

The Christmas Goose

Written by Joshua Powlison

Abigale (eldest orphan)
Joel (elder orphan)
Isabel (middle orphan)
Constance (middle orphan)
Charity (young orphan)
Lucas (young orphan)
Fortune (young orphan)
Jack

Scene 1 (City Streets)

Mid-1800s in London; think "A Christmas Carol"

LC: Lights Up

Abigale runs out from SR to CS

Abigale: (calling) Hullo? Joel? Isabel? Constance? Charity? Lucas? Fortune?

Joel, Isabel, and Constance come in from SL

Joel: (to Isabel) Where did the little scamps wander off to this time...

Isabel: Joel, don't talk such way! Christmas is just around the corner!

Constance: Yes Isabel, but so is dinner. I hope they return soon.

Charity
and Lucas: (offstage) We're coming! (run in from SR)

Constance: What... where did you two come from?!

Charity: We just followed the roof paths back around!

Lucas: Why did you lose us?

Isabel: It wasn't on purpose.

Abigale: (to Lucas and Charity) Did you find anything?

Charity: There was a little shop selling apples for a brass farthing apiece. They must be overstocked.

Constance: Yes, we saw that too.

Joel: And we didn't even have to get who knows how many feet off the ground.

Isabel: Don't be sour!

Constance: (to Lucas and Charity) Did you find anything else?

Lucas: Here's something you wouldn't have seen from ground level. (hands Abigale some coins)

Abigale: Beautiful! (drops the coins in a small pouch) And I have enough more to cover us for tonight!

Isabel: Where's Fortune?

Fortune: I'm over here! (runs out from SR)

Constance: What took you so long, Fortune?

Fortune: Apologies, ma'am, I was over gawking at old man Jack's fat goose. He left the window open.

Charity: A goose?! Wow... a goose for Christmas...

Fortune: He was harvesting its eggs.

Lucas: I wonder if old man Jack would be willing to sell his goose...

Abigale: Doubtful, but we'll be okay.

Joel: (snarky) Why don't you go ask him?

Charity: Good idea! (runs off SL)

Isabel: No, wait! Charity! Jack's dangerous! (turns to Joel) Joel!

Joel shrugs his shoulders

Isabel: Charity! (runs off SL. Abigale follows)

Bring out door SL to Stage Left, behind Lucas and Joel.

Lucas, Fortune, Constance, and Joel step upstage.

Fortune: Would old man Jack kill her?

Joel: No, you would have to be absolutely heartless to kill Charity.

Constance: You're right, and I think Jack has a heart, it's just... a dull one.

Lucas: His heart is boring?

LC: Front stage lights down

Charity comes out SR, walks up to door and knocks. Isabel comes out SR, Abigale behind, hoping to stop Charity. Jack comes from SL to the door.

Isabel: Charity, what are you doing?

Abigale: Isabel, you're overreacting. Jack can't be that bad.

Jack opens the door.

Jack: (gruff) What do you want?

Charity: Hello, sir, I was wondering if you would be willing to sell your goose.

Jack: Oh, were you? And how much do you think a goose like mine is worth?

Charity: I don't know. Is it very fat?

Jack: It doesn't need to be.

Isabel: I'm sorry sir, we didn't mean to bother you.

Jack: It's quite all right. But let me repeat my question. How much do you think the goose is worth?

Charity: (ponders. Takes the pouch from Abigale, hands it to Jack) This much?

Jack: (looks into the pouch. Shouts) No! (throws the bag out into the street past Charity and Abigale, scatters coins. Enters the door and slams it behind him.) And don't you soil my doorsteps with your miserable selves again!

Jack exits SL. Pause. Charity starts to bawl.

LC: Front stage lights up

Joel, Constance, Fortune, and Lucas enter SR.

Lucas: What's wrong, Charity?

Charity can't speak.

Joel: (ashamed) I'll go get dinner.

Isabel: You can start by picking up the coins. (Works to comfort Charity.)

Joel: Charity... I'm sorry.

Charity: (stops crying) It's okay, Joel. (pause. starts bawling again)

Abigale: A miserable old man Jack is.

Lucas: What happened? I didn't hear any of it... except for the "miserable selves" part.

Isabel: You didn't need to hear any more.

Fortune: Will he give us the goose?

Abigale: But by a miracle, no.

Fortune: Or... (thinking) If we steal it.

Isabel: Fortune! Don't talk such ways! Stealing's wrong!

Lucas: But he made Charity cry! I say he has it coming.

