna keep me here forever. People, who were once proud to say they knew me, will forget the very name of Toad. "Toad?" they'll say, "who's Toad? Never hearda him!" What's for dinner? Don't tell me. Couldn't eat a thing.

MOLE:Here come's Jill the jailer's daughter, Toad.

TOAD:Bloey, bloey on the horse faced jailer's daughter.

MOLE:Be nice to her. She's bringing dinner.

JILL:(ENTERS) Hot from the oven. Now, Toad, be a sensible animal like your friend Mole and try ta eat.

TOAD:Smells like oats.

MOLE:It's oats, Toad.

JILL:That's what it is. That's what it was yesterday. That's what it's gonna be tomorrow. I brought enough for the two of you.

TOAD:I wanna die. Toad of Toad Hall eating oats for dinner. Who would believe it? I just wanna die.

JILL:See that he eats Mole or the silly toad'll die indeed.
(SHE EXITS)

MOLE:She's only trying to be nice, Toad, I think she likes you. These oats are not bad.

TOAD:I can't believe this is happening ta me. That's why I never spoke up at the trial. I couldn't believe it. I shoulda said something. I shoulda said, your honor, I am a very rich toad. I will pay a very big fine. Money talks ya know. I shoulda said, your honor, I shoulda said, where I come from I am definitely not nobody. I'm somebody! I am a really big...those oats smell good. Well, maybe not good but they don't smell bad.

SCENE TWELVE: JULY AT THE RIVERBANK, RAT GROWS MORE RESTLESS

OTTER:(ENTERS) Hello, Ratty. Ya hear anything?

RAT:Not a word.

OTTER:I was just saying to myself this very morning "It's not like Mole to go off," I said, "and what about Toad? Toad's gone too," I said. "He left his latest car in the repair shop and disappeared," I said.

RAT:I know. Without his car.

OTTER:That's what I said. "Without his car," I said. "Toad, without his car?" And then I said impossible. And then I said but it's true. And then I said impossible. And then I said but it's true. And then Mr. Otter said "Will you please stop talking to yourself."

RAT:POOR DEAR MOLE - SWEET LOST SOUL
TOADIE TOO - WHERE ARE YOU?

OTTER:Without a word, Ratty.

RAT:WITHOUT A WORD

OTTER:And without his car. It's too weird.

RAT:IT'S TOO WEIRD
TOAD AND MOLE HAVE DISAPPEARED
Everybody's going off or getting ready ta go off!

OTTER:Well, it's getting ta be that time of year again. Animals will be animals and birds will be birds and everybody will do what everybody always does every year won't they? "You can't fight it," I say. You grow up and you start to be like your mother and father and you like your mother and father just fine of course but you promise yourself "When I grow up I won't do everything just like my mother and father." In fact, you say, "I won't do anything like my mother and father" and then you grow up and one day you look in the mirror and "who is that," you ask, "looking back at me? Who on earth is that? Is that my mother?" Well it is. "You

look just like your mother," you say. And she winks at you and she says, "I told you so." Oops, there goes a scallop. (EXITS, REENTERS) My mother loved scallops. (EXITS)

RAT:POOR DEAR MOLE - SWEET LOST SOUL
TOADIE TOO - WHERE ARE YOU?
WITHOUT A WORD - IT'S TOO WEIRD
TOAD AND MOLE HAVE DISAPPEARED
SCENE THIRTEEN: END OF JULY IN JAIL

JILL:Toad, ya got me thinking. I have twin possum aunts who are washerwomen.

TOAD:Well, don't feel so bad. I have a coupla aunts who oughta be washerwomen.

JILL:My aunts do the washing for all the prisoners in this jail. We try ta keep business in the family, ya know. They take out the washing on Monday night and bring it back on Friday night.

MOLE:This is Friday, Toad.

TOAD:I know what day it is.

MOLE:It's Friday night.

JILL:Now Toad, you're very rich, ain't ya?

TOAD:I don't like ta brag. Yes, I have bags of money.

JILL:Well my twin possum aunts are awful poor.

MOLE:Get it Toad? Her aunts are poor. And it's Friday night.

JILL:A coupla bucks'd be a drop in the bucket for you...

MOLE:Ya get it Toad? The old darling's could use some cash. And what a coincidence that it's Friday night.

JILL:Now, I think if them two were properly approached ya could reach some kinda arrangement so that the twins'd let ya have their dresses...

TOAD:Why on earth do we want old possum washerwomen's dresses?

MOLE:Don't ya get it Toad? We can escape from jail!

JILL/MOLE:In the washerwomen's dresses!

MOLE:Oh Toad, it's the end of July and this adventure is starting ta get me down. If we just get outta here we could go home and find the people who's car it was and you could pay for the damage and they would forgive you and the cop would forgive you and then the judge might forgive you and...

TOAD:Okay. Okay. You are right and I am wrong. Introduce me and my friend the mole to your worthy twin aunts, if you will be so kind, Jill dear, and I will arrange suitable monetary terms.

JILL:Just in time, here the two old dears are now.

(TWIN POSSUM WASHERWOMEN ENTER WITH TWIN LAUNDRY BAGS)

POSSUM II:WE'RE TWIN WASHER WOMEN
WE'RE OPOSSUMS - THAT'S RIGHT

POSSUM I:LOOK AT ME - YOU CAN SEE
WE DON'T LOOK LIKE EACH OTHER

POSSUM II:WE'RE BOTH OF US NOCTURNAL
DO OUR BEST WORK AT NIGHT

POSSUM I:I LOOK LIKE MY FATHER
SHE LOOKS LIKE MY MOTHER

JILL:Girls!

POSSUM II:WE USE LIQUID NOT POWDER
HOT WATER OR COLD

POSSUM I:WE'RE TWIN WASHER WOMEN
LIKE WE ALREADY SAID

POSSUM II:WE WASH AND WE RINSE
AND WE IRON AND FOLD

POSSUM I:SOMETIMES WE GET LAZY
PLAY POSSUM. PLAY DEAD

(BOTH FALL TO THE FLOOR, PLAY DEAD)

JILL:Girls! Girls, let me tell ya what we have in mind.

MOLE:Your song is very nice. Ya should meet my friend Rat.

BOTH:STAINS NO ONE CAN BUDGE DON'T GIVE US TREPIDATION
WE MIX UNDIES AND OUTIES, WE CAN'T STAND SEGREGATION
WE WORK EVERY NIGHT, WE DON'T TAKE NO VACATION
CAUSE WASHING AND IRONING'S OUR FULL TIME VOCATION

POSSUM II:WE'RE AUSTRALIAN MARSUPIALS
OUR FUR'S ATTRACTIVE PLEASE NOTE

JILL:The boys are gonna escape dressed up as you.

POSSUM I: BUT KEEP YOUR DIRTY HANDS OFF
DON'T WANNA WIND UP A COAT!

JILL:We don't have a lotta time girls. Ya gotta get outta ya
clothes and give them ta these guys and they'll tie us
all up so we look like we been outwitted and they got
away. Whattaya say?

