

Cast of Characters

A Soldier (Cap'n Price)

A Woman of Snow

A Bear

Two Girls of Snow

A Boy of Snow

A Kangaroo

A Tiger Hand Puppet

A Sea Lion Hand Puppet

A Clown Hand Puppet

An Elephant Hand Puppet

A Jack-in-the-Box

Place

A snow-covered expanse.

Time

Any time.

So Much Snow

by Emmett Loverde

SCENE: A snow-covered expanse. The base of a gigantic tree is upstage, off to one side, and a particularly large snowdrift (or something) is upstage opposite the tree. It is morning. (The “snow” consists of Styrofoam peanuts or some sort of white material.) Beautifully-colored lights shine down from the sky.

AT RISE: A sprightly tune, played by a flute or piccolo, is heard off stage. A SOLDIER in a colorful uniform enters playing said instrument and looking battered, perhaps from battle. This is CAP’N PRICE. CAP’N PRICE limps slightly as he pulls a little wooden wagon laden with plain cardboard boxes, but his manner is upbeat. On his chest is tacked a yellow letter-sized sheet of paper containing the handwritten message “OLD-EST BOY”.

(Whistling still, CAP’N PRICE stumbles over something buried in the snow. He stares down at it, astonished. A woman’s face! He bends down and “uncovers” the woman by gathering and rearranging the snow and shaping it into the figure of a reclining woman. As soon as he finishes his work, a beautiful WOMAN OF SNOW—all in white, of course—opens her eyes.

(He reaches out his hand and she hesitantly takes it in hers. He guides her to her feet, then bows to her. The music he had been playing now resumes as if by magic and they begin to dance beautifully together.

(At first, they are far apart, touching only with the tips of their fingers. As their dance continues, they move closer together, until their arms almost completely encircle each other. Suddenly, she

leaps away from him, frightened.)

WOMAN. You will melt me!

CAP'N PRICE. Show me how *not* to.

WOMAN. Stay there.

(She backs away a few feet, then stops, squinting at his chest.)

Why are you wearing that sign? Are you the oldest boy?

CAP'N PRICE. And the youngest.

WOMAN. *(Smiles.)* Around here, at least.

CAP'N PRICE. Help me make more.

WOMAN. More boys?

CAP'N PRICE. And girls.

WOMAN. *(Suspicious:)* How?

CAP'N PRICE. The same way I made you.

(Together they begin pushing and gathering snow to make a new person.)

WOMAN. What's your name?

CAP'N PRICE. Everyone calls me Cap'n Price.

WOMAN. Captain of what?

CAP'N PRICE. Everyone.

WOMAN. *(Looks around.)* Where is everyone?

(Before he can answer, the small pile they've made begins to move.)

CAP'N PRICE. *(To the snow:)* No! You're not finished!

(A furry pink animal pops its head out from under the snow. It shakes itself, flinging snow in every direction. It is a BEAR. As the BEAR bows grandly to the WOMAN, CAP'N PRICE can see the yellow hand-lettered sign on its back: "GIRL." The BEAR turns to CAP'N PRICE and bows.)

BEAR. How d'y'do?

WOMAN. You don't sound like a lady!

BEAR. *(To WOMAN, coldly:)* Madam, neither do you. *(To CAP'N PRICE:)* What's her problem?

CAP'N PRICE. Your sign.

BEAR. I've never gotten a good look at it.

WOMAN. It says "Girl." And if you're a girl, I'm an elephant!

BEAR. Thank you both for uncovering me. I could barely move.

CAP'N PRICE. What should we call you?

WOMAN. In spite of your sign, I refuse to address you as "Girl" just on principle!

BEAR. I'd prefer that you address me as little as possible. *(To CAP'N PRICE)* Why not just call me "Bear"?

(Everyone nods. A good solution.)

WOMAN. Now that you're here, you can help us make children.

CAP'N PRICE. *(Quickly:)* Out of snow.

