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*Dramatic Publishing*



# THE JUST SO STORIES

by  
RUDYARD KIPLING

A Musical for Children of All Ages

Adapted for the Stage  
by  
JOSEPH ROBINETTE

Music and Lyrics  
by  
RONNA LYNN FRANK



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Book by  
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(THE JUST SO STORIES—The Musical)

ISBN 1-58342-103-3

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# **THE JUST SO STORIES**

**A Musical**

**For a cast of 8-21 (flexible)\*  
and two offstage adult voices – m and f**

## **CHARACTERS**

**(for a cast of 8, with all roles interchangeable except for Elsie)**

**ELSIE KIPLING**

**AGNES (ARTHUR)**

**FAITH (FRANK)**

**LIZZIE (LEWIS)**

**GIRARD (GEORGETTE)**

**TEDDY (TRUDY)**

**BERT (BARB)**

**PETER (PATRICE)**

**The cast may consist of children or teenagers (or youthful adults) or any combination thereof.**

**TIME: The early 1900s.\*\***

**PLACE: The living room of an upper-class Victorian home.**

**\* See Production Notes for a large cast**

**\*\* Period costuming optional (see Production Notes)**

## VOCAL SELECTIONS

"My Papa".....	Elsie and Company
"I'm Gonna Rest, for the Rest of My Life".....	Camel, Dog, Ox and Horse
"The Mighty Djinn Is Coming".....	Djinn and Company
"The Parsee"*.....	Parsee and Company
"Kangaroo-Dingo Chase"*....	Kangaroo, Dingo and Company
"It's a Sparkling Night".....	Tortoise and Hedgehog
"That's Him".....	Mother Jaguar and Jaguar
"My Josephine".....	Elsie and Company
"'Satiabie Questions"...	Ostrich, Giraffe, Baboon and Elephant
"Elephant's Child Journey"*.....	Elephant and Company
"New Sound in the Jungle".....	Snake and Elephant
"Voices from the Stories".....	Company
"Curtain Call-Reprise: New Sound in the Jungle" ...	Company

\* Vocalized musical scenes

# THE JUST SO STORIES

## (MUSIC #1: "OVERTURE")

SCENE: *The living room of an upper-class Victorian home. To the back, left and right, are doors—or openings—to a den and parlor, respectively, which may be partially visible. A door to the outside is at right, and a stairway leading to the second floor is at left. (NOTE: The stairway may be replaced with a door at left which leads to a bedroom.)*

AT RISE: *ELSIE KIPLING, a young girl, is calling to the upstairs area (or through the open door at left).*

ELSIE. Have a good rest, Aunt Georgie!

AUNT GEORGIE'S VOICE (*offstage*). Thank you, child!  
Wake me in an hour if I'm not up!

ELSIE. I will! (*She walks slowly away from the stairwell—or closes the door to the bedroom—and quietly moves to the center of the room, then calls loudly.*) All right—the coast is clear!

## (MUSIC #1a: "GAME MUSIC")

(*SEVEN CHILDREN—or early TEENAGERS—bound into the room with reckless abandon from the offstage den and parlor. They chatter animatedly as they pair up for games. PETER and AGNES play tag. LIZZIE and*

*BERT engage in hide-and-go-seek. GIRARD and TEDDY play an “odd-even” fingers game, and FAITH joins ELSIE in a hand-clapping game.)*

PETER (*tagging AGNES*). You’re it, Agnes!

AGNES. You missed me by a mile, Peter! (*She tries to tag him.*) Anyway, I got you back.

PETER. Did not.

AGNES. Did, too. Elsie, you saw me tag Peter.

ELSIE. Sorry, I wasn’t watching.

AGNES. Lizzie?

LIZZIE. I missed it, too. I’m playing hide-and-go-seek with Bert.

AGNES. Girard, you saw me tag him.

GIRARD. I’m playing odd-even with Teddy. (*He and TEDDY each quickly pump a closed fist three times, then “throw” two fingers each.*)

TEDDY. Even—I win again!

GIRARD. Not fair. Agnes distracted me.

AGNES. Bert!

BERT (*popping up from behind a chair*). Don’t ask me. I was hiding from— (*Realizing he has been seen by LIZZIE.*) —oh, no!

LIZZIE. Aha! Caught you. Now I get to hide.

FAITH. I know who tagged who!

*(ALL await the answer.)*

ELSIE. Well—who was it, Faith?