POSSUM I:Like we've been out witted?

JILL:I'm afraid so.

POSSUM II:By these men animals?

JILL:Here's the money.

POSSUMS:Okay!

(TOAD AND MOLE DRESS UP AS POSSUM WASHERWOMEN)

JILL:I'm sure you never looked half so respectable in all your
lives before. When ya get outta here go straight the
way ya came.

POSSUM I:And if anyone says anything to ya, as they probably
will, being men...

POSSUM II:Ya can talk back and wiggle ya hips a bit...

POSSUM I:But remember you're respectable possums!

POSSUMS:NOW YOU LOOK JUST LIKE POSSUMS
WATCH YOUR BACKS WHILE YOU RUN
AVOID TRAPPERS AND HUNTERS

OR ANY GUY WITH A GUN!

TOAD/MOL:WE'RE SO GRATEFUL THAT YOU LENT US
ALL THIS FINE RIGMAROLE
AU REVOIR, CHARMING LADIES
FROM THE TOAD AND THE MOLE (THEY EXIT)

SCENE FOURTEEN: AUGUST BEGINS FOR THE WIDOW MINK AND BADGER

WIDOW:Happy August, Badge.

BADGER:Happy August, Widow...uh Minky.

WIDOW:I thought I might go and visit Ratty. He's been so restless and gloomy since Mole disappeared.

BADGER:Very kind of you I'm sure. I always say a friend indeed is a friend uh indeed.

WIDOW:I thought I might bring him some home made fruit jams. Time to start stocking up for winter.

BADGER:Well, that seems ta be part of his problem. He has second thoughts about hibernation this year.

WIDOW:What do you mean second thoughts?

BADGER:He was growing fond of Mole and Mole is gone without a word and then Toad goes and the weather begins to change. It always does. Then everybody starts wearing wool cardigans which I always say they do much too early and earlier this year than ever, and packing up, and moving in together...the older animals do find it very practical for fall and winter...ta not be uh always uh...alone.

WIDOW:And what does dear Ratty do for the winter months?

BADGER:That just it. He usually takes a good long nap like I do, and you uh too uh I suppose.

WIDOW:Mr. Mink and I used to enjoy the long winter alone together...in bed.

BADGER:Well I...yes, but this year is so confusing. For Ratty. He doesn't know if he's coming or going so to speak. If ya ask me.

WIDOW:What does he want to do?

BADGER:To hibernate or to migrate? That seems to uh be the

question.

SCENE FIFTEEN: END OF AUGUST/TOAD AND MOLE STILL ON THE RUN

TOAD:Aha, this is a piece-a luck.

MOLE:What is?

TOAD:A train!

MOLE:A train. Boy are we lucky. First we steal a car, then we get chased by the police, then we go ta court, then we go ta jail, then we escape dressed up as washerwomen and run all over the place for weeks and weeks trying to steer clear of the cops and find our way home and now we find a train but we have no money and no train tickets. Boy are we lucky.

TOAD:No train tickets but there's the train and here we are.

MOLE:Yes?

TOAD:No train tickets but there's the train and here we are and there doesn't seem ta be a driver.

MOLE:Noooo! No Toad. Ya remember why we went ta jail in the first place? The car with no driver. I dunno how every where you go everybody leaves vehicles unattended for you to find. N'besides, ya dunno how ta drive a train.

TOAD:Oh blooey I know howta drive an anything. I got driving in my blood. (JUMPS ONTO TRAIN) C'mon Mole, hop on.

MOLE:Oh Toad, surely stealing a train is more illegal than stealing a car, it's so much bigger.

TOAD:We're not stealing it, we're borrowing it. How else can we get home to make everything okay.

MOLE:Are you sure? (MOLE CLIMBS ON)

TOAD:Sure I'm sure. I'm always sure. Sure is my middle name.
I'M TOAD OF TOAD HALL - I'M GREEN AND I'M SMALL
I WANT WHAT I WANT AND I MUST HAVE IT ALL
I row boats, I ride horses, drive wagons, drive roadsters
Do everything better than all other toadsters
BUT BOATS ARE SO BORING - HORSES SO BORING
WAGONS AND CARS ARE SO BORING - SO BORING
WHAT WAS I THINKING? WHERE WERE MY BRAINS?
SHOULDA KNOWN ALL ALONG TOADS ARE BEST OFF IN TRAINS

(POLICE SIREN)

MOLE:Toad it's the police again.

TOAD:We better jump.

MOLE:Jump from a moving train?

TOAD:Just think what an adventure this is and jump!

(THEY JUMP, TRAIN EXITS, HORSE ENTERS)

Aha, this is a piece-a luck.

MOLE:What is?

TOAD:Our old friend the horse! We'll just get on the horse and ride all the way ta Toad Hall. C'mon Mole.

MOLE:Don't ya think ya better ask her?

TOAD:Ya don't have ta ask a horse. (TRIES TO MOUNT HORSE)

HORSE:I beg your pardon.

TOAD:You know us.

HORSE:I don't know any possumwasherwomen or washerpossumwomen or any posher-pusher-pisher-wisher-washerwomen.

TOAD:What did she say?

MOLE:She doesn't know us.

TOAD:It's us! Toad and Mole in disguise.

HORSE:Who would have guessed?

TOAD:Ya gotta take us to Toad Hall.

HORSE:I beg your pardon.

TOAD:Toad Hall. We wanna get ta Toad Hall, ya silly cow.

HORSE:Oh, now I remember you. You're the toad who thinks horses are for the birds. Well you can get to Toad Hall without me. You don't own me anymore green peewee, I'm free!

MOLE:Would you be willing to tell us the way to Toad Hall, please?

HORSE:Does your friend know how to say please?

MOLE:Oh Toad, please say please.

TOAD:Oh please. Very well. Please.

HORSE:Now that's a horse of a different color. I'd be so glad to give you "ladies" directions. Go straight till you come to the biggest tree you ever saw and then go left till you come to the smallest tree you ever saw and then go right till you see a brook with no bridge and

on the other side you'll see a sign that says "This way to Toad Hall." Good luck ladies. (EXIT)

MOLE:Walk straight, then left, then right, then swim. C'mon Toad. (THEY EXIT)

SCENE SIXTEEN:LABOR DAY APPROACHES AND RAT IS ALONE

RAT:Coming and going. Coming and going. (TWO BIRDS ENTER W/MAPS)
It isn't Labor Day. Where are ya going so soon?

BIRD 1:Oh we're not flying away yet. We're only making plans.

BIRD 2:What route we're gonna take. And where we'll stop off.

BOTH:It's half the fun.

RAT:Fun? Now that's what I don't get. If ya gotta go - ya gotta go but ya leave the snug homes ya just settled into and friends who'll miss ya. I can't even make up a song. I don't get it.

BIRD 1:Ratty doesn't get it.

BIRD 2:Naturally, he doesn't.
FIRST YOU FEEL IT STIRRING IN YOU,
DO YOU FEEL IT? DO YOU FEEL IT?