(The three begin shaping three children out of snow: two girls and a boy. CAP'N PRICE is finished first. BEAR stops his work to help the wobbly SNOW GIRL #1 to her feet. The WOMAN joins them, her eyes beaming at SNOW GIRL #1 as though she were her own.)

(As soon as she stands up straight, SNOW GIRL #1 opens her eyes to focus on what is in front of her: a gigantic pink wad with arms.)

SNOW GIRL #1. Candy!

(To the WOMAN'S dismay, SNOW GIRL #1 dashes directly into BEAR'S cuddly arms—ignoring the WOMAN'S own, which are wide open. Laughing, BEAR hugs the child back. Furious, the WOMAN plunges back into her work.)

(BEAR, CAP'N PRICE, and SNOW GIRL #1 quickly complete a second child of snow: SNOW BOY. As he struggles to stand up, the WOMAN dashes over and stands at the ready, arms outstretched. SNOW BOY opens his eyes and focuses them on the

bright uniform of CAP'N PRICE.)

SNOW BOY. Soda pop!

(He dashes into the surprised CAP'N PRICE'S arms. Defeated, the WOMAN trudges back to finish her work. The others try to help her but she swats their hands away.)

(Finally her creation comes to life: a second snow girl. SNOW GIRL #2 staggers to her feet and opens her eyes, looking directly at CAP'N PRICE...and does nothing, much to the WOMAN'S delight.)

(Next, SNOW GIRL #2 turns to BEAR. Again no reaction. The WOMAN can scarcely contain her glee as SNOW GIRL #2 turns to face her...and does nothing.)

WOMAN. Don't you know me?

SNOW GIRL #2. I'm hungry!

SNOW GIRL #1. So am I!

SNOW BOY. *(To BEAR, sputtering bits of pink fur out of his mouth:)*
You're not candy!

(BEAR rubs the tender spot where SNOW BOY bit him. Suddenly a long, furry ear pokes up out of the snow.)

CAP'N PRICE. *(To BEAR:)* Is that one of yours?

(BEAR feels for his own two ears, then shakes his head.)

Then whose is it?

BEAR. Maybe it belongs to a cat.

CAP'N PRICE. *(Shakes head.)* The ear's too skinny.

SNOW GIRL #1. A bird?

WOMAN. *(Sneers.)* A bird? Where are its feathers?

SNOW GIRL #1. What do I know? *(Points at BEAR.)* I thought he was candy.

SNOW BOY. Maybe it's a weed!

SNOW GIRL #1. A furry weed?

SNOW BOY. *(Shrugs, pointing at CAP'N PRICE.)* I thought he was soda pop.

(A second long ear appears next to the first.)

WOMAN. A bunny rabbit!

(A cute little head to which the ears are attached pops up a moment later...but the creature has no long teeth.)

CAP'N PRICE. Hmm...no long teeth...

(The bunny-like creature begins to bounce. It bounces higher and higher each time. With each successive leap, more and more of a handwritten yellow sign on its chest is revealed. The sign reads "DOG".)

BEAR. Do dogs do that?

WOMAN. Certainly not! If *that's* a dog, then I'm an—

BEAR. Right, you're an elephant. We got it.

(On its next bounce, a pouch on the creature's belly peeks into view.)

It's a kangaroo!

(Nods all around. The KANGAROO'S final bounce carries it all the way out of its hole in the snow...and into the arms of the surprised WOMAN.)

KANGAROO. Mommy!

(The WOMAN struggles out from under the KANGAROO and backs away.)

WOMAN. I'm not good with animals. Besides, *you're* the mommy—a mommy kangaroo.

KANGAROO. I'm neither!

SNOW BOY. Then what's with the pouch?

KANGAROO. That's a satchel.

SNOW GIRL #2. And the big feet?

KANGAROO. I am specially-abled, so please mind your comments.

BEAR. You can call it a “satchel” if you want, but it’s still in your tummy and still meant for carrying baby kangaroos.