Isabel: I'll have no part in it!

Abigale: Neither will I. You know this can only end badly.

Joel: Well, I'm with Lucas and Fortune.

Constance: Me too!

Charity: Me too!

Abigale: (to Isabel) Come on, Isabel, let's go buy some apples.

Isabel and Abigale, unimpressed, exit SR

Fortune: Here's what we'll do...

LC: Light Out

Move the door SR, facing SR. Place a table behind CS, a chair SR of the table, and on SL place a cage with a blanket over it, hay inside, and a golden egg in the hay (important Scene 3). Place a two-step stepstool with a gray cloth over it behind the table, SL of it a bit; this is a "window" for Fortune to come through.

Scene 2 (Jack's House)

LC: Lights Up. Nighttime

Jack is asleep in the chair. Fortune, Joel, Constance, and Lucas enter SR and go up to the door.

Fortune: Wait for me, I'll go through the window and come around.

Charity: All right.

Lucas: We'll have goose tomorrow!

Fortune goes to window; climbs up and gets into the house, as the following dialogue goes on.

Constance: You sure that's not today now?

Lucas: Whichever day it is, I'm ready. Let's just hope that Santa doesn't come while she's in there.

Charity: Are you kidding? Jack's not good enough for coal.

They all snicker.

Fortune goes to the door and unlocks it. Opens it.

Joel: Good job.

Fortune: Thanks.

Charity: It's odd to have a goose so near where one sleeps.

They walk over to the cage. Fortune lifts up a corner of the blanket...

FX: Goose honking

..quickly drops it. Jack wakes slightly, falls back asleep. Joel and Lucas scowl at Fortune.

Fortune: It's still in there.

Joel: (grabs the cage) Okay, let's get out of here.

They all walk towards the door. Jack sniffles, wakes up slightly.

Jack: What... what's happening?

Lucas: We're stealing your goose.

Constance: No, we're not!

Fortune: Go back to sleep, sir. (singing) Rock-a-bye-baby on the tree top...

Jack is snoring in no time. They all exit the house. They run off SR

FX: Goose honking wildly

Jack wakes up.

Jack: Wha... what? (looks over) My goose! It's gone! Gaaaah!

LC: Lights Out

Take the door, table, chair, and stepstool offstage

Scene 3 (City Streets)

LC: Lights Up.

Joel and Constance are CS, sitting on the Goose cage without the blanket. Isabel comes out SL, a little groggy with the blanket from the goose's cage wrapped around herself.

Isabel: Hullo, Joel and Constance, you look awfully chipper.

Joel: You bet, Izzy.

Constance: We're looking forward to Christmas dinner!

Isabel: Dinner? I didn't sleep in that long, did I?

Constance: Oh, no. But it'll take a while to prepare.

Isabel: (shocked) You didn't! You little...

Joel: Don't talk such way, Isabel! It's Christmas!

Abigale enters SL

Isabel: It's the season of giving, not of taking! (feeling the blanket around her shoulders) Where did you get this blanket?

Constance: From the cage that the goose was in.

Joel gets off the cage, begins to examine it

Abigale: What! You stole the...

Joel: If we clean it out, maybe we could use it to store some of our food. Aren't I a city man, Abigale? (opens the cage)

Abigale: Despicable, yes.

Joel: I was thinking economical. (takes a golden egg out of the cage) Oh, look, an egg. Constance, do you recall what the brown ones are?

Constance: Double yoke.

Joel: Ah, enough for an omelette!

Constance: (takes the egg from Joel) Joel... this isn't an ordinary egg.

Joel: Yes, because it came from a goose, not a chicken, Constance.

Isabel: It glitters!

Constance: It does! (bites it, pondering) Joel... I know it's crazy maybe, but I do believe this egg is made of...

Joel: (takes it and looks at it himself, bites it, shocked) No... (calls) Charity! Lucas! Fortune! Bring the goose in here right away!

Charity, Fortune, and Lucas bring in the goose, now cooked and on a platter, singing "We Wish You a Merry Christmas"

Joel: The goose laid golden eggs!

Charity, Fortune, and Lucas stop singing. Shocked.

Fortune: (happy, runs up) Let me see it!

Joel: No! Do you realize what this means?!

Lucas: Must have been a sick goose.

Joel: No!

Charity: We can buy ten more geese!

Joel: Yes, but no. Think about it!

Charity, Fortune, and Lucas stop. Their countenances fall.

Charity: Oh.

Lucas: Oh.

Fortune: Oh.

