

EASTER SHOES

One-Act Play For Young Actors

*Adapted by Susan Shore
from the original play by Maud C. Jackson*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Jennifer and Justin go to their grandparents' farm for Easter. Jennifer can't wait to show off her new dress and shoes at the small, country church the next morning. In fact, that's all she thinks about, to the dismay of her Grandmother.

But when both Grandmother and Jennifer are out of the room momentarily, a poor migrant worker steals the shoes for his daughter to attend church. Later, the director of the church's Easter pageant persuades Jennifer to take the part of an angel, wearing a simple robe and sandals.

The role changes Jennifer's attitude. When the shoes are returned by the worker's daughter after church, Jennifer encourages her to keep them and promises to find other clothes for the young girl.

PLAYING TIME: 20 minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Grandmother Whitney: knows the meaning of Easter.

Grandfather Whitney: agrees with Grandmother.

Jennifer Whitney: teen who thinks Easter means clothes.

Justin Whitney: Jennifer's brother.

Mandy Brown: poor girl Jennifer's age and size.

Strange Man: father of Mandy.

Miss Prosser: head of church program.

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COSTUMES

In Scene 1, all wear ordinary, everyday attire except Jennifer who first appears in a new, expensive dress and shoes and wearing heavy makeup. Later in the scene, Jennifer wears school clothes and tennis shoes. In Scene 2, all appear in nice but not fancy church clothes and Jennifer is dressed as an angel.

SETTING

The Whitney's living-room is furnished with sofa and easy chairs. There should be an outside door at one side of stage and one door upstage, with one or two windows if desired. Imaginary doors and windows will suffice if simpler settings are necessary. There should be a mirror on one wall.

TIME: The present. The Saturday evening before Easter and Easter morning.

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: GRANDMOTHER and JUSTIN are sitting in the living room. It is late Saturday evening, before Easter.)

JUSTIN: Grandma, it's sure nice of you and Granddad to have Jennifer and me down here at the farm every Easter.

GRANDMOTHER: I'm glad you think so, Justin. You children have been spending your Easters here for so long it wouldn't seem like Easter without you.

JUSTIN: Yep, I remember when I was a little kid ... anyhow, littler than I am now ... how Granddad used to hide candy eggs around the yard. I was as sure as anything the Easter bunny brought them.

GRANDMOTHER: *(Looks admiringly at JUSTIN.)* You children have grown like weeds. And I'm glad you are finding the true meaning of Easter.

JUSTIN: *(Honestly.)* So am I. And it will be great to go to your church tomorrow. Are they going to have their special Easter services like they always do?

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, yes. Mt. Lebanon Church couldn't exist without that. People have been coming for miles to attend the Easter services at our little country church. Miss Prosser and practically all the young people in the community have been working for weeks on that program.

JUSTIN: I noticed a few trailers in a trailer camp, I guess you'd call it, down in Wilson's Hollow as we came out from town. Where are they from and what are they doing here?

GRANDMOTHER: They're migrant workers. The crop was light in their part of the country, so they came here expecting to help with the spring seeding and planting, but I guess they haven't found much work as yet.

JUSTIN: Do they go to Mt. Lebanon church?

GRANDMOTHER: *(Sadly.)* No, they do not, Justin. I've heard that some of them might come, but they feel that their clothes aren't good enough. I'm sure any of them should feel at home ... nobody at Mt. Lebanon wears fine clothes.

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JUSTIN: Say, they will tomorrow. You ought to see Jennifer's new outfit. She about died when she heard we were coming out here ...

GRANDMOTHER: *(Looks surprised and troubled.)* What?

JUSTIN: *(Embarrassed.)* Well ... ah, that is, she wanted to see you and Granddad, of course. But she wanted to go to church at home so she could show off her new clothes. It took her about a half a day to buy a pair of shoes to go with her Easter outfit, and does she strut when she gets them on! *(JUSTIN rises and minces across the room and back in imitation of his SISTER on high heels.)* I know they are too tight for her and must hurt her feet like the dickens ...

GRANDMOTHER: *(Reprovingly.)* Justin! I'm sorry about Jennifer. She does seem changed from the happy little girl who used to cry to come to "Gamma's."

JUSTIN: Changed ... she's a mess! Spends all her time fixing her hair, painting her nails, putting on makeup ...

GRANDMOTHER: My sweet little Jennifer. All girls grow up and change, of course, but I didn't ever expect to see the time Jennifer would be foolish about clothes and makeup.

JUSTIN: She drives Mother nuts. And if I say anything to her she hauls off and hits me. She's upstairs this minute putting on her new Easter clothes to show you. Hey, listen... there she comes now. I'm leaving, I'm going to go find Granddad.

(JUSTIN exits at side door as JENNIFER, wearing her new clothes and heavy makeup, enters by upstage door. She walks as a model might, checks herself in the mirror, then addresses her GRANDMOTHER.)

JENNIFER: How do you like my new Easter outfit, Grandma? Don't you think I'll excite the natives out here when they see me walking up the church aisle tomorrow?

GRANDMOTHER: *(Sternly.)* Your clothes are very pretty, Jennifer, but in my day we were taught, "Pretty is as pretty does."

End of Freeview

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