

# Mother Goose, State Your Case

Patricia Walker





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ArtAge Publications  
Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President  
PO Box 19955  
Portland OR 97280  
503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998  
[bonniev@seniortheatre.com](mailto:bonniev@seniortheatre.com)  
[www.seniortheatre.com](http://www.seniortheatre.com)

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MOTHER GOOSE, STATE YOUR CASE  
By Patricia Walker

CAST

BAILIFF: male or female, any age; appears in every case

KING COLE: male, any age, part of the Tribunal; appears in every case

QUEEN of Hearts: female, any age, part of the Tribunal; appears in every case

KING FROM THE COUNTING HOUSE: male, any age, part of Tribunal; appears in every case

Case 1: OFFICER: male or female, any age  
WILLIE: Wee Willie Winkie, male, any age

Case2: H.O.A. (Home Owners Assoc.) Representative: male or female, any age  
WOMAN: older female who lives in a shoe

Case 3: PUBLIC DEFENDER: male or female, any age  
TOM: the Piper's Son, male, any age  
WIFE: The Farmer's spouse, female, any age

Case 4: INSPECTOR: Building code inspector, male or female, any age  
WITCH: female, any age, lives in a gingerbread house

Case 5: SPCA OFFICER: male or female: any age  
MRS. HUBBARD: motherly female, any age

Case 6: WILDLIFE OFFICER: Endangered Species Act officer, male or female, any age  
MISS HOOD: female, any age, wears a red hood  
WOODCUTTER: male or female, any age  
MRS. HOOD: mother of Miss Hood, any age  
C.P.S. (Child Protective Services) OFFICER: male or female, any age

Case 7: FARMER: male who lives in the Dell, any age  
BLUE: male, any age

Case 8: BO PEEP: female, any age

MARY: female, any age  
MISS MUFFET: female, any age

Case 9: OSHA Representative: male or female, any age  
MRS. DUMPTY: female, any age

Case 10: Dept. of LABOR Officer: male or female, any age  
JACK: male, any age  
JILL: female, any age

Case 11: BUTCHER: male, any age  
BAKER: male, any age  
CANDLESTICK MAKER: male, any age  
COAST GUARD Officer: male or female, any age  
GODMOTHER: female fairy-like, any age

No doubling of cast is available for members of the Tribunal or the Bailiff.

The 31 characters who appear before the Tribunal can be played by as few as eight actors, the full 31, or any number in between.

This play can be shortened simply by removing one or more cases from the script.

Place

A court of law.

Time

A nod to times past but actually happening in the present.

Props List for *Mother Goose, State Your Case*

	Bailiff	clipboard
	King Cole	pipe, bowl of popcorn, paper crown
	Queen of Hearts	tiara, oversize deck of cards to randomly shuffle
	King from counting house	paper crown, large bag of gold pieces
1	Officer	police hat
	Willie	night hat, nightshirt, bag of gold pieces
2	H.O.A. Woman	clipboard, badge baby in blanket, bag of gold pieces
3	Public Defender Tom Wife	clipboard, bag of gold pieces recorder apron, carving knife
4	Inspector Witch	badge hat, bag of gold pieces
5	SPCA Mrs. Hubbard	badge bonnet, empty tote bag
6	Wildlife Officer Miss Hood Woodcutter Mrs. Hood C.P.S. Officer	badge red hooded jacket, basket hatchet hat, basket of cookies, bag of gold pieces badge
7	Farmer Blue	straw hat horn
8	Bo Peep Mary Miss Muffet	shepherd's crook hair bow bowl and spoon
9	OSHA Mrs. Dumpty	badge, emergency yellow safety vest hat with plastic eggs glued on
10	Workman's Compensation Jack Jill	badge, bag of gold pieces head bandage cane
11	Butcher Baker Candlestick Maker Coast Guard Officer Godmother	messy apron, knife clean apron, rolling pin candlestick badge wand

MOTHER GOOSE STATE YOUR CASE

Scene: One continuous scene broken into court cases.

Setting: Courtroom presided over by King Cole, Queen, and Counting House King. They sit at a tall table on tall stools. The various law-enforcement and compliance personnel bring defendants forward one by one, state the complaint, and either argue for or against, depending on the case.