BIRD 1:A SWEET UNREST - A RECOLLECTION
DO YOU FEEL IT? DO YOU FEEL IT?

BOTH:FLUTTERING THROUGH YOUR DREAMS AT NIGHT
FLYING WITH YOU IN THE DAY
ONE BY ONE THE SOUNDS AND SCENTS
AND NAMES OF LONG FORGOTTEN PLACES

BIRD 2:THEN YOU LONG TO ASK THE QUESTION
DO YOU FEEL IT? DO YOU FEEL IT?

BIRD 1:IS THIS REAL? WILL YOU ASSURE ME?
THAT YOU FEEL IT? DO YOU FEEL IT?

BIRD 2:WHEELING - CIRCLING IN THE SKY

BIRD 1:RESTING - HAUNTED ON THE BRANCHES
ONE BY ONE THE SOUNDS AND SCENTS

BIRD 2:AND NAMES OF LONG FORGOTTEN PLACES

BOTH:DO YOU FEEL IT? DO YOU FEEL IT.....YES

BIRD 1:I tried staying behind one year.

RAT:Ya did?

BIRD 1:I was having such a good time that I let the others go
without me.

RAT:Ya did?

BIRD 1:For a few weeks it was fine, but then...
SHIVERY DAYS - SO COLD - SO SUNLESS

BIRD 2:DO YOU FEEL IT?

BOTH:DO YOU FEEL IT?

BIRD 1:FROZEN STREAMS - NO LEAVES - NO INSECTS

BIRD 2:DO YOU FEEL IT?

BOTH:DO YOU FEEL IT?

RAT:But you could take a nap like I do.

BIRD 1:Ratty, you live on the ground, my home's in a tree.

RAT:But ya could...

BIRD 1:No, it was no good. I hadda get outta here. It was
snowing and blowing and I had such a hard time getting
there but I will never forget the feeling of the hot
sun on my back when I finally got to the lakes.

BIRD 2:The beautiful placid blue lakes. So blue...

BIRD 1:So blue and the taste of the first fat bug.

BIRD 2:That first bug always tastes best.

BIRD 1:That first fat bug I found ta eat - well, I just can't
tell ya.

BIRD 2:We call it the call of the south.

RAT:Why d'ya ever come back then at all?

BIRD 1:D'ya suppose you're the only one who loves the river?

BIRD 2:The meadows and the wet orchards?

BIRD 1:The warm ponds full of insects?

BIRD 2:The hay making and the farm buildings and the...

BIRD 1:Different music.

BIRD 2:The different music of different places.

BIRD 1:At different times of year.

BOTH:That's what we love.
FLUTTERING THROUGH OUR DREAMS AT NIGHT
FLYING WITH US IN THE DAY
ONE BY ONE THE SOUNDS AND SCENTS
AND NAMES OF LONG FORGOTTEN PLACES
DO YOU FEEL IT? DO YOU FEEL IT.....?
YES

BIRD 2:Have ta go now Ratty,

BIRD 1:But we'll see ya before we fly.

BOTH:Goodbye.

(THE TWO BIRDS EXIT CHATTERING EXCITEDLY, SAILOR RAT ENTERS)

SAILOR:Ahoy.

RAT:What?

SAILOR:(APPROACHES) I just called out ahoy, matey. Ya don't
have ta answer. I appreciate a friendly silence
between animals. (PAUSE) You're a freshwater rat. Am
I right?

RAT:Right.

SAILOR:It's a good life, friend. Everything seems asleep yet
going on all the time. A good life, no doubt the best
in the world if you're strong enough ta lead it.

RAT:(ABSENTMINDEDLY) Yes, it's the life, the only life.

SAILOR:I didn't exactly say that, but no doubt it's the best. I
oughta know, I tried it but here I am, footsore and
hungry, going away from it.

RAT:Everybody's going away.

SAILOR:Going south.

RAT:Everybody's going south.

SAILOR:Following the old call back to my old life. The life
which won't let me go.

RAT:Won't let ya.....go where? Where ya coming from?

SAILOR:Nice little farm back there. I had everything I wanted.
And yet here I am. On my way to my heart's true
desire.

RAT:Your heart's..how d'ya know what's your heart's desire?

SAILOR:I'm a seafaring rat, I am.

RAT:You're a...you're a real sailor?

SAILOR:Set me down on any dock and I'm home.

RAT:I suppose ya go on great voyages. Months and months outta
sighta land, communing with the mighty ocean, running
shorta food and water and all that sorta thing?

SAILOR:Running shorta food and water ain't my sorta thing.
I SHIP MYSELF ON BOARD A TRADING VESSEL
A VESSEL BOUND OUTTA CONSTANTINOPLE
DURING BALMY NIGHT AND GOLDEN DAY
TO THE GRECIAN ISLANDS WE MAKE OUR WAY
OVER THROBBING WAVE - ACROSS CLASSIC SEA
TO THESSA-LANIKI - INLAND TO MYCENAE
AND I SEE OLD FRIENDS - EVERYWHERE I GO

RAT:I always wanted ta see the Greek Islands.

SAILOR:THEN WE TURN AND COAST UP THE ADRIATIC
THE SHORES SWIMMING IN IMAGES ATMOSPHERIC
AQUAMARINE AND AMBER AND OCHER AND ROSE
WIDE LAND LOCKED HARBORS - THAT'S WHERE OUR SHIP GOES
TO ANCIENT NOBLE CITIES WHERE YA'LL SOON FIND US
AS WE RIDE INTO VENICE THE SUN RISES BEHIND US

RAT:Venice, Italy?

SAILOR:WE RIDE INTO VENICE DOWN A PATH OF GOLD
AND EVERYTHING IS BEAUTIFUL JUST LIKE I TOLD YA
AND I SEE OLD FRIENDS - EVERYWHERE I GO

RAT:I always wanted ta see Venice.

SAILOR:It's a fine city where a rat can wander at his ease and
when ya tired of sightseeing ya can sit at the edge-a

the Grand Canal at night with ya friends and the air is fulla music and the sky is fulla stars and ya can jump on to a gondola ta go from one side ta the other and the food? Italian food! Tell me, d'ya like pasta?

RAT:Not much opportunity for Italian food in our town.

SAILOR:AFTER EATING POUNDSA SEAFOOD PASTA
WE GET ON BOARD AND SAIL AT LASTA
WE COAST DOWN ALONG THE ITALIAN SHORE
SAILING SOUTH TILL WE REACH PALERMO

RAT:I always wanted ta go to Palermo.

SAILOR:BUT I GROW SO THIRSTY FOR SICILIAN WINE
THAT I JUMP THAT SHIP AND THE WINE IS FINE
AND I'M RESTLESS SOON - TO BE ON MY WAY
THE BREEZE IN MY FACE - THE SALT SEA SPRAY
SO I BOARD A TOURING SHIP - SARDEGNIA BOUND
AND I GO ON TA CORSICA - OLD HAPPY HUNTING GROUND
AND I SEE OLD FRIENDS - EVERYWHERE I GO

RAT:In books and movies it seems like such a hard life.

