

The Shoemaker & the Elves by P.L. Snow

This is a play for four or six players. The parts of the Elves can be doubled with the parts of the Customers.

It is, of course, the well-known tale of the elves who help a poor shoemaker by making the most excellent shoes. The shoemaker and his wife reward the elves by making them a suit of clothes each.

The play contains a great deal of verse, which can be set to music if wanted. The players should be willing to use improv skills and interact with the audience for best results.

Characters:-

Rags the Elf

Tatters the Elf

Shoemaker

Shoemaker's wife

1st Posh Customer

2nd Posh Customer

(NB – The parts of the posh customers can be played by the same actors who play RAGS and TATTERS)

Scene 1: *The Shoemaker's workshop. Workbench, tools etc. RAGS lies onstage in a bundle. The audience should not see that he is an elf. They should just see a bundle of rags.*

Enter SHOEMAKER& WIFE

SHOEMAKER

Oh dear! What it is to be a poor shoemaker!

WIFE

We are very poor, but at least we've got each other.

SHOEMAKER

Of course we do, but the times are very hard. Very hard indeed! Here I am, a shoemaker, and a very good shoemaker too! Just ask anybody! They'll tell you. I'm a very good shoemaker indeed, but nobody's coming to buy my shoes! The rent is due at the end of the week; there's no food in the house. And I've only got leather enough

to make one more pair of shoes. But I'll make the finest pair of shoes ever seen with these last pieces of leather! The very finest!

WIFE

Never mind, Cobblino! Your dinner's on the table dear.

SHOEMAKER

Dinner! Have we got dinner? You are a clever little wifie, Cobblina! I didn't know there was any food in the house! What have we got?

WIFE

Well, not very much, I'm afraid. It's macaroni cheese. I had to use the aglets from the shoelaces for macaroni.

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

(Direct to audience with visual aid if appropriate) You know the little bits at the ends of shoelaces? They're called aglets!

SHOEMAKER

We'll be asking questions later. So you had to use aglets for the macaroni? What about the cheese?

WIFE

I had to get it out of the mousetrap.

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

You know what a mousetrap is? It's a –

WIFE

Oh, they know what a mousetrap is!

SHOEMAKER

Yes, of course they do. But at least we've got some dinner. The mouse'll just have to go hungry. Here, I'll just lay out the pieces of leather to make a fine pair of shoes tomorrow, and then, well. We'll see.

WIFE

No customers again today, then? And I work so hard to make sure the shop is neat and tidy!

SHOEMAKER

No. Nobody came today. Nobody came yesterday. Nobody came the day before that. And the weather's so cold and wet!

WIFE

Perhaps that's why they aren't coming out to buy shoes!

SHOEMAKER

How do you work that out?

WIFE

Well, if you haven't got any shoes, you don't want to go out on cold, wet days to get some, do you? Your feet'll get cold. You wait till it's warmer and dryer.

SHOEMAKER

Oh, I see. But we can't wait until the weather gets better to sell shoes! There's the rent to pay! And we've got to eat!

WIFE

That's true. Those aglets won't last for ever. (*To audience*) Remember: aglets!

SHOEMAKER

Aglets! Well, anyway, the shoes that I'll make tomorrow will be smart and proper shoes to wear on special days! Shoes that would make you proud to be seen in!

WIFE

Ooh! Will you really?

SHOEMAKER

Yes, I've got the leather all laid out ready. First thing tomorrow I'll get to work and put them in pride of place in the window... Next to the tin of polish and the last pair of shoelaces –

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

With the aglets at each end.

SHOEMAKER

Whatever would you do
If you didn't have a shoe?
No matter where you trod
Each step's a painful plod
If you didn't have a decent shoe.

WIFE

It wouldn't suit
If you didn't have a boot.
Each step you take
Would be a pain and ache
If you didn't have a sturdy boot.