KANGAROO. I’m not a—

WOMAN. And the only animal that’s specially-able to jump like that is a kangaroo!

KANGAROO. (*Starts to cry.*) Please call me something else.

CAP’N PRICE. Does anyone have a problem with calling her “Dog”, like her sign says?

(No one does.)

KANGAROO. And please, if you must also give me a nickname, could you make it something along the lines of “Slim” or “Toothpick”?

WOMAN. But you’re anything but!

(The KANGAROO cries harder.)

BEAR. There, there. She didn’t mean it.

WOMAN. Of course I did. If that enormous creature is “skinny”, then I’m—

BEAR. About to be eaten alive!

WOMAN. (*To KANGAROO:*) Accept who you are. I’m made of snow. That means I’m going to melt soon.

(Alarmed, the SNOW CHILDREN crowd around her.)

SNOW GIRL #1. But we’re made of snow, too!

SNOW BOY. Does that mean we’re not going to live forever?

WOMAN. (*Nods sadly.*) I’m sorry I brought you into a world you would have to leave so soon.

BEAR. *You brought??*

(CAP’N PRICE calms him with a quick squeeze on his shaggy arm.)

SNOW BOY. (*Shrugs.*) It’s okay. So far I’ve had a great time!

SNOW GIRL #1. Yeah. It’s not like we’re seeing famine and greed and everything.

SNOW GIRL #2. (*Pats the WOMAN'S shoulder comfortingly.*) And we've learned about dogs and cats and bunny rabbits and kangaroos and bears and all sorts of ridiculous creatures and we have this wonderful sky full of brightly-colored stars.

BEAR. Ridiculous creatures?

(Laughing, SNOW GIRL #2 dashes out of BEAR'S clutches, and he gives her a merry chase. The other two SNOW CHILDREN join in, and soon everyone is running, leaping, and laughing.)

(Giggling, SNOW GIRL #2 nearly trips over a wide flat something buried in the snow. She uncovers it enough to glimpse a hand-lettered yellow sign that reads "YOUNGEST BOY".)

Snow Girl #2. Look! It says "Youngest Boy."

(Everyone gathers around the box as BEAR and CAP'N PRICE lift off the wooden cover and pull out its contents one by one: several large, flat pieces of cloth with a different person or animal painted on each—a tiger, a sea lion, a clown, and an elephant. Without hesitation BEAR hands the elephant tapestry to the WOMAN.)

BEAR. Now you're all set.

(The WOMAN shoves the tapestry back at him, insulted. CAP'N PRICE pulls out a handbill and holds it up.)

CAP'N PRICE. (*Reads:*) "Directions for Enjoying Your New Circus Hand Puppets."

BEAR. Whose hands are that big?

SNOW GIRL #1. Yours, almost.

(BEAR smiles at her. The KANGAROO and the SNOW CHILDREN drape the gigantic hand puppets over snowdrifts in order to admire them better. BEAR surveys the elephant puppet critically.)

BEAR. It's too thin.

KANGAROO. It's too flat.

BEAR. You're right.

(He picks up the fabric bag with the elephant's picture—really,

two pieces of painted cloth sown together at the edges—and begins blowing air into it.

(As the ELEPHANT fills with air, it comes to life. It starts swinging its trunk to and fro, much to BEAR'S annoyance, and then begins picking snow up in its trunk and spitting it at whoever is nearby.)

If you don't cut that out, no more air!

ELEPHANT. *(Laughs playfully.)* I'm an elephant! I'm taking a dust bath! With snow!

BEAR. You don't have to give *me* one.

(But he resumes blowing up the puppet. The KANGAROO and the SNOW CHILDREN scramble to inflate the other puppets. Soon the air is filled with happy shouts of newborn creatures. The SEA LION puppet keeps trying to nudge the KANGAROO with his fabric nose, but the KANGAROO leaps out of his reach. The CLOWN and the ELEPHANT give rides to the two SNOW GIRLS. The TIGER boxes teasingly with the SNOW BOY.