SAILOR:It is for the crew! But not for the likes-a me. Ya oughta
try it some time.

RAT:Me?

SAILOR:Well I gotta lotta dusty days and nights aheada me till I
get to a little grey sea town I know. Sooner or later
the big ships pull into the harbor and I find out
which one's goin where and I slip on board ta see what
kinda grub they have and what quarters does the
captain keep and then early one morning I wake ta the
rattle of anchor chains pulled up and the noise-a
sailors hustlin and then the little white houses on
the harbor side glide slowly past and the voyage has
begun.

RAT:(HYPNOTIZED) And the voyage has begun.

SAILOR:Wanna join me matey? Wanna take a chance on the sea?

RAT:A chance on the...what? Oh no, not me. I'm happy here.

SAILOR:Well then, it's been a pleasure.
I CAN'T STAY - I GOTTA GO - PLEASE FORGIVE MY RUDENESS
THE TALKA SHIPS MAKES ME ITCH - MAKES ME RESTLESS
DID YA EVER HAVE SHELL FISH FROM MARSEILLES?
Some times I dream-a the shellfish of Marseilles and I wake up

crying. I always have such a good time when I'm in
Marseilles -

AND I SEE OLD FRIENDS - EVERYWHERE I GO
Maybe when I get back here, I'll see you.

RAT:I'd be glad.

SAILOR:You could come along ya know. Take the adventure. The days pass and ya never get em back. Just shut the door behind ya and take a step forward and you are out of the old life and into the new.

RAT:Outta the old life and into the new....

SAILOR:Then some day, some other day, when the song has been sung and the play has been played, just jog along home here if ya get the urge and sit down by your quiet river with a store of good memories for company and a lotta retellables for the locals. Think it over. You can easily overtake me on the road. You're younger than me and you can still move faster and I will go slow and look back. (SAILOR EXITS SINGING)

AND I SEE OLD FRIENDS - EVERYWHERE I GO
(RAT SITS STILL AS WE HEAR THE SAILOR OFFSTAGE)
I SEE OLD FRIENDS - EVERYWHERE I GO

RAT:(JUMPS UP) Hey, wait up, I'll walk a ways with you.

SCENE SEVENTEEN: LABOR DAY, HERE COMES EVERYONE

WIDOW: Isn't that Ratty coming now? (RAT ENTERS)

BADGER: Ratty dear, so nice of you to visit.

RAT: I happened ta be in the neighborhood.

BADGER: Who's that coming now?

WIDOW: Looks like two... washerwomen. Are you expecting someone to pick up your laundry, Badge?

BADGE: I do my uh own uh washing uh Minky. I always have.

WIDOW: How sweet.

RAT: Isn't that...?

WIDOW: That looks like...

RAT: It's Mole.

BADGER: And Toad.

ALL: It's Mole and Toad.

(MOLE AND TOAD ENTER)

TOAD: So lovely ta find ya all together waiting ta see me.

MOLE: Oh Ratty.

RAT: Oh Mole.

WIDOW: Oh it's so good to see us all together again isn't it?

BADGER: Let's none of us ever go anywhere again, that's what I say. "Home sweet home" and "every bird uh likes his own nest best!"

TOAD: "Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam..."

BADGER: "Be it ever so humble there's no place..."

MOLE:"Like home is where the heart is."

WIDOW:How sweet you boys all are. Aren't they Ratty?

RAT:What?

MOLE:What are you thinking about, Ratty?

RAT:Why don't we all go away together? Why do we have to stay here all winter freezing off our...

BADGER:A lady is present Ratty.

WIDOW:That's awfully sweet Badge, but I know what part of us freezes off in the winter.

RAT:Why don't we go someplace warm and lie around getting tan and drinking rum and coca cola?

TOAD:Sounds great.

WIDOW:You know I'm famous for my Margueritas. Mr. Mink just loved my...

BADGER:Mr. Mink was certainly a paragon gourmet.

WIDOW:Now don't be jealous, Badge. I'm sure you'll love my Margueritas just as much as Mr. Mink after a while.

RAT:So whattaya say? How about going south this winter? I'm tired of doing the same old thing. "The days pass and ya never get em back. Just shut the door behind ya and take a step forward and you are out of the old life and into the new." If ya wanna go with me, I'd really like that, but whether ya do or ya don't - I'm going.

MOLE:I'm with ya Ratty.

TOAD:Me too. Ya know me. I love ta get up and go.

BADGER:Well, I always say nothing ventured, no adventure, uh, or anything. What about you...Minky?

WIDOW:I was hoping you'd ask me Badge. I'll go Ratty.

BADGER:Me too.

TOAD:I could drive.

ALL:No!

TOAD:I have an idea. Come with me, Badger.

BADGER:Coming Minky? (TOAD, WIDOW MINK, BADGER EXIT)

RAT:I'm very glad ta see ya, Mole. I was worried.

MOLE:I'm sorry I couldn't call. It's a long story.

RAT:I'm glad you're coming. I'm glad you're all coming.
Sometimes ya just have ta question the natural order
of things if ya know what I mean.

MOLE:Well I do and I don't Ratty but I wanted an adventure and
this sure seems like one hell of an adventure.

OTTER:(ENTERS) Hello Ratty, welcome back Mole. I bumped into the
horse who told me you and Toad were on your way. We
all certainly missed you, didn't we Ratty? I was
saying to Mr. Otter just this morning, "I hope Mole
and Toad get back soon, it being Labor Day and all." I
said "Mr. Otter, if those sweet boys don't get back
soon we have to send out a search party." And do you
know what Mr. Otter said? Of course you don't. He
said, the sweet darling, "well, if there has to be a
search party then you must go my dear, no matter how
long it takes to find them, you must go." Isn't that
the sweetest thing? Yes it is. But here you are and
not a moment too soon.

(HOT AIR BALLOON W/BASKET DESCENDS)

TOAD:(ENTERS SHOUTING FOLLOWED BY OTHERS) It's coming. It's
coming. Here it comes. Look up.

OTTER:Is that a balloon?

RAT:A balloon. How wonderful. How exciting.

OTTER:Are you all going somewhere?

RAT:Going south.

MOLE:It's an adventure. Wanna come?

OTTER:Thank you so much for asking Mole but I couldn't leave Mr. Otter and I have so much to do and someone will have to keep an eye on Toad Hall and all your sweet little houses and who is that someone I ask myself and I answer myself who do you think it is dear Mrs. Otter?

TOAD:Get in everybody. I'm in charge. I can drive anything.

MOLE:Oh, Toady. Are ya sure?

TOAD:Sure is my middle name. Goodbye Mrs. Otter.

ALL:Goodbye. Goodbye. We'll see you in the Spring.

RAT:OFF TO THE SOUTH - THE FRENCH RIVIERA

MOLE:FOUR LEGGED ANIMALS - LOOK MA - I'M FLYING!