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

To make a shoe
Is a wonderful thing to do.
To stitch a boot
And make it look real cute
Is a thing to make you
Hop and skip
Run and jump
But mind you don't trip!
You can walk for miles
If you're soled and heeled
Over gates and stiles
Through wood and field,
With shoes so neat
Every road and street
Is like a velvet carpet
Under your feet –
Yes, whatever would you do
If you didn't have a shoe?

WIFE

That's right, dear. You make a smashing pair of shoes. They'll look lovely. Well, come on, before the dinner gets cold.

SHOEMAKER

It's a good word, aglets. Very good for crossword puzzles.

SHOEMAKER

Ooh, it's a cold and damp winter's day, I'll carefully put away my tools, as usual –

WIFE

Dust down the workbench, as usual, and sweep the floor –

SHOEMAKER

But I'm down to the very last pieces of leather. There's no more leather in the shop,
and no money to buy any more –

WIFE

And no money to buy any food, or pay the rent, or buy coal for the fire.

SHOEMAKER

But still, I put out the last pieces of leather that I had, ready to make a pair of shoes in
the morning. Cobblina! Don't forget to put out a little jug of milk and a little bowl of
porridge for the Good Folk –

WIFE

Now we mustn't forget our prayers.

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

Bzzzbzzzbzzzbzzzmumble mumblebzzzbzzz...AMEN

SHOEMAKER

And off we go to bed, as usual.

Exit SHOEMAKER & WIFE

Scene 2: *As before*

Enter TATTERS

TATTERS

Rags? Rags! Ra-ags! Where are you? Rags! Come out, come out wherever you are!

RAGS *uncurls himself from the floor and creeps up behind* TATTERS

TATTERS

Honestly! Where is he? (*sees audience*) Oh! Hello! What a lovely bunch of people!
All these happy smiling faces!

(*Opportunity for by-play with audience ad-lib*)

But I'm looking for my friend Rags. Have you seen him? He's an ugly, goblin-faced sort of elf. Big long ears and a long, pointy nose. (*Or as appropriate*) Have you seen him? Well, have you? (*Opportunity for "He's behind you, etc."*) Perhaps he's over here? No, he's not there. Maybe he's hiding over here! Is he down here among you? (*Descends into audience. RAGS meanwhile makes faces and so on, but as TATTERS returns, gets back into bundle on stage*) Well, I don't know, I'm sure. And to think I was going to share my last Mars Bar with him.

RAGS

(*Leaping up from bundle*) Mars Bar?

TATTERS

(*Sudden shock – acrobatic response*) Whaaa-aaa-aaah! What a fright I got! Look, my Mars Bar's all bent and broken.

RAGS

Never mind, look. I've got some liquorice allsorts! We can share them.

TATTERS

(*Evil laugh*) Heeheeheeheeheehee!

RAGS

What do you mean, heeheeheeheeheehee?

TATTERS

Oh, nothing. Just let me share them out. I'm the one with the *brains*, after all.

RAGS

And I'm the one with the *good looks*. (*They pose as brainy and good looking*)

RAGS & TATTERS

(*Pause. To audience*) What?

TATTERS

Pay no attention to them. They're just jealous. Come on, get your liquorice allsorts out.

RAGS

Here we are. (*He pours them out on the bench*)

TATTERS

(He divides the sweets, giving himself more, as indicated by his way of counting) So it's one for you, and one for me. Two for you, and one, two for me. Three for you, and one, two three for me –

RAGS

Hey! Wait a minute!

TATTERS

What's the matter?

RAGS

That's not fair!

TATTERS

All right. You count them.

RAGS

That's more like it! So, one for you and one for me. Two for you and two for me. *(He counts correctly, but puts all the sweets down on his own side of the bench)*

TATTERS

Hey! Wa-a-a-a-ait a minute! That's not – Hang on! Where did you get these liquorice allsorts?

RAGS

There's a big bag full of them under the bench!

TATTERS

(Tastes one) Eeeuughhh! That's not a liquorice allsort!