(The ELEPHANT puppet, who has leaked a lot of air by this point, struggles valiantly to the top of the cottage-shaped mound.)

ELEPHANT. I'm running out of air!

BEAR. So come down and we'll give you some more.

ELEPHANT. I must find my own! My own breath, my own voice, my own wind!

WOMAN. Don't worry, you have plenty of wind already.

CAP'N PRICE. *(To ELEPHANT:)* What are you doing up there?

(By now the ELEPHANT is so lacking in air that his voice is little more than a gurgle and his body the consistency of an old blanket.)

ELEPHANT. Being available for a visit by my muse. Muses fancy high places...

(He trails off into silence, a mere piece of cloth once more.)

SNOW GIRL #1. They're all dying!

(Indeed they are. The SEA LION waves a sad good-bye with the last of its strength. The CLOWN is now merely a tall hat in a pool of bright colors. The TIGER makes a final swat at the SNOW BOY'S nose.)

SNOW BOY. Hey! That's the first time you missed me!

(But the TIGER is too weak to answer. Soon all the puppets are emptied of life.)

KANGAROO. *(To CAP'N PRICE:)* Does your rifle have a bayonet?

CAP'N PRICE. Yes. Why?

WOMAN. Oh no, don't you kill yourself now!

KANGAROO. *(To CAP'N PRICE; ignoring the WOMAN:)* If you please.

(Hesitantly, he offers her his weapon. KANGAROO takes it and—before anyone can stop her—she thrusts it into the seam that runs from her left armpit down to the bottom of her left foot. Everyone screams—everyone, that is, except KANGAROO.)

What's the matter?

SNOW BOY. Didn't that hurt?

KANGAROO. No. I'm stuffed with stuffing, after all.

BEAR. Like a turkey?

KANGAROO. No, like a pillow.

(Puffy white stuffing pokes out of the opened seam. KANGAROO pulls a few gobs out and the two SNOW GIRLS stuff it deep inside the SEA LION, filling out his flippers. Immediately, the flippers leap up and began flapping wildly...but the motion knocks the stuffing back out of the animal and it drops, motionless again.)

BEAR. Maybe you should start with his head.

(The SNOW GIRLS fill the SEA LION'S head all full of stuffing. It begins barking happily. Encouraged, KANGAROO gives more and more of her stuffing to the three SNOW CHILDREN, who continue to fill the SEA LION.)

(In moments, the SEA LION is bounding all over the place. KANGAROO sags slightly but is overjoyed.)

SEA LION. I can do anything!

BEAR. Within reason.

(The SEA LION ignores him and races to the roof of the cottage mound, laughing all the way. He races toward the edge...)

ALL BUT THE SEA LION. Watch out!

(Just before diving off the roof, the SEA LION grips the edge... and his body flies over his flippers and the stuffing flies out of his body and lands in a heap below. He is nearly "empty" once more, holding fast to the roof by two flippers with just enough stuffing in them to hold fast.)

WOMAN. He should have let go.

(The SNOW CHILDREN pry the SEA LION'S flippers loose from the roof and bring him down for restuffing. This time, BEAR sits on the SEA LION.)

SEA LION. You're squishing me!

BEAR. Do you promise not to do anything stupid?

SEA LION. What do you expect? My head's full of stuffing.

WOMAN. Why not a knot?

BEAR. What do you mean?

(The WOMAN ties a knot in the open end of the SEA LION, trapping the stuffing inside.)

CAP'N PRICE. Ingenious!

KANGAROO. Smart, too!

WOMAN. *(Nodding and smiling.)* Thank you, thank you. *(Glares at the others.)* Well??

SNOW BOY. I thought it was pretty cool.

SNOW GIRL #1. Yes, very cool.

SNOW GIRL #2. *(Nodding.)* Cool. Yes.

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