



A one-act dramatic play
The Old Woman and the Eagle
by Idries Shah

CAST

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

The Old Woman

The Eagle: with rounded beak, long claws, and tufted feathers on his head.

The Other Eagle: who also has a rounded beak, long claws, and tufted feathers.

PROPS NEEDED

Clippers (or little scissors)

Two Brushes

THE SCRIPT FOR *THE OLD WOMAN AND THE EAGLE*

Narrator 1: Once upon a time, when cups were plates and when knives and forks grew in the ground...

Narrator 2: ...there was an old woman who had never seen an eagle.

Narrator 3: One day, an eagle was flying high in the sky and decided to stop for a rest.

Narrator 1: He swooped down and landed...

All of the Narrators: ...where do you think?

Narrator 2: He landed right at the front door of the old woman's house.

The Old Woman [staring sharply at the eagle]: Oh my, what a funny pigeon you are!

Narrator 3: She figured he was a pigeon, you see, because although she had never seen an eagle, she had seen lots of pigeons.

The Eagle [straightening up high]: I am not a pigeon at all.

The Old Woman: Nonsense! I've lived for more years than you've got feathers in your wings, and I know a pigeon when I see one.

The Eagle: If you're so sure that I'm a pigeon, then why do you say I'm a funny pigeon?

The Old Woman: Well, just look at your beak. It's all bent. Pigeons have nice, straight beaks. And look at those claws of yours! Pigeons don't have long claws like that. And look at the feathers on top of your head! They are all messed up and need to be brushed down. Pigeons have nice, smooth feathers on their heads.

Narrator 1: And before the eagle could reply, she got hold of him and carried him into the house.

Narrator 2: She took her clippers and trimmed his claws until they were quite short.

Narrator 3: She pulled on his beak until it was quite straight.

Narrator 1: And she brushed down the lovely tuft of feathers on top of his head until it was quite flat.

The Old Woman: Now you look more like a pigeon! That's so much better!

Narrator 2: But the eagle didn't feel any better. In fact, he felt quite sad.

Narrator 3: As soon as the old woman let him go he flew to the top of a tree.

Narrator 1: As he was sitting there wondering what to do, another eagle came along and alighted on the bough beside him.

The Other Eagle: Well, well. Aren't you a funny looking eagle!

The Eagle: Well, at least you know I'm an eagle. Thank goodness for that!

The Other Eagle: What happened to you?

The Eagle: Well, an old woman thought I was a pigeon. And since pigeons don't have long claws, she trimmed my claws. And since pigeons don't have hooked beaks, she straightened my beak. And since pigeons don't have tufts of feathers on their heads, she brushed my tuft down.

The Other Eagle: She must be a very foolish old woman, indeed.

Narrator 2: And with that, he took a brush from under his wing, and he brushed the first eagle's feathers back into a tuft.

Narrator 3: And with his claws he bent the eagle's beak down until it was nicely rounded once again.

The Other Eagle: There now! You look like an eagle again. Don't worry about your claws, they'll soon grow back.

The Eagle: Thank you, my friend!

The Other Eagle: Think nothing of it...But remember this, there are a lot of silly people in the world who think that pigeons are eagles, or that eagles are pigeons, or that all sorts of things are other things. And when they are silly like that, they do very foolish things. We must be sure to keep away from that silly old woman and the people like her.

Narrator 1: And with that, the eagles flew back to their own country...

Narrator 2: ...and returned to their own nests.

Narrator 3: And they never went near that silly old woman again.

All of the Cast: And so everyone lived happily ever after.

THE END