FAITH (*after a silence*). I’m not going to tell.

**(MUSIC #1b: “CHASE MUSIC”)**



*(Laughingly, ALL begin chasing FAITH about the room. They stop suddenly when a door chime is heard.)*

ELSIE. Shh!

POSTMAN'S VOICE *(offstage)*. Parcel here. Parcel for Miss Elsie Kipling, care of Lady Georgina Burn-Jones.

ELSIE. Quick. You've got to hide till he's gone.

TEDDY. He can't see us.

ELSIE. We don't know that for sure. Now, hurry.

**(MUSIC #1c: "HIDE MUSIC")**

*(ALL find hiding places—two or three behind furniture pieces, the others just inside the adjoining rooms.)*

POSTMAN'S VOICE. I say, is anyone here? I have a parcel for Miss—

*(ELSIE opens the door at right and speaks to the POSTMAN who remains unseen just offstage.)*

ELSIE. Hello.

POSTMAN'S VOICE. Good afternoon. And who might you be—Miss Kipling or Lady Burn-Jones?

ELSIE. I'm Elsie—Kipling. Aunt Georgie's upstairs *(in her room)* taking a nap.

POSTMAN'S VOICE. Can you write your name in cursive?

ELSIE *(proudly)*. Yes.

POSTMAN'S VOICE. Then you may sign for the parcel yourself. *(A male hand thrusts a tablet and pencil to ELSIE who signs.)* This should have been delivered yester-

day, but the regular postman is on vacation. (*ELSIE hands him the tablet and pencil.*) Nicely done. You have good penmanship. Perhaps you'll be a famous writer like your father someday. (*The hand gives a parcel to ELSIE.*)

ELSIE. Thank you, sir. Good day.

(*She closes the door, and ALL come out of their hiding places as ELSIE looks at the parcel.*)

It's from Papa.

(MUSIC #1d: "IT'S FROM PAPA MUSIC")

(*She begins to open it as the OTHERS crowd around.*)

LIZZIE. You never told us your father's a famous writer.

(MUSIC #2: "MY PAPA")

ELSIE (*singing*).

I DON'T LIKE TO BRAG, BUT I'M PROUD OF  
HIM ALL THE SAME.  
HE'S TERRIBLY CLEVER, AND EV'RYONE  
KNOWS HIS NAME.  
MY PAPA'S A WIZARD WITH WORDS,  
THOUGH SOMETIMES HE'S SIMPLY ABSURD!  
HE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW, MY PAPA  
HIP, HIP, HOORAY.

ALL (*speaking*). Hip, hip, hooray!

ELSIE.

**WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL, I SAT ON PAPA'S  
KNEE.  
HE WOULD MAKE UP STORIES JUST FOR US,  
YOU SEE.  
USING SILLY SOUNDING VOICES, HE ALWAYS  
MADE US LAUGH.  
'SPECIALLY WHEN HE TRIED AND TRIED TO  
TALK LIKE A GIRAFFE!**

ALL (*speaking*). But, giraffes don't talk!

ELSIE (*speaking*). Exactly!

(*Singing.*)

**WHEN PAPA TELLS A STORY YOU CAN  
PICTURE IT ON THE STAGE.  
HE MAKES THE CHARACTERS COME ALIVE.  
THEY JUMP RIGHT OFF EACH PAGE!**

ALL (*speaking*). Ooh!

ELSIE.

**HE'S A FIRST-RATE STORYTELLER. AND ONE  
MORE FACT REMAINS.  
THOUGH I DON'T LIKE TO BRAG.**

ALL.

**SHE DOESN'T LIKE TO BRAG!**

ELSIE

(and OTHERS).