RAGS

They look like liquorice allsorts! *(Tries one)* Grooooghghh! That's horrible! What are they then?

TATTERS

(Pulls a big bag of aglets out from under the bench. AGLETS written big on the bag)
You know what these are?

RAGS & TATTERS

(To audience) What are they?

(Opportunity for more by-play ad-lib with audience, depending on reactions)

RAGS

Ah well. Get your bent Mars bar out.

TATTERS

Here you are. Try a bit.

(They each try a bit and spit it out at once)

RAGS

That's the worst Mars bar I've ever tasted!

TATTERS

(Looking at the label) No wonder! See what it says on the label?

RAGS & TATTERS

Suede cleaner!

RAGS

And you're meant to be the brainy one!

TATTERS

Anyone can make a mistake. But here! Look! There doesn't seem to be any food in this house!

RAGS

No, but look at this shoe leather laid out all neat and tidy.

TATTERS

I love things all neat and tidy.

RAGS

Neat and tidy is my favourite, too.

TATTERS

Neat and tidy really matters!
Just you take a tip from Tatters!

RAGS

Put your rubbish in rubbish bags.
Just you take a tip from Rags.

RAGS & TATTERS

Rags and Tatters
Know what matters!
Keep things tidy,
That's the ticket!
Don't drop litter,
Always pick it
Up!

(Opportunity for acrobatic fun on the word "Up"?)

RAGS

Well, you know what? This shop is so neat and tidy, and all the poor shoemaker and his wife have to eat is twiglets –

TATTERS

Not twiglets!

RAGS

Chiclets?

TATTERS

Not chiclets!

RAGS

Giblets?

TATTERS

Not giblets!

RAGS & TATTERS

What is it?

(Audience supplies word Aglets, with any luck)

RAGS

What I say is, here is this poor man and his wife, and they need a bit of help!

TATTERS

Of course! Yes, what a good idea! Come on! Let's get to work!

RAGS & TATTERS

(They set to work to put the shoes together)

Hob shoe hob
Hob shoe hob.
Here's a tack, there's a tack
Do a good job!
Hob shoe hob,
Hob shoe hob!
Sew it up with waxy thread,
Do a good job.
Give a tap upon the heel,
Think how comfy it will feel!
Give a tap upon the toe,
That'll make 'em want to go!
Hob shoe hob!
Hob shoe hob!
Hob! Shoe! Hob!

TATTERS

There! Look at that! Perfect!

RAGS

Absolutely first class! Look at that. A fine pair of shoes!

TATTERS

And now, a bit of polish!

RAGS & TATTERS

(Polishing madly)

A-rrrrrrrrrubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin

(Pause. They spit on the toe of their shoes)

And a-rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin!

RAGS

Look! I can see my face in mine.

TATTERS

That's funny, I can see *my* face in mine.

RAGS

No, it's definitely my face. Not your face.

TATTERS

Yes, *you* can see *your* face in *yours*, but *I* can see *my* face in *mine*.

RAGS

(Deeply compassionate) Oh, bad luck. Still, aint science wonderful! Mirrors and telescopes and things. Let's have a look. *(He takes TATTERS's shoe and looks in it like a mirror)* Oh yes. It *is* your face.

TATTERS

Eh? Give it here. Yes, it's my face. Give me yours to look at. That's my face, too.

RAGS

How did your face get on to both shoes?

TATTERS

It's a mystery! A magical mystery. Come on, let's leave the shoes where the shoemaker will find them. Here on the bench. Now come on!

(Exit singing Hob shoe hob)

Scene 3: *The same. The new shoes on the bench.*

Enter SHOEMAKER tired and yawning and cold.

SHOEMAKER

(Yawning) Grooooo-aaaaaaah A haaaaaaah! Brrrrr, it's chilly! Ah well, time to go to work. I laid out the leather last night, all ready, but where did I put it? Can't seem to find it anywhere...Cobblina! Cobblina?