Charity: Ought we...

Abigale: Apologize?

Isabel: You bet.

Fortune: But he'll kill us!

Lucas: Yeah, his heart is boring!

Abigale: Do we have any other choice?

Constance: You don't know what he'll do to you!

Fortune: Ma'am... we can't let you go!

Isabel: Why don't I go ask him then? (grabs the cage and runs off SL)

Joel: Izzy!

Joel runs off after Isabel SL, Abigale follows, and Constance follows her. Charity, Fortune, and Lucas stay behind.

Bring out door SL to Stage Left, behind Charity and Lucas.
Charity, Fortune, and Lucas step upstage.

Fortune: You guys hungry?

Charity and Lucas shake their heads.

LC: Front stage lights down

Isabel runs out SR, goes to Jack's door and knocks. Jack comes over to the door. Joel runs out SR and goes over to Isabel. Abigale and Constance come in and go over.

Joel: Isabel, what are you doing?

Isabel: What should have been your first thought!

Jack opens the door, freaking out.

Jack: Have either of you seen my goose?! (sees Isabel holding the cage) Oh, thank goodness! (takes the cage, closes the door. Pause. Opens it back up and shouts) This cage doesn't have my goose in it!

Isabel: (furious) That's right, old man Jack, we stole your goose last night.

Jack: What?!

Abigale: If you need further proof... (holds the golden egg up to Jack)

Jack is stunned.

Jack: But... why? All I ever wanted to do was live at peace with my neighbors...

Isabel: Then explain why you screamed yesterday at Charity! You don't want to live at peace, you want to live alone! With your crotchety old self!

Jack: (furious) Where is the goose now?

LC: Front stage lights up

Charity, Fortune, and Lucas come up with the cooked goose. Jack sees it, freaks out.

Lucas: Did we come too soon?

Jack: What?! The goose that laid the golden eggs... is Christmas dinner?

Constance: Yes, would you tell us why you look like that? Just what were you doing with the eggs?

Fortune: Not much, judging from the inside of your house.

Jack: What are you all here for, then? To mock this "crotchety old man"?

Abigale: To apologize!

Charity: Apologize? He yelled at me!

Constance: (to Charity) Two wrongs don't make a right.

Jack: (shocked) You're here to apologize?

Abigale: Yes, and to return to you what is rightfully yours.

Abigale hands Jack the golden egg, then takes the cooked goose from Charity and Lucas and hands it to Jack.

Lucas: Hey!

Isabel: Jack... (takes the blanket from around her shoulders and hands it to Jack)
we are truly sorry.

Lucas: We promise never to steal again.

Joel, Charity, and Constance agree. Fortune pauses a bit, then agrees too.

Abigale: And we'll be taking our leave now.

Abigale curtsies, they all walk SR

Jack closes the door, then, fighting with himself, quickly re-opens the door.

Jack: Wait! (all stop) It's been years since I've had Christmas dinner with anybody... would you all like to join me? Even though, it was a goose that laid golden eggs... and it meant a lot to me... and... well...

Lucas: Would we?!

Lucas runs to the door. Jack stops him.

Jack: I'm Jack. (extends hand)

Lucas: (shakes Jack's hand) Lucas. (runs through the door, off SL)

Charity: I'm Charity.

Jack: Pleasure to meet you. (they shake hands)

Charity exits SL

Fortune: I'm Fortune. This was kind of my idea. I'm sorry, sir.

Jack: Thank you for your apology. I'm Jack. (they shake hands)

Lucas exits SL

Constance: I'm Constance.

Joel: I'm Joel, we saw you last night while you were sleeping.

Jack: Way too much information. I'm Jack.

Joel: Yes, good to meet you.

Constance: Indeed.

Jack: You too.

Joel exits SL

Jack: And who are you two young ladies?

Isabel: I'm Isabel.

Abigale: I'm Abigale.

Jack: Abigale? I believe that means a joyful father.

Abigale: I wouldn't know, sir. I never met my father.

Jack: Me neither. The goose was a bit of a family heirloom, but I don't think I've been honoring my late father's wishes with it. Are there many other children like you two and your friends?

Isabel: You haven't been out much sir, have you?

Jack: No.

Isabel: Yes, yes there are.

Jack: Maybe I'd best work to change that.

Abigale: (touched) Merry Christmas, Jack. (exits SL)

Isabel: (touched as well) Merry Christmas! (exits SL)

Jack: Yes, Merry Christmas. (walks SL)

LC: Lights Out
Curtain Call