**EV'RYONE KNOWS HIS NAME.  
(OOH.) (AHH.)**

**IT'S PAPA. MY PAPA.**

**(AHH.)**

**HE'S CLEVER AS CLEVER CAN BE.**

**(OOH.)**

**(OOH.)**

**(AHH.)**

**MY PAPA. MY PAPA.**

**(AH.)**

**(YOU ARE PROUD OF HIM, WE SEE!)**

**MY PAPA.**

**(PAPA. YOUR PAPA)**

**ALL.**

**HE'S CLEVER AS CLEVER CAN BE.**

**ELSIE.**

**MY PAPA. MY PAPA.**

**ELSIE**

**(and OTHERS).**

**HE MEANS EVERYTHING TO ME.**

**(OOH.)**

**(OOH.)**

**(AHH.)**

**TEDDY.** What's in the package. Elsie?

*(ELSIE pulls out a book and letter.)*

**LIZZIE.** It's a book.

**BERT.** *And* a letter.

**AGNES.** What does it say?

**PETER.** Don't be so nosy, Agnes. *(He stands close behind ELSIE and tries to look at the letter.)*

ELSIE (*reading*). “My dear Best Beloved—” (*To the OTHERS.*) That’s what he calls me—Best Beloved. (*Reading.*) “While Mum and Little John and I are away, I’m sending you the very first copy of our brand new book. It really is *our* book, because if it weren’t for you and dear Josephine— (*She hesitates for a moment.*) —I would never have written this book.”

(MUSIC #2a: “SPARKLING MUSIC”)

FAITH (*reading the title*). “The Just So Stories.”—

GIRARD. “By Rud-yard Kipling.”

BERT. Are these the stories you told us?

ELSIE (*nodding*). And these are the pictures he drew for them. (*She flips to different pages as ALL react favorably to the pictures. She reads again.*) “Have you made any friends yet at Aunt Georgie’s? (*ALL exchange nods and smiles with ELSIE.*) If so, maybe you could read the stories to them, then act them out the way you and Mum and—dear Josephine—and I used to do. All our love, Best Beloved. We’ll be by for you a day earlier than planned. Tell Aunt Georgie we’ll pick you up late Saturday. Fondly, Papa.”

(MUSIC #2b: “WE HAVEN’T MUCH TIME”)

PETER. Saturday.

FAITH. That’s today.

TEDDY. Well, we haven’t much time.

ELSIE. Time for what?

LIZZIE. Time to act out the stories—like your father said.

(*ALL agree enthusiastically.*)

ELSIE. But I have chores to do. I'm not just a house guest here, you know. And now I have to pack as well.

BERT. But you don't have to read us the stories. You already told them to us.

AGNES. Now all we have to do is act them out.

ELSIE (*looking at their eager faces*). Oh, all right. I suppose we can do a *few* of the stories. The shorter ones anyway. (*ALL cheer.*) That way I can let Aunt Georgie rest a little longer before telling her I have to leave today.

FAITH (*looking over ELSIE's shoulder*). "How the Camel Got His Hump." That's my favorite. And since I chose it, *I* get to be the Camel.

ELSIE. Very well.

PETER. That's no fair. *I* want to be the Camel. He's the main character.

ELSIE. There'll be plenty of main characters to go around. So, we'll let Girard start off by being the Camel.

GIRARD. Thanks, Elsie.

ELSIE (*looking through the pages of the story*). Peter, you can be the horse.

PETER (*with a whinny*). Yeeeeees!

ELSIE. Lizzie, the dog.

LIZZIE (*with a growl*). Grrrrreat!

ELSIE. Teddy—the ox.

TEDDY (*with an "ox-like" drawl*). Oh, thank you!

ELSIE. And Bert—the Djinn.\*

\* Pronounced "De-JIN"

BERT (*excitedly*). The Djinn! I get to be the Djinn. Wait a minute—what’s a Djinn anyway?

FAITH. Don’t you remember, silly? He’s the man of magic.

BERT. Oh, yeah. The magic man. I’m perfect for the part.

FAITH. Of course. Whenever you walk into a room, everybody disappears.

*(ALL laugh as BERT playfully chases FAITH.)*

ELSIE. Agnes, you can be the farmer.

AGNES. Good. I’ll grow all the strawberries in the world. I love strawberries.

ELSIE. Oh, and Agnes, you can also be the water—along with Faith.

FAITH. Water?

ELSIE. There’s a pond in this story.

AGNES. How can we be water?

ELSIE. Use your imagination.

FAITH. I’d rather use water.

ELSIE. Okay. Everyone has a part. Are you ready?

TEDDY. Can I look at the words I have to say?

AGNES. Me, too...

ELSIE. You already know the story. Just make up the words as you go along. And use anything you find to help you with your characters. Okay, everybody into the den or the parlor until you’re called on to enter.

**(MUSIC #2c: “INTRODUCTION TO THE CAMEL STORY”)**

*(ALL except ELSIE exit excitedly, dividing themselves between the den and parlor.)*

ELSIE (*continues*). Ready?

ALL (*offstage*). Ready!