Enter WIFE

WIFE

What's the matter?

SHOEMAKER

Have you seen the leather I laid out last night to make a pair of shoes with?

WIFE

Why, you left it on the bench where those shoes are now.

SHOEMAKER

Well, that's funny! Where can I have put it? *(Looks under the shoes)* I was sure...I could have sworn...

WIFE

You didn't take it to bed with you, did you?

SHOEMAKER

Don't be silly! Why would I take...Here, *(hands her the shoes)* hold these a minute while I look under here.

WIFE

Is it there?

SHOEMAKER

It's a mystery! You don't suppose...Nah!

WIFE

What?

SHOEMAKER

Well, I mean, you don't suppose the mice could have taken it? After all, we did take their cheese out of the trap for our dinner last night.

WIFE

Don't be daft! Mice don't eat shoe leather.

SHOEMAKER

If they eat *that* cheese they'll eat anything! Where can it possibly be?

WIFE

Well, it must be somewhere. Here, you take these shoes back. I've got to get on with the housework.

SHOEMAKER

Righto. I'll keep on looking around in here... Wait a minute! Where did you get these shoes?

WIFE

You just gave them to me. Just now.

SHOEMAKER

I did? Did I?

WIFE

You did.

SHOEMAKER

Well, did you make them?

WIFE

Me? I thought you did!

SHOEMAKER

Hang on! This is the leather I laid out last night!

WIFE

You must have started sleep-cobbling! You've been cobbling in your sleep!

SHOEMAKER

Well if I have, I'm a better shoemaker when I'm asleep than when I'm awake! Look at this stitching!

WIFE

I've never seen anything so fine and neat! It's better than the best I've ever seen!

SHOEMAKER

This is the very finest piece of workmanship I've ever seen in all my days of shoemaking! But how did it happen?

(Shop doorbell rings. Enter POSH CUSTOMER 1)

POSH 1

Good morning. I've come to buy a pair of shoes.

WIFE

You've come to the right place! This is a shoemaker's shop.

SHOEMAKER

You're very welcome! But I'm afraid we've not much in stock at the moment. Things are a bit slow just now.

POSH 1

What about that very fine pair in your hand?

SHOEMAKER

What, these? I don't know –

WIFE

(Quickly) Try them on sir. Just try them for size.

SHOEMAKER

That's right sir. Have a seat here.

(POSH 1 sits. SHOEMAKER & WIFE help him off with his shoes. They react to his smelly feet.)

POSH

Yes, I hardly ever wash my feet. I'm so rich I don't have to.

WIFE

(To audience) The posher they are, the smellier the feet. *(As though to someone in the audience)* Oops! Only joking, Your Royal Highness!

SHOEMAKER

(To audience) Hah! That made you look, didn't it! *(To POSH 1)* How do they feel, sir?

POSH 1

How do they feel? HOW DO THEY FEEL?

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

(Timidly) Are they all right?

POSH 1

ARE THEY ALL RIGHT??!!!!?
They are incredible! Fantastic!
Why, something really drastic
Has happened to my feet inside these shoes!
Such noble work is so entrancing,
With these shoes my feet enhancing
I can dance away my Monday Morning blues!
What style, what pizzazz!
I can do ballet, tap and jazz,
I can do ballroom, and the Tango and the Twist!
I'll be the star of all the valley
Doing jazz and tap and ballet,
Paso doble, demi plie, with a swift flick of the wrist!

POSH 1, SHOEMAKER & WIFE

They are quite wonderful and smart!
They've absolutely won his heart!
We can say without piling on the schmalz
Such fancy workmanship is thrilling!
Any girl would be most willing
Just to be his dancing partner for the Foxtrot or the Waltz!
They are incredible, fantastic!
Yes, something really drastic
Has happened to his feet inside these shoes!
Such noble work is so entrancing,

With these shoes his feet enhancing
He can dance away his Monday morning
Tuesday morning, Wednesday morning,
Thursday morning - every morning blues!