WIDOW:I GOTTA BE BUYING - A TOWEL AND A BATHING SUIT WITH RUFFLES AND POLKA DOTS

MOLE:That oughta look cute!

MOLE/RAT:WHO WOULD'A THOUGHT WE'D BE TRAVELLING TOGETHER?

ALL:WHAT AN ADVENTURE! WHAT AN ADVENTURE!

TOAD/WID:AIN'T WE OPTIMISTIC! BRAVE AND UNSINKABLE!

BADGER:DOES ANYONE THINK THIS TRIP IS UNTHINKABLE?

RAT:OFF TA THE SOUTH - THE FRENCH RIVIERA

ALL:OFF TO THE SUN - ONE FOR ALL - ALL FOR ONE

MOLE:ISN'T LIFE WONDERFUL? ISN'T LIFE FUNNY?

ALL:WHAT AN ADVENTURE! WHAT AN ADVENTURE!

TOAD:PARLEZ-VOUS FRANCAIS? I GOT THE FRENCH MONEY!

ALL:WHAT AN ADVENTURE! WHAT AN ADVENTURE!

RAT:WHO WOULD'A THOUGHT WE'D GET WANDERING-ITIS?

ADD MOLE:ANTS IN OUR PANTS - GET THE ITCH - GET SAINT VITUS

ADD TOAD:GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD - GOT NO TIME TO SPARE

WIDOW:WHAT A GAME!

BADGER:WHAT A DAME!

WIDOW:WHAT A GUY!

ALL:WHAT A PAIR!

ALL:OFF TO THE SOUTH - THE FRENCH RIVIERA
WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT WE WOULDN'T BE NERVOUS?
TOAD:I THINK WE DESERVE US A TWENTY ONE GUN SALUTE!
WIDOW:I FORGOT MY PARASOL
BADGER:I FORGOT MY PARACHUTE!

ALL:WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT WE'D BE TRAVELLING TOGETHER?
WHAT AN ADVENTURE! WHAT AN ADVENTURE!
AIN'T WE OPTIMISTIC! BRAVE AND UNSINKABLE!
BADGER:DOES ANYONE KNOW IF FRENCH WATER IS DRINKABLE?

ALL:OFF TO THE SOUTH - THE FRENCH RIVIERA
OFF TO THE SUN - ONE FOR ALL - ALL FOR ONE!

OTTER:Well, wait till I tell Mr. Otter about this. (EXIT)

BALLOON ASCENDS/END OF ACT ONE

SYNOPSIS:ALL THE ACTION TAKES PLACE IN ONE YEAR BETWEEN SPRING 1919 AND SPRING 1920.

IN ACT ONE THE MISCHIEVOUS, THIEVING WEASELS, STOATS, SQUIRRELS AND FOXES WHO LIVE IN THE WILD WOOD ARE KEEPING THEIR EYES OPEN AS THE BIRDS FLY HOME, ANIMALS WAKE UP AND YOUNG MOLE, HIS FIRST SPRING OUT OF THE MOLE ORPHANAGE, MEETS HIS NEIGHBOR RAT WHO TAKES HIM UNDER HIS PAW, TEACHES HIM TO ROW, INTRODUCES HIM TO MRS. OTTER AND TO TOAD OF TOAD HALL.

TOAD CONVINCES RAT AND MOLE TO SET OUT ON AN ADVENTURE WITH A HORSE AND WAGON. THEY ARE SIDESWIPED BY AN AUTOMOBILE ONE OF THE FIRST OF IT'S KIND IN THE LITTLE TOWN OF WILLOW, (UNDOUBTEDLY DRIVEN BY A FOX.)

TOAD FALLS INSTANTLY UNDER THE SPELL OF THIS NOISY VEHICLE AND RUNS OFF TO BUY ONE OF HIS OWN.

MEANWHILE, RESTLESS YOUNG MOLE WANDERS OFF TO VISIT BADGER AGAINST THE ADVICE OF RAT WHO WARNS HIM OF THE DANGERS IN THE WILD WOOD. MOLE GETS LOST IN A FREAK SNOWSTORM. RAT WORRIES AND GOES AFTER HIM. BADGER GIVES THEM SHELTER. THE LONELY WIDOW MINK LIVES NEXT DOOR TO BADGER AND HAS AN EYE FOR HIM. SHE SEES HER OPPORTUNITY AND PERSONALLY DELIVERS A POT OF HOT SOUP JUST IN TIME TO NOTICE MOLE HAS A BAD COLD. RAT LEAVES MOLE IN THE CAPABLE HANDS OF THE WIDOW MINK AND BADGER. BADGER AND MOLE DISCOVER THEY HAVE A LOT IN COMMON BOTH BEING BURROWING ANIMALS AND THE WIDOW MINK COOKS SEDUCTIVELY.

MEANWHILE MOLE GETS WELL, HEADS FOR HOME, BUMPS INTO TOAD IN A NEW RED CAR WHO INVITES HIM FOR A RIDE. MOLE, STILL GAME FOR ADVENTURE JOINS TOAD AND DISCOVERS THE CAR IS STOLEN AND HE AND TOAD ARE STOPPED BY A POLICE HORSE WHO TAKES THEM TO A JUDGE HORSE WHO SENTENCES THEM TO A GREAT MANY YEARS IN JAIL.

MEANWHILE, RAT GROWS INCREASINGLY UNHAPPY AT HAVING LOST HIS NEW FRIEND MOLE, HIS OLD FRIEND TOAD AND THE COMING OF FALL WHICH MEANS GETTING READY FOR WINTER AGAIN. MRS. OTTER TRIES TO SOOTHE HIM BY REMINDING HIM OF THE NATURAL ORDER OF THINGS BUT RAT HAS BEGUN TO QUESTION THE NATURAL ORDER.

MEANWHILE THE DAUGHTER OF THE JAILER HORSE, FEELING PITY FOR THE VERY UNHAPPY JAILBIRDS TOAD AND MOLE PLOTS TO HELP THEM ESCAPE DISGUISED AS HER TWIN POSSUM AUNTS WHO ARE WASHERWOMEN. MOLE AND TOAD ESCAPE AND STEAL A TRAIN, ARE CHASED BY THE POLICE HORSE, JUMP OFF THE TRAIN, MEET UP WITH THE ORIGINAL HORSE WHO PULLED THE WAGON WHO SHOWS THEM THE WAY HOME.

MEANWHILE, THE BIRDS ARE GETTING READY TO FLY AWAY AGAIN AND RAT MEETS A SAILOR RAT WHO DESCRIBES THE EXOTIC LIFE OF A SAILOR IN SUCH A WAY THAT RAT GROWS MORE AND MORE RESTLESS.