At Rise: Queen and King Cole enter, sit. Queen shuffles a deck of oversize cards.

KING COLE: Pipe! (*Bailiff or one or the other actors brings him a pipe.*) Bowl! (*Bailiff or different actor brings him a bowl of popcorn.*)

QUEEN (*to King Cole*): No fiddlers three today?

KING COLE: Musicians' strike.

QUEEN: I hate it when that happens. (*Counting House King enters, sits at position 3.*) Where 've you been? You're late.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Yeah, I know. I'm sorry. I was in my counting house counting my money. (*arranges gold coins in a stack in front of him*)

KING COLE: (*passes bowl*) Popcorn?

QUEEN: Sure. Thanks.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: None for me, thanks. Just finished off some blackbird pie. (*King Cole laughs heartily.*)

QUEEN: Well, aren't you just a merry old soul?

KING COLE: Hey, it's a tough job...

ALL: But somebody's got to do it.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Let's get this show on the road. Bailiff!

BAILIFF: Hear ye! Hear ye! Silence is now commanded while this court is now in session. All those with suits to prosecute, come forward and ye shall be heard.

CASE 1

BAILIFF: I call Case 1. (*Officer enters with Willie*)

OFFICER: (*nods*) Your Majesties.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: What's the complaint, Officer?

OFFICER: Wee Willie Winkie runs through the town.  
Upstairs and downstairs in his nightgown  
Tapping at the windows and crying through the locks,  
Are all the children in their beds? It's past eight o'clock.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Peeping Tom.

QUEEN: Indecent exposure.

KING COLE: Seems like a sweet lad.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: So, Mr. Winkie, what do you have to say for yourself?

QUEEN: Yes. Explain.

KING COLE: Talk to us, lad.

WILLIE: I don't mean any harm, your graces. It's just that I get all fidgety, and I have to run around a lot.

QUEEN: Fidgety, you say?

WILLIE: Yes, ma'am, I have ADHD, so my attention span is short and I'm hyperactive.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Well, what's this business of your nightgown and looking in windows?

WILLIE: Oh, no, Sir, I tap at the windows. I don't look in them.

QUEEN: But you call through the locks, asking about children in their beds. That seems peculiar.



WILLIE: I check to make sure they're in bed by eight o'clock. Children shouldn't stay up late, you know. It's not good for them.

KING COLE: But you're a child yourself.

WILLIE: No, Sir. I'm grown. I'm just little.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: But all this running around at night. It frightens people.

WILLIE: I run around in the daytime, too, in my regular clothes, but nobody minds that so much.

OFFICER: That's true, your Majesties. We see him running up and down the town at all hours of the day and night.

QUEEN: Off with his head!

KING COLE: Oh, I don't know. Let's give him another chance. Maybe if he promises not to run around at night?

OFFICER: We already tried that, Sir. He says he won't, but he does it anyway.

WILLIE: But the children have to go to bed.

KING COLE: I bet your mother was pretty strict about your bedtime, wasn't she?

WILLIE: Boy, I'll say. You don't know the half of it. And thank you for asking.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: One of you would cut off his head and the other would let him go. Looks like I'll have to break the tie. A fine! Ten gold pieces. Maybe that'll make you try a little harder to stay away from windows at night.

*(Willie pulls a pouch out of a pocket and hands it to the Officer who hands it up to the King. The both bow and back away from the bench.)*

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Next!

END OF CASE 1

CASE 2

BAILIFF: I call Case 2. (*Homeowners' Association representative enters with Woman*)

HOA: Your Majesties, I represent the Homeowners' Association for Gooseland Acres. This woman's home has become an eyesore. We've made repeated efforts to get it spruced up, but she hasn't complied.

QUEEN: Who is she?

H.O.A.: She's the old woman who lived in a shoe and  
had so many children she didn't know what to do  
She gave them a supper of jelly and bread  
Then spanked them all soundly and sent them to bed.

KING COLE: This sounds like a job for Child Protective Services. Who's looking out for the children?

WOMAN: Been there, done that, Your Majesty. Some years ago, I was hauled before Child Protective Services, but I was cleared of any wrongdoing. That busybody Mistress Mary filed a complaint.

QUEEN: She is quite contrary.