POSH 1

I'll take 'em. Wrap 'em up. Now, how much?

SHOEMAKER

How much? Er, I'm not really sure...

WIFE

Obviously, sir, a pair of shoes like these you don't find every day. I mean... What would you expect to pay for a pair like this? Be honest, now!

POSH 1

For a pair of shoes like this? Why, I would expect to pay something in the region of...twenty golden guineas!

WIFE

(Can't believe their luck) Twenty golden guineas?

(SHOEMAKER faints dead away)

POSH 1

Oh, all right. Thirty golden guineas, and that's my final offer!

SHOEMAKER

(Waking up) Did he say thirty...golden...guineas?

POSH 1

You drive a hard bargain, mister Shoemaker. Thirty five, and that's it.

WIFE

We'll take it!

(POSH 1 hands over the cash and exits)

WIFE

(Counting it all out) Now this is for the rent. And this is for the groceries. Cheese for the mousetrap. Coal for the fire. And that leaves two guineas.

SHOEMAKER

Two guineas! Just enough to buy some first class leather to make another pair of shoes. I'll go and get it right away, and cut it out tonight, and make them up tomorrow...But wait a minute. I didn't make those shoes. So who did?

WIFE

Yes, who did?

SHOEMAKER

It's a real mystery.

Scene 4: *The same again. Enter RAGS*

RAGS

(He is carrying a plate full of foaming goo. He whispers to the audience) Look what I've got! I found it in the cupboard, and it's all for me! I don't want that greedy fellow Tatters to get his hands on it. So I'm going to put it here, and if Tatters comes in and tries to get any of it, shout out: Rags! All right? Now, let's just have a try. Go on, shout out: Rags! *(Disappointed by the reaction)* Well, that was pathetic. Come on, really loud and clear: Rags! *(Keep this up ad lib until satisfied. On the last shout from the audience, RAGS falls over and does somersault backwards)* That was much better. Now I'm just going to sort out my sewing things.

(Enter TATTERS. Audience reaction)

RAGS

Yes yes, all right. Don't overdo it. *(TATTERS finds the pie and sneaks away with it upstage of RAGS)* What, you've seen Tatters? Where is he? *(More "He's behind you" while TATTERS clearly has the intention of shoving the pie in RAGS's face)*

What, is he over here?... Well, is he over here?...What, over here?...Behind me? Where?...Over there? *(Reaches out his hand to point, and pushes the pie into TATTERS's face)* What...You greedy thing! You might have left a bit for me!

TATTERS

(Scrapes a bit off his face) Here, try a bit.

RAGS

(Apparently tasting it) Yes, not bad! *(He starts to slurp the pie off TATTERS's face.)*

TATTERS

YEEOW!

RAGS

(Thoughtfully) Hm. I didn't expect it to be a meat pie.

TATTERS

That was my ear, you bampot!

RAGS

Oh! Let's try the other one.

TATTERS

No you don't, you cannibal. There's not enough of me to go round. There's only enough of me for me.

RAGS

I like this place. There are all sorts of pies and things in the cupboard.

TATTERS

Yes, they seem to have come up a bit in the world since yesterday. And it's still so neat and tidy here. Look, there's leather all laid out again for a pair of shoes.

RAGS

Are you thinking what I'm thinking?

TATTERS

And are you thinking what I'm thinking?

RAGS

Come on then!

RAGS & TATTERS

Hob shoe hob reprise

RAGS

And a-one, a-two, a-three...

RAGS & TATTERS

A-rrrrrrrubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin –
(*Pause, spit*)

TATTERS

Isn't it a wonderful service we provide!

RAGS

Yes, there's a lot to be said for the National Elf Service.

RAGS & TATTERS

And a-rrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin.

TATTERS

There! A fine job, if I may say so, my dear colleague.

RAGS

Congratulations my dear colleague.

TATTERS

A spiffing job.

RAGS

Absolutely top-hole, old bean! Come on, let's go!

