

Elves and the Shoemaker Synopsis

As Act 1 starts, a shoemaker, named Joseph Cobbler, and his wife, Peach, are living together in a rented cottage where he has his shop. The shoemaker works hard to make beautiful shoes, but no matter how many shoes he makes, he cannot earn enough gold kroners for himself and his wife to live on. Finally, the day has come when all he had left on his workbench is a piece of leather that will make one pair of shoes. As Joseph and Peach realize they are in some money trouble, the landlord of the cottage, Lord Lowenbrau, enters the shop. He has come to tell them that since they cannot pay the rent, they will have to move out and become farmers in the country. Joseph says he only needs a little extra time before he has the money to pay the rent. Lord Lowenbrau reconsiders and gives them two weeks to pay the rent or he takes the shop away from them. He leaves. Joseph and Peach decide not give up hope that someone will come to buy shoes. Joseph lays the leather and his tools out on his workbench and they leave the room for the night. The next morning Joseph enters the shop to find an exquisite pair of shoes on his workbench where the leather had been. He calls for Peach who comes and sees the beautiful shoes. Peach puts them in the shop window and almost immediately Jacob the printer sees them in the window and comes in to buy them. He is so pleased that he buys the new shoes for five gold kroners and two new books. He goes away with his new shoes. Joseph takes the kroners and leaves to buy more leather so he can make shoes. While he is gone Lord Lowenbrau returns to check up the shoemaker. Peach tells him of their success and reminds him that he has given them two weeks to get the rent money. Lord Lowenbrau exits in a huff. The lights fade out. When the lights come up it is the next morning. Joseph and Peach are amazed at the new shoes that continue to be made and left on the workbench each morning. Word of the marvelous shoes are spreading throughout the villages and towns and people have come to buy the shoes. Jacob enters the shop again with the two books he owes Joseph and tells him that he wants to buy boots for his brother Wilhelm. While he is there a traveling actor enters the shop to buy a pair of boots. He has come from far away because he has heard about the wonderful shoes. Both Jacob and the traveler buy their boots, for much money, and leave very happy with their purchase. Jacob and Peach are overjoyed, but they have become very curious about who is making these shoes. The lights fade out. It is now midnight as the lights come up. In the shadows are to elves, Sprite and Elvish. They are wearing tattered clothing, but are having fun busily making shoes They work into the night as the lights fade. The next morning Joseph and Peach again find the shoes. They make a plan to stay up that night and watch the shop to see the mystery person who is making the shoes. They are preparing as Act 1 ends.

Act II

When the lights come up it is late at night. Peach and Joseph are not seen, but Sprite and Elvish are getting ready to work on the shoes. They dance and sing and have a good time. As they get to work Joseph and Peach come out of hiding. They see the elves and decide they must somehow repay them for their great kindness. Peach, seeing the elves old clothes, wants to make them new vests and coats. Joseph will make them new shoes. The elves hearing noise stop working, but do not see anything. They go back to work and Joseph and Peach get very quiet and fall asleep where they hide as the lights fade out. When the lights come up it is morning. Joseph and Peach are still sleeping on the floor when there is a knock at the door. They're awakened and let Lord Lowenbrau into the shop. He has come for the rent. Joseph tells him they have enough to pay the rent. Lord Lowenbrau is very upset. Joseph and Peach are explaining to him about the shoes when a wealthy Lady enter. The Lady discloses that she has been sent by the King to have the extraordinary shoemaker come to the King's court to make the King new shoes. Joseph tells her to tell the King he will come to the court and she leaves. Lord Lowenbrau is so impressed that he tells Joseph and Peach they can stay in the cottage for as long as they need it. He then buys a pair of

shoes and exits. Joseph and Peach have one last thing to do. They need to make the clothes and shoes to give to the elves. They get working on their projects as the lights fade. It is night when the lights come up. Joseph and Peach have placed the vests and jackets on the workbench where the leather usually is and they hide. Sprite and Elvish arrive and find the new clothes. They are surprised by the gifts. The elves rejoice and gleefully leave the shop. Joseph and Peach come out of hiding very happy that they could help the elves, who helped them keep their cottage and allow Joseph to continue making shoes for rest of his life.