

MOP TOP

A ten-minute play for young audiences by
Wysteria Edwards

Based on the book by
Don Freeman

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

MOPPY, a young boy.

MOTHER

MR. LAWSON

A WOMAN ON A LADDER

A LADY WITHOUT HER GLASSES

SALESMAN

MR. BARBERPOLI

(A YOUNG BOY enters dressed in overalls and striped T-shirt and bright, red hair that looks like a mop on his head.)

MOPPY: This is my story. A story of a boy who NEVER wanted to have my hair cut. Everybody calls me Moppy for a reason. Do you think my hair looks like a mop? *(Waits for a response from the children:)* Well, I don't care what anybody says about my hair or what they call me, for that matter. I just want to stay at home and play...do the things that make me happy. I play all sorts of things! Let me show you. *(While he explains, he acts things out for the audience:)* Sometimes I play that I'm a soaring eagle flying over cannons and valleys.

(The SOUNDS of a FLUTE playing a Native American song.)

Other times I pretend I'm a roaring lion stalking my prey through the African Savannah.

(Sounds of AFRICAN TRIBAL MUSIC as he leaps around the stage and growls at the audience.)

See, I need my hair to look like a lion's mane! You were scared, weren't you?

(He waits for a response from the audience, very proud of himself. He begins to hang from the branches of a "tree" as his MOTHER enters.)

MOTHER: Pardon me, but who do you think you are dangling there—Tarzan?

MOPPY: Oh no, Mother, I'm not Tarzan! I'm a man from Mars and I'm visiting all the stars and other planets!

(The SOUNDS of MISSION CONTROL during a space mission.)

MOTHER: Well then, Mister Man-from-Mars, could you plan to make a landing on this earth sometime today? We want

you to hop on over to hairdresser and get that floppy mop clipped off before your birthday party tomorrow. You want to be able to SEE your presents don't you? You won't if there's a bunch of hair in your eyes. Here's some money. (*Handing it to him. He stuffs it into his pocket.*) I've just called Mr. Barberpoli and he says he'll be ready for you at four o'clock sharp. What time is it now?

(He looks at his watch.)

MOPPY: It's 3:30 now.

MOTHER: Well, let's see you hippity-hop to the barbershop all by yourself.

MOPPY: Off I go!

(He zooms off like a rocket being launched. She laughs and exits. After he rounds the corner though, he loses interest.)

I don't need my hair cut at all — anyway not now.

(He walks along until some bright red lollipops catch his eyes in the candy store window. As he is standing there, a SHAGGY DOG, with his eyes hidden, enters and barks at him, wagging his tail. He bends down to pet the pup. The pup rolls on his back for Moppy to scratch his tummy.)

What a silly-looking pup you are! You're the one who needs a haircut, not me!

(The shaggy dog barks and exits. Moppy continues to walk until he comes across MR. LAWSON mowing his yard.)

That lawn is what needs a haircut, not me!

(Mr. Lawson stops to wipe his brow.)

MR. LAWSON: How about letting me use this machine on that grassy patch of yours, boy? It could do with some mowing.

MOPPY: No thanks, Mr. Lawson.

(He continues on his way. A WOMAN ON A LADDER is snipping branches off a low, droopy tree.)

MOPPY: Maybe a tree needs a clipping, but not me!

WOMAN ON A LADDER: Oh, I don't know about that. You could do with a few snips of these snippers, mister!

MOPPY: No thanks, ma'am!

(He skips along until he sees the barbershop. He starts to walk to the door but changes his mind. He turns to address the audience.)

I just don't want a haircut. I think I'm afraid. Perhaps I'll hide behind this barrel of brooms and brush and fancy mops.

(He moves behind the barrel. A LADY WITHOUT HER GLASSES approaches the barrel with a SALESMAN.)

LADY WITHOUT HER GLASSES: I'm wanting a mop to help me keep my kitchen floor clean.

SALESMAN: We have lots to choose from right over here.

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