(*Exit*)

Scene 5: *the same. Enter SHOEMAKER. He looks at the bench and does a double take.*

SHOEMAKER

Cobblina! Cobblina! Come quick!

(Enter WIFE)

WIFE

What is it, what's the trouble?

SHOEMAKER

It's happened again! Look!

WIFE

What has? What are you talking about? Oh! Goodness me! Another pair of shoes!
And even better than the last pair! But who can be doing it?

SHOEMAKER

Yes, who is it who's helping us so kindly?

WIFE

And doing such beautiful work?

SHOEMAKER

You know what we ought to do? We ought to sit up tonight, very, very quietly, and
watch and see what happens.

WIFE

Ooh, do you think we should? Do you think we ought to? It might spoil the luck.

SHOEMAKER

No, I think we really ought to. We ought to know whom we have to thank. And
maybe there's something that we can do for them, who knows?

WIFE

Well, all right. If you think so.

SHOEMAKER

Oh yes, I think so. Look out, here comes a customer.

(Enter POSH 2)

POSH 2

Good morning. I wish to purchase a pair of shoes... For my feet.

SHOEMAKER

Oh, those kind of shoes. Well, you might try these ones?

POSH 2

My word, how smart they are!

Quite the latest fashion,
Quite the latest style!
I think if I try these ones on,
I'd dance and skip a mile.
They really are quite handsome,
And so the *dernier cri*,
I really think that these smart shoes
Are just the shoes for me.

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

They really are quite handsome,
And just the latest thing.
To choose such shoes
As these new shoes
Would make a body sing!

SHOEMAKER, WIFE & POSH 2

Good news, good news
For folk who need new shoes!
We've just the very shoes for you
In all the latest hues.
We've yellow shoes and red ones
And shoes in black and brown,
We've –

SHOEMAKER

Hey, wait a minute! (*Confidentially, to WIFE*) We haven't got all those shoes! We've only got this pair!

WIFE

I know that, and you know that, but *he* doesn't know that!

SHOEMAKER

Oh no. He doesn't, does he.

SHOEMAKER, WIFE & POSH 1

We've yellow shoes and red ones
And shoes in black and brown;
We've shoes for Australia,
You wear them upside down!
We've shoes in patent leather
And shoes in finest suede –
We've shoes for every boy and girl,
The finest ever made.
Yes, they're the finest ever made!

POSH 2

Now, let me try them on.

(SHOEMAKER & WIFE *help him off with his shoes. Reactions to pong even stronger than before*) Why, they're marvellous! The most comfortable shoes I ever had! Here, take fifty golden guineas! Don't bother to wrap them up, I'll wear them. And you can toss these ones in the bin. Goodbye, and thank you very much! I'll tell all my posh friends about your wonderful shop. Goodbye!

WIFE

Goodbye! Gosh, fifty golden guineas! Did you hear that? He said he was going to tell all his posh friends about us.

SHOEMAKER

Yes, that's all very well, but we don't know who's making them, do we?

WIFE

Well, tonight, we'll keep watch.

(Slow fade)

Scene 6: *as before. Night time. Enter SHOEMAKER & WIFE with candles.*

WIFE

Did you put the leather out?

SHOEMAKER

Yes, I did. All cut out properly, like before.

WIFE

We'd better blow the candles out, or they'll know we're here.

SHOEMAKER

All right. I'll blow yours out, and you blow mine out.

WIFE

Why don't we blow our own candles out?

SHOEMAKER

Well, just to make sure.

WIFE

Oh, all right.

(They blow each other's candles out)

SHOEMAKER

Are you there?

WIFE

Yes. Are you there?

SHOEMAKER

Yes. Sssshhhhhh!

(Long pause)

Are you still there?

WIFE

Of course I'm still here you twit! Shhhhhhh!

SHOEMAKER

Shhhhh!

(Enter RAGS & TATTERS)

RAGS

Come on Tatters! Look, the leather's all laid out, as usual.