WOMAN: Boy, I'll say. She said my children played in her garden and messed up her silver bells and cockle shells and pretty maids all in a row. So she made up a story that I spanked my kids and didn't feed them properly.

KING COLE: But you were cleared?

WOMAN: Yes, Sire.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: So, what's the problem now?

H.O.A.: Well, her house is unusual, to say the least. It doesn't meet our uniformity standards. She lives in a shoe, for crying out loud.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Have you always lived in this shoe, ma'am?

WOMAN: Not in this particular one. We honeymooned in Snowshoe, then took a lease on a Bass Weejun loafer as our starter home. We moved to a Converse All-Star high top when our family grew, and then we moved to the high-button model we live in now.

QUEEN: And the problem is?

H.O.A.: It's getting shabby. It's bringing down the property values of all the homes around it.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: So, Mrs....uhm?

WOMAN: Just call me Old Woman.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Old Woman, why won't you fix up your house, er, shoe?

WOMAN: Well, we only have five or six more children at home and then we're going to downsize. We have our eye on a pretty little flipflop in Fort Lauderdale. And what with putting all those kids through college, we just can't afford to modernize the shoe.

QUEEN: Off with her head!

KING COLE: Oh, give her another chance. I'm sure the shoe doesn't look that bad.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Ten gold pieces. Next!

*(Woman pays fine, they leave, next two enter.)*

END OF CASE 2

CASE 3

BAILIFF: I call Case 3.

*(Public Defender enters with Tom Tom the Piper's Son and the Farmer's Wife)*

PUBLIC DEFENDER: Your Majesties, I represent Tom, Tom, the Piper's son.

QUEEN: He stole a pig—

KING COLE: And away he run.

WIFE: The pig got loose and ate a goose—

PUBLIC DEFENDER: And Tom was put in the calaboose. Which is why we're here, your Majesties. It was a reckless act of childhood mischief and foolhardiness which Tom has certainly paid for by now.

WIFE: He's paid nothing at all!

PUBLIC DEFENDER: But he has, your Majesties. He's been in the calaboose for years, now, and surely, it's time—

WIFE: I don't care how long he's been in the calaboose. He hasn't paid a single farthing for my pig and goose.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Well, lad, what do you have to say for yourself?

TOM: You see, Sir, I was running with a bad crowd at the time: Georgie Porgie—

QUEEN: Puddin' and pie—

KING COLE: Kissed the girls and made them cry.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Yes, I quite see what you mean. Go on.

TOM: We were out with Peter Piper picking a peck of pickled peppers when he said, "Wouldn't these peppers taste good with pork chops?" and so I was dispatched to pick the pork.

WIFE: It was bad enough he stole my pig, but then the pig got loose and ate my prize goose.

TOM: That was just an accident, Sir. Collateral damage, you might say.

WIFE: I'll collateral your damage, you little punk (*moving aggressively toward Tom*).

PUBLIC DEFENDER: (*stepping between the two*) Madam! Madam! Control yourself.

COUNTING HOUSE KING: Indeed! Or it'll be the calaboose for you, too. Now, then, Tom. Go on, lad.

TOM: I had never been in any trouble before, Sir. Not like that wonky Wee Willie Winkie. He's so spastic, he's always up to something.

KING COLE: Who's your family, lad? Are you the son of the Pied Piper?

TOM: No, Sir. He's a distant cousin. Peter Piper's my father.

QUEEN: Of the pickled peppers?

TOM: Yes, Ma'am.

KING COLE: Seems like there are a lot of you Pipers. How do you keep your family lines straight?

TOM: Ancestry.com.

PUBLIC DEFENDER: Your Majesties, he's been a model prisoner in the calaboose and deserves time off for good behavior.

WIFE: Good behavior? He had one of his buddies send those three blind mice chasing after me. They had me backed into a corner and I had to cut off their tails with a carving knife before I could get away. I never saw such a sight in my life.

PUBLIC DEFENDER: Your Majesties, there is no evidence whatsoever to link the appearance of the three blind mice to Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son.

WIFE: Hmmph! I know what I know. But he still hasn't paid for my pig and goose.

KING COLE: I know the pig ate the goose, but what became of the pig?

TOM: Pork chops, Sir.

QUEEN: Off with his head!

**END OF FREEVIEW**

*You'll want to read and perform this show!*