

ELF 1. (Pretending leadership) Come on! It's time to go! (Lights coming up)

ELF 2. Time to go. . . dawn is breaking!

ELF 3. Hurry, scurry! Oooooo!

(ELVES leap through doorway, led by ELF 1. Their lanterns are seen bobbing Offstage.

ELVES' Exit Music. Lights up as SHOEMAKER wakes from his sleep with loud yawn. He rubs eyes, yawns again, covers his mouth as he remembers sleeping WIFE. He gets out of bed, stretches, goes to doorway and looks out, breathing deeply of morning air. Turning, he spots audience.)

SHOEMAKER. Ah, I see you're still here! ~~(Goes downstage)~~ It's a fine winter morning! Good morning! Will you wish me the same? ~~(Listens)~~ Thank you. ~~(Waves a last greeting and goes to bench. He is about to put on his apron when he stops in amazement.)~~ What's this? ~~(Holds up pair of shoes ELVES made)~~ What is this? Am I dreaming? ~~(Puts down shoes, rubs eyes, examines spectacles)~~ Where did these come from? ~~(Searches wildly for pieces of leather)~~ Why. . . they're made from the leather I cut last night! And what shoes! They're beautiful! I don't understand! Wife! Wife, wake up! ~~(Goes to bed and shakes her. She sits up, half-alarmed.)~~

WIFE. What is it? Why are you shouting?

SHOEMAKER. Look! Look!

WIFE. You've finished them already?

SHOEMAKER. No, no. . . not I! I found them like this when I awoke!

WIFE. What?