MOLE AND TOAD AND THE HORSE AND MRS. OTTER AND THE WIDOW MINK AND BADGER AND RAT ALL MEET IN THE WILD WOOD AND RAT CONVINCES MOLE AND TOAD AND BADGER AND THE WIDOW TO RUN AWAY WITH HIM TO THE FRENCH RIVIERA AND FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE A MIGRATING ANIMAL AT LEAST ONCE. THEY GO OFF IN A BALLOON AND BASKET LEAVING ALL THEIR HOMES IN THE CARE OF WELL MEANING MRS. OTTER AND VULNERABLE TO THE WEASELS, THE SQUIRRELS, THE STOATS AND THE FOXES.

IN ACT TWO, WE DISCOVER OUR FURRY FRIENDS IN BATHING SUITS AND SUNGLASSES ON THE BEACH OF THE FRENCH RIVIERA NOT ALL HAPPY WITH THE RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENT. THEY MISS THEIR OLD LIVES AND THEIR COMFORTABLE HOMES AND THEY EACH COMPLAIN ABOUT THE TOO LONG VACATION AND CONCLUDE "THEY WANNA GO HOME."

MEANWHILE, ENOUGH TIME HAS PASSED FOR THE BIRDS TO BE PLANNING THEIR RETURN TRIP AND THE ANIMALS HAPPILY MAKE AIRLINE RESERVATIONS AND FLY QUICKLY BACK TO THE LITTLE TOWN OF WILLOW WHERE, MET BY MRS. OTTER, THEY LEARN THAT THE WEASELS AND THE STOATS HAVE STOLEN TOAD HALL OUT FROM UNDER HER CARE AND ARE IN POSSESSION OF ALL OF TOAD'S POSSESSIONS. MOLE, WHO HAS MATURED GREATLY IN THIS YEAR OUT OF THE ORPHANAGE, INVENTS A PLAN TO WAGE WAR ON THE STOATS AND WEASELS AND GET TOAD HALL BACK. THEY ARE SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR BATTLE AND THE CELEBRATION OF RECLAIMING TOAD HALL COINCIDES WITH THE WEDDING OF THE WIDOW MINK AND BADGER AND THE ADOPTION, BY THOSE TWO NEWLYWEDS, OF MOLE AS THEIR PERMANENT ONLY SON. RAT WANTS NOTHING MORE FOR HIMSELF THEN TO LIVE OUT HIS LIFE QUIETLY AT HOME AND TO HAVE MOLE CALL HIM UNCLE RAT AND TOAD, HAVING DISCOVERED THAT ALL MODES OF TRAVEL ARE WHAT MAKE HIM HAPPIEST DECIDES TO BE THE FIRST TOAD ASTRONAUT AND TAKE A ROCKET TO THE MOON.

CHARACTERS:

THE TWO BIRDS ARE YOUNG, DO NOT LOOK ALIKE BUT THEY ARE GOOD FRIENDS WITH SIMILAR TASTES.

MRS. OTTER IS A SIXTY YEAR OLD MARRIED WOMAN, A CHATTERING GOSSIP WHO TELLS EVERYBODY EVERYTHING AND RUSHES OFF TO GATHER THE NEXT EDIBLE MORSELS OF FOOD OR GOSSIP. SHE IS THE SELF APPOINTED CARETAKER OF THE COMMUNITY, A LITTLE LONELY BUT ALWAYS BUSY.

MOLE, NINETEEN, UNSOPHISTICATED, LIVELY, INQUISITIVE, WANTS TO DO NEW THINGS, HE IS A GOOD AND RESPONSIBLE FRIEND AND IS WILLING TO BE LED BY RAT AND BADGER AND TOAD AND ANYBODY WHO SEEMS TO KNOW THE WORLD. EVENTUALLY HE ASSERTS HIMSELF AND HELPS TO RETRIEVE TOAD HALL FROM IT'S KIDNAPPERS.

RAT, ALMOST FORTY, LOVES THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE RIVER AND IS NOT INTERESTED IN TRAVEL. HE MAKES UP SONGS AND DEVELOPS A MENTOR ATTACHMENT TO MOLE. THE BEGINNING OF THE INEVITABLE WINTER MIGRATION OF HIS NEIGHBORS AND THE MEETING WITH A NOMADIC SAILOR RAT SETS RAT AT A CROSSROAD. IS HE MISSING OUT ON THE PLEASURES OF AN ACTIVE ADVENTUROUS EXISTENCE OR WILL HE KEEP TO THE CONVENTIONAL LIFE CYCLE OF HIS BREED?

TOAD IS IN HIS THIRTIES. HE HAS ALWAYS HAD MONEY AND IS IRRESPONSIBLE, SELF INDULGENT AND VAIN WITH A VERY SHORT ATTENTION SPAN. BUT HE IS ALSO FAITHFUL TO HIS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS, AND OBVIOUSLY VULNERABLE ENOUGH SO THAT FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS RETURN HIS AFFECTIONS. HE IS A TYPICAL LITERARY LEGENDARY COUNTRY SQUIRE WHO WILL GROW TO BE LOVED BY ALL AFTER HE HAS SOWN HIS WILD OATS.

BADGER IS IN HIS LATE FORTIES OR EARLY FIFTIES. A CONFIRMED BACHELOR, SHY, PRIVATE, CONVENTIONAL, HE RESORTS TO HOMILIES AND PLATITUDES TO REPLACE ACTUAL CONVERSATION. HIS NEIGHBOR, THE WIDOW MINK, IS HORRIFYING AND EXHILARATING TO HIM. HE IS FRIGHTENED AND ATTRACTED BY HER DIRECTNESS AND SEXUALITY.

THE WIDOW MINK IS A WEALTHY, SELF CONFIDENT FORTY FIVE YEAR OLD,

USED TO HAVING HER OWN WAY WITH MEN. SHE IS SENSUOUS
AND LONELY BUT PRACTICAL ABOUT WHAT HER OPTIONS MAY
BE. SHE LIKES OLDER MEN AND SHE THINKS SHE COULD BE
HAPPY WITH BADGER. SHE'S NOT ABOUT TO SACRIFICE HER
INDEPENDENCE BUT SHE IS WILLING TO SHARE.

THE HORSE WHO PULLS THE WAGON IS MIDDLE AGED, SHE KNOWS HER OWN WORTH AND IS DETERMINED TO STOP BEING DEALT WITH AS AN OBJECT BY OTHER ANIMALS.

THE POLICE OFFICER HORSE LOOKS JUST LIKE THE OTHER HORSE BUT SHE IS A FIGURE OF AUTHORITY IN HER BLUE UNIFORM JACKET AND CAP FULL OF GOLD BUTTONS AND BADGES.

JUDGE HORSE, IN FULL JUDGE REGALIA, IS CRANKY, IMPATIENT, A FIRM BELIEVER IN THE LETTER OF THE LAW AND SHE HAS AN ULCER.

JILL IS A YOUNG HORSE, DIRECT, SOFT HEARTED AND PRACTICAL.

THE TWINS POSSUMS LOOK NOTHING LIKE EACH OTHER, ARE IN THEIR THIRTIES, BUSINESSLIKE WASHERWOMEN WHO ONLY TOLERATE THE MALE ANIMAL.

