THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

By Frumi Cohen

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THE STORY

The story of how THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS came to be published is intermingled with the actual tale of the animals in the Wild Wood in this beautiful full-length musical.

The wealthy, impossible, incorrigible but thoroughly loveable Mr. Toad develops a taste for driving (and crashing) fast cars. Finally, after being forbidden to drive, he steals a car and ends up in jail. The story's villains, the Weasels and Foxes, take over Toad's estate in his absence. Toad's loyal friends, the wise but gruff Badger, kindly Rat, and gentle Mole, come to the rescue, conquer the Weasels, and save Toad Hall from ruin.

These charming adventures, written by Kenneth Grahame for his young son, are also "rescued" by a magazine editor and published for the rest of the world to enjoy. The human and animal characters interplay at the climax of this story. Original, melodious songs makes this a Broadway-quality musical ideal for community theatre and audiences of all ages.

CHARACTERS
(Flexible cast, min. 11 with doubling)

THE FAMILY
KENNETH GRAHAME: Author *(tenor).*
ALASTAIR GRAHAME: His son.
MARGARET: Alastair's nanny *(soprano).*

THE ANIMALS
RIVER RAT: Kindly rat who loves the river *(soprano, tenor).*
BADGER: Gruff but wise *(baritone, bass).*
MOLE: Gentle, prefers underground *(baritone, second tenor).*
TOAD: Exuberant, loves fast cars *(soprano, tenor).*
WEASELS, FOXES,and other ANIMALS: As chorus.

OTHER HUMANS
CONSTANCE SMEDLEY: Of *Everybody's Magazine (alto, second soprano).*
WILLIAM BILLINGS: Editor, *Everybody's Magazine.*
THEODORE ROOSEVELT: Wants to see the stories published *(baritone).*
JAILER'S DAUGHTER: Helps Toad escape.
GREGORY STONE: Editor at Doubleday Books.
MARJORIE SMITHFIELD: Editor at Harper and Row.
CHARLES SCRIBNER: Editor at Scribner's.

**NOTE: A woman may be cast as any one of the editors, the River Rat, Toad, or Mole because of the singing range of those roles.*

SONGS

SONG OF THE RIVER (I) / THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS
(By all Animals)

SONG OF THE RIVER(II) / MOLE'S SONG/RAT'S SONG
(By all Animals)

THE LIFE ADVENTUROUS
(By Toad, Rat, and Mole)

THE SCARY WOODS
(By Mole and Wild Wood Animals)

SONG OF THE WILD WOOD
(By Weasels and Foxes)

HE MUST WRITE/WIND IN THE WILLOWS (Reprise)
(By Margaret, Constance, and Roosevelt)

THROUGH THEIR WINDOWS
(By Mole, Rat, and other Animals)

THE BATTLE OF TOAD HALL (I)
(By Rat, Badger, Mole, and Toad)

THE BATTLE OF TOAD HALL (II)
(By Rat, Badger, Mole, and Toad)

THE BATTLE OF TOAD HALL (III)
(By Rat, Badger, Mole, and Toad)

BACK AGAIN
(By Grahame)

FINALE: THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS *(By entire cast)*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I
Scene 1: May, 1906. Grahame's study.
Scene 2: The riverbank and Wild Wood.
Scene 3: May, 1907. Grahame's study.
Scene 4: The Wild Wood.

ACT II
Scene 1: August, 1907. Three separate scenes, suggested by spotlights.
Scene 2: Simple jail cell, front of curtain, spotlit.
Scene 3: Edge of Wild Wood.
Scene 4: Grahame's study.

ACT III
Scene 1: Rat's parlor, before curtain.
Scene 2: March, 1908. Three separate scenes suggested by spotlights.
Scene 3: Book signing parties.

SET DESIGN

There are two sets, the river and the Wild Wood. The Wild Wood may be set behind the curtain and left there throughout the show. It can be as simple as a backdrop or as complicated as desired. Adding multilevel platforms will give it more depth. A rowboat facsimile is needed but the giant window frame is optional.

The scenes in Grahame's study, publishers' and President's offices, and Rat's parlor can be simply suggested by wing chair and desk.

COSTUME SUGGESTIONS

Kenneth Grahame, President Roosevelt and all the other men - Three piece suits, early l800's, spats.

Alastair - Suit with knickers, knee socks, and laced, ankle-high shoes.

Margaret, Constance - Long skirts, lacy white blouses with puffed sleeves, and pumps.

Rat, Mole, Badger, Toad - Normal clothes with animal accessories. Suit slacks, velvet suit jackets, vests, spats, suspenders, scarves, whiskers, tails, caps with ears, make-up. Toad can wear oversized painted green spectacles for toad eyes. Wears a shawl, bonnet and a skirt for the washerwoman.

Weasels - Masks on popsicle sticks that are held in front of the face and removed to reveal make-up during the Weasels' Song. Gangster suits a la 1940.

Jailer's Daughter - Layers of aprons, high lace shoes, lots of make-up.

PROPS

Picnic basket lunch for Rat; backpack for Toad; drums and noisemakers for Wild Wood animals; tray of food for Jailer's Daughter; knitting, newspapers for humans; laundry basket for Toad; belts, pistols, swords, sticks for Toad and friends; old-style telephones for Roosevelt and Grahame; letters for editors and manuscript for Grahame; books for signing party; book and pen for Badger.

End of Freeview

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