

“Lost My Shoe to a Wallaroo”

A children’s play in one-act

By

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Characters

Third graders

JOSH
KEVIN
FLOR
ASHLEY
LIZA

Teacher

MS. PEDICURIOUS

Zoo residents

JUAN, the wallaroo
JOE, the kangaroo
COCKATOO

ZOOKEEPER

Setting

Time: May

Place: a city zoo - picnic and play area, with a pond nearby

Synopsis to excerpt

Running from the drink stand to the picnic play area ahead of the others, JOSH hears thumping and races down the path to find out what's happening. The group returns, MS. PEDICURIOUS leaves to find JOSH, the children eat snacks, and look at photos of animals they've seen. Suddenly JOSH rushes in and tells KEVIN he saw kangaroos boxing and that the small one jumped a fence and escaped! JOSH and KEVIN leave in search of the runaway "roo." The girls' Chinese Jump Rope game is interrupted by the entrance of JUAN, the injured wallaroo. Catching sight of him as he steals KEVIN's shoe, they scream.

ASHLEY

Shhhhhhhhhh! That could be the little roo!

FLOR

Oh, my, oh, my! What should we do?

LIZA

And, look! He took one of Kevin's shoes!

ASHLEY

Be really quiet; don't make a sound.
Maybe, just maybe, he'll come back around.

(JUAN wails and snorts.)

LIZA

Such crying!

ASHLEY

Was that a snort?

LIZA

Or worse.

(JUAN moans twice.)

FLOR

Painful sounds.

LIZA

He could be badly hurt.

ASHLEY

Josh said he fled.

FLOR

I hope he's not dead!

(JUAN moans again.)

LIZA

He's alive! You could sing to help him rest.
I'll tiptoe with my camera—

FLOR

Oh, yes! What song's best?

ASHLEY

(Singing.)

Rock-a-bye baby kangaroo
In the treetop
When the wind blows—
The cradle—

LIZA

No, stop!
That's no fit!

FLOR

Kangaroo cradle? Not one bit.
Instead, let's try my favorite—
(Singing.)
Frere Jacques, Frere Jacques,
Dorme vous, dorme vous?

ASHLEY

Wrong, that song's French. You lose, too.
Speak English in Australia, home of roos.

FLOR

Sweet melody. My grandma taught me the flow
from French to English—here's how it goes:
(Singing.)
Are you sleeping, are you sleeping,
Brother Joe, Brother Joe?

LIZA

Joe?

ASHLEY

Baby roos are "Joeys."

FLOR

Don't you know?

(JUAN gives a loud cry and jumps to girls.)

JUAN

Joe's coming? Oh, no! Just what I dread!
I fear next time he'll stomp my head.

ASHLEY

Which Joe? Who?

LIZA

The BIG kangaroo—
who injured the little one, just like Josh said.

JUAN

He boxes hard! I never get a fair go.
I've had it with his kicking—better hide low!

LIZA

What's your name, then, if it's not "Joe?"

JUAN

Sorry! G'Day, I'm Juan, the wallaroo, but,
excuse me, now I must get out of this zoo!

FLOR

Wait, little one, please, what's a wallaroo?
And why are you wearing Kevin's shoe?

JUAN

We're family: the kangas and wallaroos.
But it's endless boxing from my cousin Joe.
He gets too excited—part of growing, I know.
He can't control his whopping. What can I do?

ASHLEY

You look very young to fight a large kangaroo.

JUAN

I beg your pardon, mates. How old are you?

LIZA

Already nine!

JUAN

As am I, very fine.
I see that you girls mean to be kind,

JUAN (Cont'd)

But I'm fully grown, and I hate to whine!

ASHLEY

Then you're not a boy. At nine, you're a guy!

JUAN

One who stands a hundred centimeters high!

FLOR

A hundred what-a-meters? Like a centipede?

ASHLEY

It's "cen-ti-meters." a bit over three feet.

JUAN

Young miss, you're right-o!

FLOR

Then how big is Joe?

JUAN

Two meters tall, a jumping giant, you know!
He could hop and bite the leaves right off that limb.

LIZA

Yikes! We don't want to bump into him.

JUAN

And, Crikey, his feet!, I hear them pounding, now!
He's yonder, on the path! Hide me! How?

(JUAN hops around awkwardly.)

ASHLEY

There's no loud stomping. You're just scared.

JUAN

My ears are sharp. It's him, so beware!

(KEVIN and JOSH dash in and jump on the table top.)

KEVIN

Hey, jump up, quick! He's following us, there!

(COCKATOO appears on a nearby tree branch with loud cries.)