RAGS & TATTERS

Hob shoe hob reprise

TATTERS

Are you ready?

RAGS

Of course!

RAGS & TATTERS

Aaaaaaaaaa-rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin.

(Pause, spit)

Aaaaaaaaaa-rrrrrrrrrrrrrubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin a rubbin a dubbin!

RAGS

There! A splendid job my dear colleague!

TATTERS

A most salubrious piece of work, my dear colleague.

RAGS

Come on. Let's go quick before they wake up.

(Exit RAGS & TATTERS. SHOEMAKER & WIFE emerge from hiding place)

SHOEMAKER

Well! What do you make of that! A little pair of elfin men.

WIFE

And the poor little mites are all in rags and tatters.

SHOEMAKER

Not a decent suit of clothes between them. Aaaahhhh.

WIFE

Do you know what? I could make them a fine suit of clothes each!

SHOEMAKER

Why, so you could!

WIFE

It would be our way of saying thank you!

SHOEMAKER

That's a great idea! I'll give you a hand. They'll be ready by tonight.

WIFE

(To audience) And so, all the next day, we were busy making a suit of clothes for the two little men.

SHOEMAKER

(To audience) And that night, instead of laying out pieces of leather for new shoes, we laid out the new suits, and waited to see what would happen.

(Enter RAGS & TATTERS)

RAGS

Tatters! Tatters! Look at this!

TATTERS

What? Is there lots of leather to stitch up?

RAGS

No, look. Two suits of clothes!

TATTERS

Yes, and they're just our size! Come on, let's try them on.

(Exit RAGS & TATTERS)

WIFE

They've found them! They're trying them on!

SHOEMAKER

Are they pleased with them? What did they say?

WIFE

Ssshhh! Let's see what happens next!

SHOEMAKER

Do you think these are the ones that have been helping us? They might be some other elves, just come for a visit.

WIFE

Don't be silly! Oh, I do hope the suits I made fit them.

SHOEMAKER

They're bound to. You've got a good eye for that sort of thing.

WIFE

Shhhh! They're coming back.

(Re-enter RAGS & TATTERS)

TATTERS

Well, look at you! How smart you look!

RAGS

And just look at you! The very height of fashion!

RAGS & TATTERS

Making clothes is a real fine art.
You and I never looked so smart.
Every pleat and collar and stitch
Makes us look like we're filthy rich!
Nobody ever could tell
That never did we look so swell!
'Cos look at the lovely suits we've found!
They suit us both right down to the ground
From head to toe we'll excite such passion,
For we're at the very height of fashion;
Yes, nobody ever could tell
That never did we look so swell.

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

Making clothes is a real fine art.
Both of them never looked so smart.
The whole ensemble meets the case;
Every button and bow and lace,
Yes, nobody ever could tell
That never did they look so swell.

WIFE

The suits I made are just the ticket!

SHOEMAKER

Thorn-proof in any copse or thicket!

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

They'll be the envy of elfin eyes,
Suits bespoke in the elfin size.

RAGS & TATTERS, SHOEMAKER & WIFE

Yes nobody ever could tell
That never did they look so smashingly dashingly
So Beau Nashingly swell!

(Exit RAGS & TATTERS)

WIFE

Well, they seemed pleased, didn't they?

SHOEMAKER

And so they should, Cobblina, my dear! You did a fantastic job!

WIFE

(Tenderly) Oh, go on, you big softie...I wonder if they'll ever come back?

(Re-enter RAGS & TATTERS)

RAGS & TATTERS

But after that night, the two elves never came back to visit the shoemaker's shop.

SHOEMAKER & WIFE

But their fortunes changed from that moment on, and the shoemaker and his wife lived –

SHOEMAKER

Prosperously –

WIFE

And happily –

SHOEMAKER & WIFE, RAGS & TATTERS

Ever after!

(Reprise of Nobody ever looked so swell)

Curtain