THE SAILOR RAT , ABOUT FORTY, LIKES HAVING FRIENDS IN EVERY PORT AND IS FAITHFUL IN HIS FASHION BUT AVOIDS THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DAILY INTERACTIONS IN A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP. HE APPEARS EXOTIC IN EVERY GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT BECAUSE HE BELONGS TO NONE OF THEM.

ALTOGETHER A POSSIBLE CAST OF EIGHT. IT IS LIKELY THAT THE BIRDS AND THE TWIN POSSUMS ARE PLAYED BY THE SAME TWO ACTORS. THAT ALL THE HORSES AND THE WIDOW MINK ARE ONE ACTOR. THAT ONE ACTOR PLAYS BADGER AND THE SAILOR. AND THAT MOLE, RAT, TOAD AND MRS. OTTER ARE PLAYED BY INDIVIDUAL ACTORS WHO MAY DOUBLE AS STOATS OR WEASELS WHEN POSSIBLE.

OMITTED HORSE SONG:

A HORSE IS A HORSE IS A HORSE
A HORSE HAS NO CHOICE - NO RECOURSE
YOU SAY GO AND I GO - YOU SAY SLOW - I GO SLOW
I STOP WHEN YOU SAY WHOA - OF COURSE
I'M A HORSE
JUST A HORSE

MOLE:You're a very nice horse.

HORSE:A HORSE WORKS LIKE A HORSE - A WORKHORSE
IF A HORSE ISN'T FAST YOU USE FORCE
SPURS AND WHIPS TO PROPEL ME - DON'T ASK ME - JUST TELL ME
WHEN I'M OLD - YOU FAREWELL ME
REPLACE ME AND SELL ME FOR GLOOOO - YES YOU D0000

MOLE:That's so sad.

HORSE: THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES ARE SPENT PULLING YOUR
CARTS
WHEN WE THINK THAT YOU LOVE US YOU BREAK ALL OUR HEARTS
YOU SELL OFF OUR PARTS FOR DOG STOOOO - YES YOU DOOOO
NO REMORSE
FOR A HORSE
I'M A HORSE

OMITTED JUDGE HORSE SONG:

JUDGE:AS A JUDGE I AM FAIR - AS A JUDGE I AM TOUGH
I HAVE VERY LITTLE PATIENCE WITH THIS CLEM-EN-CY STUFF
I MAKE MY DECISIONS AT ONCE OFF THE CUFF
I'VE A VERY BIG CASE LOAD - E-NOUGH IS E-NOUGH!

MOLE:I'm sure you're a good judge, Judge. Isn't she Toad?

JUDGE:THE COURT AND THE BENCH IS MY NA-TU-RAL ABODE
WHEN A CAR GOES TOO FAST ON A FINE PUB-LIC ROAD
A LESSON MUST BE LEARNED AND A MORAL MUST BE SHOWED
I GO BY THE BOOK OF THE CRI-MIN-AL CODE!

MOLE:I am so very morally sure we've learned our lesson. If
Toad wasn't struck dumb I'm sure he'd say so.

JUDGE:I'VE A VERY BIG CASE LOAD - A VERY BIG LOAD
AND FROM WHERE I SIT I DO NOT LIKE THIS TOAD
I HAVEN'T HAD LUNCH AND I HAVE TO ADMIT
I SIMPLY CAN'T STOMACH THIS MOLE OR THIS TOAD!
So, the question is, what's the stiffest penalty we can impose
for each of these offenses? Without, of course,
giving the prisoner the benefit of any doubt, because
undoubtedly there isn't any.

ONE MONTH IN PRISON IS TOO COM-MON-PLACE
AND A YEAR'S NOT ENOUGH FOR THESE CRIM-IN-AL FACES
I'D LIKE TO GIVE "LIFE" BUT LET'S CUT TO THE CHASE
TWENTY YEARS MISTER TOAD! TWENTY YEARS MISTER MOLE!

TWENTY YEARS FOR YOU BOTH! NEXT CASE! NEXT CASE! NEXT CASE!
Jailor Horse! Take them away!

CHARACTERS:

THE TWO BIRDS are young, lively, lyrical, do not look alike.

MRS. OTTER, sixty, chattering gossip, self appointed caretaker, well meaning, lonely but always busy.

MOLE, nineteen, unsophisticated, optimistic, inquisitive, willing to be led, asserts himself to retrieve Toad Hall.

RAT, almost forty, frustrated poet at a crossroad - is he missing adventure? Is there no place like home? Becomes a mentor to Mole.

TOAD thirties. rich, irresponsible, vain but vulnerable, faithful to friends, typical literary country squire loved by all.

BADGER, late forties/early fifties. Confirmed bachelor, private, conventional, resorts to homilies. Mesmerized by the Widow Mink.

THE WIDOW MINK, forty five, wealthy, sexy, self confident, lonely but practical. Won't sacrifice independence but willing to share.

THE HORSE, POLICE OFFICER HORSE, JUDGE HORSE and JILL, THE JAILOR HORSE'S DAUGHTER played by the same actor.

THE TWINS POSSUMS, thirties, don't look alike, business women, no tolerance for male animals, played by actors who play birds.

THE SAILOR RAT, about forty, a romantic/exotic/seductive figure, friends in every port, belongs nowhere.

POSSIBLE CAST OF EIGHT OR TEN DEPENDING ON DOUBLE CASTING OF WIDOW/HORSES, BADGER/SAILOR RAT.

EVERYBODY DOUBLES AS STOATS, WEASELS, FOXES.

SYNOPSIS:ALL THE ACTION TAKES PLACE IN ONE YEAR BETWEEN SPRING 1919 AND SPRING 1920.

ACT ONE: MISCHIEVOUS, THIEVING WEASELS, STOATS, SQUIRRELS AND FOXES WHO LIVE IN THE WILD WOOD WATCH THE BIRDS FLY HOME. THE ANIMALS WAKE UP AND YOUNG MOLE (HIS FIRST SPRING OUT OF THE MOLE ORPHANAGE) MEETS HIS NEIGHBOR RAT WHO TAKES HIM UNDER HIS PAW, TEACHES HIM TO ROW, INTRODUCES HIM TO MRS. OTTER AND TO TOAD OF TOAD HALL. TOAD CONVINCES RAT AND MOLE TO SET OUT ON AN ADVENTURE WITH A HORSE AND WAGON. THEY ARE SIDESWIPED BY A CAR AND TOAD FALLS UNDER THE SPELL OF THIS NEW NOISY VEHICLE AND RUNS OFF TO BUY ONE OF HIS OWN.