ELSIE (*reading*). “How the Camel Got His Hump.”\* ... “In the beginning when the world was so new and all, the Animals were created to be Man’s helpers. The Horse—”

(*The HORSE enters whinnying.*)

HORSE (*singing*).

I WAS CREATED TO GIVE MAN RIDES ON MY  
BACK.

ELSIE. “—the dog—”

(*The DOG enters barking.*)

DOG (*singing*).

I WAS CREATED TO FETCH THINGS—LIKE  
MAN’S SLIPPERS,  
AND WOMAN’S, TOO, FOR THAT MATTER.  
I HAVE NO QUALMS ABOUT THAT.

ELSIE. “—the Ox—”

(*The OX enters.*)

OX (*singing*).

I WAS CREATED TO HELP MAN—

\* NOTE: All characters in the stories are referred to with masculine pronouns. Feminine pronouns may be substituted, if desired, when females play the characters.



DOG (*speaking*). Uh, hum. Uh, hum.

OX.

**AND WOMAN PLOW THE FIELDS  
AND OTHER 'SCRUCIATINGLY HEAVY BURDENS.**

ELSIE. "And there was another animal created when the world was so new and all. The Camel— (*A pause.*) The Camel— (*Another pause.*) The Camel!"

*(The CAMEL, without a hump, enters nonchalantly—almost disdainfully—muttering two or three "humphs.")*

ELSIE (*continues*). Tell them what you were created for.  
CAMEL (*with his nose in the air*). Humph.

*(The other ANIMALS go to him.)*

HORSE. Come, Camel. Come trot like the rest of us.

CAMEL. Humph.

DOG. Come, Camel. Come fetch like the rest of us.

CAMEL. Humph.

OX. Come, Camel. Come plow like the rest of us.

**(MUSIC #3: "I'M GONNA REST, FOR THE REST  
OF MY LIFE!")**

CAMEL. Rest of us! Schmest of us! I'm the very *best* of us!  
*(Singing.)*

**TROT AND FETCH AND PLOW LIKE THE REST  
OF YOU?  
WADDA YA THINK I AM? A SLAVE?**

**A CHATEL? A PAUPER? A PEASANT? A PEON? A  
VASSAL? A *SERF*?  
NO WAY!**

HORSE (*speaking*). Wait a minute there.

CAMEL.

**WHY SHOULD I DO WORK LIKE THE REST OF  
YOU  
WHEN I CAN TAKE A REST INSTEAD?**

DOG, OX & HORSE (*speaking*). He *must* be joking.

CAMEL.

**A PAUSE. A BREATHER. AN INTERLUDE PERHAPS?  
(Yawns loudly.)  
I THINK IT'S TIME FOR BED.**

DOG, OX & HORSE (*speaking*). He's going to bed!

CAMEL.

**OH, I'M GONNA REST FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.  
GONNA NAP. GONNA LOAF. GONNA DOZE.**

DOG, OX & HORSE (*singing*).  
**HE'S GONNA DOZE.**

CAMEL

(DOG, OX & HORSE).

**NO TOIL. NO TROUBLE. NO STRAIN. NO STRUGGLE.  
(OOH.) (OOH.) (OOH.) (OOH.)  
NO WORRIES, NO WEARIES, NO WOES. OH.  
(OOH.) (AHH.) (OOH.) (OH.)**

HORSE.

**HOW CAN YOU UP AND LEAVE,  
WHILE THE**

DOG, OX & HORSE.

**REST OF US GRIND AND SWEAT TO DO OUR  
BEST?**

*(ALL move with "bump and grind" motion.)*

DOG.

**IT ISN'T FAIR TO MAKE THE**

DOG, OX & HORSE.

**REST OF US DO YOUR WORK WHILE YOU GO  
REST.**

CAMEL *(speaking)*. Eeh.

*(Singing.)*

**I'M GONNA REST FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE.  
GONNA NAP. GONNA LOAF. GONNA DOZE.**

DOG, OX and HORSE.

**HE'S GONNA DOZE.**

CAMEL

*(DOG, OX & HORSE).*

**NO BUSTLE. NO FUSSLE. NO MOVING A MUSCLE.  
(OOH.) (OOH.) (OOH.) (OOH.)  
I'M GONNA GO AND REPOSE.**

CAMEL *(speaking)*. Good night! *(He exits.)*

HORSE. I'm going to tell on him.