COCKATOO

Look, oh look,
here, up here!
I know Joe—
Joe's on the go!

Jump, yes, jump
upon table top!
But have no fear.
Say, "hello." Hello!

LIZA

Oh, my goodness! Here's a talking bird.

ASHLEY

A fancy parrot who knows lots of words!

COCKATOO

Parrot to you?
I'm Cockatoo!
Following Joe
all over the zoo.

FLOR

Josh! They're after us because of you!

JOSH

The kangaroo heard me and Kevin talk
about the fight, then he hop-hopped,
'til he bent the fence! Made the bird squawk!

KEVIN

Higher, higher that kangaroo jumped!

JOSH

Sailed over the pen and landed: THUMP!

KEVIN

Hey, is that the injured kangaroo?

JUAN

Injured, yes, but wallaroo to you.

JUAN (Cont'd)

What a mess: that loudmouthed cockatoo
Gives me away with all her screeching!
Joe will find me! Please, no more speaking!

(JUAN hops around to hide. FLOR and LIZA chase JUAN with the rope.)

LIZA

Juan, come here, be calm.

FLOR

Let us help.

JUAN

We're no match for Joe. Don't kid yourselves.

(JOE bounds in. All CHILDREN leap to the table and watch JUAN hop, dodging to flee JOE.)

JOE

Hello, cousin Juan! Don't be afraid.
I demonstrated moves, in good play.
Didn't mean to chase you off on a run.

JUAN

You didn't aim kicks to knock me over?
Stomp my foot, *rat-a-tat*, like a drum?

COCKATOO

Knocked down stomped!
Beat like a drum!
Down and stomped
not much fun.

JUAN

You bruised me, big bully! And I was done.

COCKATOO

Bruised! Sore bruise.
the bully knew
stomping bruised?

JOE

No!

JUAN

Yes!

JOSH

Well, if so—

COCKATOO

Then shame, shame—

GIRLS

Shame on you!

JOE

Sorry, sport! I just landed askew.

JOSH

You're smiling, but he's scared through and through.

KEVIN

What about me? He took my shoe!

JUAN

Spied it there and put it to use.

(JOE leaps to throw an arm around JUAN, as MS. PEDICURIOUS enters.)

JOE

My fault, Cuz. Now, that's one cool shoe.

MS. PEDICURIOUS

Oh, here's Josh! I'm quite jubilant!
Strange: they're playing with marsupials.

FLOR

Ms. Pedicurious said, "Mar-what-ials?"

MS. PEDICURIOUS

"Big footed" mammals are marsupials.
but talking kangaroos are most unusual.

COCKATOO

Dinkum, dinkum,
Dinkum-dee-dory.
Here's marsupials'

COCKATOO (Cont'd)

regular story:
moms tote joeys
in their pouches,
warm, cuddly
baby houses.

LIZA

Where are roo mamas? I'd like to know.

ASHLEY

Don't they miss you, whenever you roam?

JOE

Our oldies were busy with our “mob.”
Watching a large family’s quite a job.

MS. PEDICURIOUS

Well, I say something’s surely gone amiss,
when a wallaroo wears a boy’s shoe, like this.
Losing it made Kevin distressed!
Wallaroo, you could do without it. Yes?

JUAN

Oh, not at all. Sorry, no time soon.

MS. PEDICURIOUS

Please, give it to Kevin. Why refuse?

JUAN

Kevin’s shoe soothes my sore foot’s bruise!

KEVIN

Ms. Pedicurious, get it back, please.
My mama will say “No more X-Box” for me!

JUAN

You box, too? He loves boxing! No!
I won’t stay for punches he can throw!

COCKATOO

So, go, Joe!
On, Juan, on.
Turn around
and hurry home!
Mob knows that
you are gone.

JOE

You’ve a long way to lump, ‘round that bend.
Zookeeper passes soon. Ready to go, then?

JOSH

“Lump?”

JOE

“Limp” and “jump.” Juan rocks along slow.

LIZA

Wait, friends! Give me one more photo.

JUAN

I'd get angrier, standing by Joe,
and it would probably spell the end
of my other foot, on which I depend!

(KEVIN grabs his remaining shoe from where he left it before.)

KEVIN

Please, help me, Ms. Pedicurious!
Seriously, I can't go home shoeless.

MS. PEDICURIOUS

Juan will feel better if we mend their fight.
Children, what can you say to help them play
and understand each other's rights?

KEVIN

Joe, box with control: the correct way.

ASHLEY

Especially with Juan, who has less height.

COCKATOO

No real fight.
Roos play right!
Friends can mend.
Be mighty friends!