RESTLESS YOUNG MOLE WANDERS OFF TO VISIT BADGER EVEN THOUGH RAT WARNS OF WILD WOOD DANGERS. MOLE GETS LOST IN A FREAK SNOWSTORM. RAT WORRIES AND GOES AFTER HIM. BADGER GIVES THEM SHELTER. THE LONELY WIDOW MINK LIVES NEXT DOOR TO BADGER (SHE HAS AN EYE FOR HIM) AND DELIVERS A POT OF SOUP. SHE NOTICES MOLE HAS A COLD. RAT LEAVES MOLE WITH BADGER. BADGER AND MOLE FIND THEY HAVE A LOT IN COMMON BOTH BEING BURROWING ANIMALS AND THE WIDOW MINK COOKS SEDUCTIVELY. MOLE GETS WELL, HEADS FOR HOME, BUMPS INTO TOAD IN A NEW RED CAR. MOLE, STILL GAME FOR ADVENTURE JOINS TOAD, DISCOVERS THE CAR IS STOLEN. A POLICE HORSE TAKES THEM TO A JUDGE HORSE WHO SENTENCES THEM TO A LOT OF YEARS IN JAIL. RAT GROWS INCREASINGLY UNHAPPY. HE LOST HIS NEW FRIEND MOLE, HIS OLD FRIEND TOAD AND FALL IS COMING WHICH MEANS GETTING READY FOR WINTER AGAIN. MRS. OTTER TRIES TO SOOTHE HIM BY REMINDING HIM OF THE NATURAL ORDER OF THINGS BUT RAT HAS BEGUN TO QUESTION THE NATURAL ORDER.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE JAILER HORSE, FEELS PITY FOR THE UNHAPPY JAIL BIRDS (TOAD AND MOLE) AND PLOTS TO HELP THEM ESCAPE DISGUISED AS HER TWIN POSSUM WASHERWOMEN AUNTS.THE BOYS ESCAPE, STEAL A TRAIN, GET CHASED BY THE POLICE HORSE, JUMP OFF, MEET THE ORIGINAL HORSE WHO PULLED THE WAGON WHO SHOWS THEM THE WAY HOME.

THE BIRDS PREPARE TO FLY AWAY AGAIN AND RAT MEETS A SAILOR RAT WHO DESCRIBES THE EXOTIC LIFE OF THE SEA.RAT GROWS MORE RESTLESS. MOLE,TOAD,THE WIDOW MINK,BADGER AND RAT ALL MEET IN THE WILD WOOD AND RAT CONVINCES THEM TO RUN AWAY WITH HIM TO THE FRENCH RIVIERA TO FIND OUT HOW TO BE A MIGRATING ANIMAL AT LEAST ONCE. THEY GO OFF IN A BALLOON LEAVING THEIR HOMES IN THE CARE OF MRS. OTTER AND VULNERABLE TO THE WEASELS, SQUIRRELS, STOATS AND FOXES.

ACT TWO: OUR FURRY FRIENDS IN BATHING SUITS AND SUNGLASSES ON THE RIVIERA BEACH AREN'T ALL HAPPY WITH THE EXPERIMENTS RESULTS. MISSING THEIR OLD LIVES AND COMFORTABLE HOMES, THEY EACH

COMPLAIN ABOUT THE TOO LONG VACATION. ENOUGH TIME HAS PASSED FOR THE BIRDS TO PLAN THEIR RETURN TRIP. THE ANIMALS MAKE AIRLINE RESERVATIONS AND FLY HOME WHERE, MET BY MRS. OTTER, THEY LEARN THAT TOAD HALL IS STOLEN BY THE WEASELS, ETC. MOLE (MATURED IN THIS YEAR OUT OF THE ORPHANAGE) PLANS TO WAGE WAR TO GET TOAD HALL BACK. THEY WIN THE BATTLE. THE CELEBRATION COINCIDES WITH THE WEDDING OF THE WIDOW AND BADGER AND THE ADOPTION OF MOLE AS THEIR ONLY SON. RAT DECIDES TO LIVE HIS LIFE QUIETLY AT HOME AND TO BE MOLE'S UNCLE RAT, AND TOAD DISCOVERS THAT MODES OF TRAVEL ARE WHAT MAKE HIM HAPPY AND TAKES A ROCKET TO THE MOON AS THE FIRST TOAD ASTRONAUT.

SYNOPSIS:

ACT ONE: Action takes place between Spring 1919 and Spring 1920. Mischievous, thieving weasels, stoats, squirrels and foxes, who live in the wild wood, watch the birds fly home. The animals wake up on the riverbank. Young Mole, fresh from the orphanage, meets Rat who takes him under his paw and introduces him to Mrs. Otter and Toad of Toad Hall. Toad convinces Rat and Mole to have an adventure in a horse and wagon. They are side-swiped by a car and Toad falls under the spell of this new noisy vehicle and runs off to buy one of his own. Restless young Mole goes to visit Badger in the wild wood and gets lost in a freak snowstorm. Rat goes after him. Badger gives them shelter. The lonely Widow Mink next door comes by with soup and notices Mole has a cold and he stays the night. Badger and Mole discover they have a lot in common, both being burrowing animals. The widow cooks seductively till Mole gets well. He heads for home and bumps into Toad in a new red car. Mole, still game for adventure joins Toad but discovers the car is stolen. Police Horse takes them to Judge Horse who sentences them to many years in jail. Rat grows increasingly unhappy. He misses Mole and Toad and winter is coming again. Mrs. Otter reminds him hibernation is their natural order but Rat questions the natural order. Jill, the jailer's daughter helps Toad and Mole escape disguised as her twin Possum Washerwomen aunts. Meanwhile, the Birds prepare to migrate and Rat meets Sailor Rat who describes the exotic life of the sea. Mole and Toad find their way home and Rat convinces them and Badger and the Widow to run away to the French Riviera to find out how it feels to be a migrating animal. They go off in a balloon leaving their homes in the care of Mrs. Otter and vulnerable to the Stoats and the Weasels. ACT TWO: Our furry friends in bathing suits and sunglasses on the Riviera beach find they aren't at all happy with the experiment. They miss their homes and they hate the beach but luckily, the Birds fly by and tell them it's time to go. Once back, Mrs. Otter tells them Toad Hall was captured by the Weasels, etc. Mole plans a war to get Toad Hall back. They win. The celebration coincides with the wedding of the Widow Mink and Badger. They adopt Mole and Ratty officially becomes Uncle Rat. Toad discovers that new vehicles make him happy and takes a rocket to the moon becoming the first Toad Astronaut.

CHARACTERS:

THE TWO BIRDS/young, lively, do not look alike.

MRS. OTTER/(60) well meaning gossip, lonely but always busy.

MOLE/(19) unsophisticated but optimistic follower, grows up.
RAT/(40ish) frustrated poet at a crossroad, mentor to Mole
TOAD/(30s) rich, irresponsible, vain but vulnerable, loved by all.
BADGER/(40s) confirmed bachelor, shy and mesmerized by Widow
Mink
WIDOW MINK/(40s) wealthy, sexy, self confident but lonely.
HORSES/middle aged, possibly doubled by Widow
TWIN POSSUMS/young, do not look alike, doubled by Birds
SAILOR RAT/(40s) romantic, seductive, elusive.
STOATS, WEASELS, SQUIRRELS AND FOXES/ everyone doubles.