



## Over the Moon: A Musical Play

By Jodi Picoult, Jake van Leer, Ellen Wilber

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Master storyteller and bestselling author Jodi Picoult teams up with Jake van Leer and Ellen Wilber to bring you an original musical, sure to breathe life into any middle-school and high school drama curriculum. Part Shakespearean comedy and part Fractured Fairy Tales, Over the Moon is all fun. Narrated by a cross-dressing Hairy Godmother (no, that's not a typo), the story begins when Luna (the moon) descends to a small town on earth disguised as a boy, and sets out to help humans find love. But Luna herself falls in love with Prince Jack... who's in love with Felicity... who has fallen for Luna. On the way to happily ever after are a steady stream of clever puns and topical jokes about American Idol, universal health care, Bernie Madoff, and just about every fairy tale creature you've ever heard of! With nineteen original hum-worthy songs and plenty of spots to tailor the play to any city or town, Over the Moon is the perfect choice for every school looking to perform an energetic show that's fresh, funny, and timeless.

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## **Over the Moon: A Musical Play** By Jodi Picoult, Jake van Leer, Ellen Wilber **Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Begin with Cinderella, Pinocchio, Humpty Dumpty and myriad other fairy-tale and nursery-rhyme figures. Add an athletic princess pretending to be dainty, a moon hiding her light and dressed as a boy, a shy prince and a scary, lonely giant who all have crushes on the obviously wrong match. There's also an evil queen and a "hairy godmother." Place them in odd variations on typical fairy-tale plots and mix with music and a moral. Designed specifically to be performed by a large cast of middle- and high-school students, the authors (the novelist and her teenage son) pepper the script with snappy one-liners, local and pop-culture references, as well as social and political issues, some left of center (the narrator/hairy godmother is a cross-dressing male; there is a gay-marriage reference in a faux news report).... The play is fast paced and full of fun, with the overlying theme of staying true to oneself handled with a light touch. Sheet music for all the songs is provided. Applause, applause.

#### About the Author

Jodi Picoult received an AB in creative writing from Princeton and a master's degree in education from Harvard. The recipient of the 2003 New England Book Award for her entire body of work, she is the author of twenty-one novels, including the #1 *New York Times* bestsellers *House Rules*, *Handle With Care*, *Change of Heart*, and *My Sister's Keeper*, for which she received the American Library Association's Margaret Alexander Edwards Award. She lives in New Hampshire with her husband and three children. Visit her website at [JodiPicoult.com](http://JodiPicoult.com).

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#### AUTHOR'S NOTE

I am fourteen years old and the boy sitting opposite me is feeding me marbles. "The rain in Spain," I say, in a thick Cockney accent, "stays mainly in the plain." I am Eliza Doolittle for the next two hours, and a few scenes later when I reappear, elegant, wearing a bottle-green velvet gown, I hear the collective gasp of the audience.

When I was growing up, theater was a big part of my life. It gave me a chance to be someone I wasn't; it taught me how to succeed at public speaking; it gave me an instant group of friends. My very first kiss, in fact, came from a boy playing the Artful Dodger in a production of *Oliver!* So perhaps it isn't surprising that when my own kids were in middle school, I wanted them to have the same experience I did onstage. The only problem? The theater program in their school didn't offer many opportunities. My solution? To create my own theater program instead. I wrote a short play that was fun and funny and age-appropriate—and that play, unlike most of my novels, actually had a happy ending. My children were too young at the time to read my books, and this was a way to share my writing with them.

The Trumbull Hall Troupe was born with ten kids on a tiny stage in a community hall attached to a local church. A friend, Marjorie Rose, was our director. Our modus operandi was twofold: to raise money for charity so that our kids realized that even at a young age they could make a difference in the world, and to provide a theater experience to the kids who might otherwise be crushed by a traditional audition process—those who were quiet, or who had no stage experience. If you were invited to be in the troupe, you had a part, and that was that. The father of one cast member could play Beatles songs on the guitar, so I rewrote the lyrics to some of those songs and peppered the play with them. We teamed up with the Zienzele Foundation, a group that provides help to HIV/AIDS orphans in Zimbabwe. The kids over there became pen pals with our cast, so there was an immediate and real connection that the work they were doing onstage was benefiting children half a world away.

To say our theater program experiment was successful would be an understatement. As the program grew, so did the production staff. My son, Jake van Leer, began cowriting the plays, which grew more complex and accommodated larger casts. My friend Ellen Wilber, a veteran musical performer and longtime music teacher, came on board to write original music for the plays and to serve as music director. Alexandra Lovejoy and I started codirecting the shows, and Allyson Weiner Sawyer became our choreographer. We began working with Dan Cragan to transcribe the music. We quickly outgrew our space and moved our performance venue to the middle school auditorium. Now, seven years into it, the Trumbull Hall Troupe has forty kids performing onstage and working behind the scenes. Ellen and I have written the music and lyrics to more than one hundred songs. Our plays have raised more than forty thousand dollars for charity. And yet our mission is still the same: to create an original musical that can be performed by kids ages twelve to eighteen (many of whom are on a stage for the first time), the ticket revenue from which is used to benefit children whose lives are less fortunate than the troupe's own.

I have heard from many drama teachers who bemoan the fact that their kids perform the same old chestnuts over and over, that few are really age appropriate, and that only a limited number of musicals accommodates a good-sized cast. *Over the Moon* is the antidote to those problems. In the spirit of inclusiveness, we have a tradition at the troupe of awarding stickers at the end of each rehearsal to three kids who have worked exceptionally hard. You'd think that high school kids would scoff at the thought of receiving a princess sticker, but they loved it (so much so that they'd yell at us if we forgot to give out the stickers at the end of rehearsal), and their scripts became dotted with the proof of positive feedback. We've provided stickers here, just in case you'd like to incorporate this tradition into your own theater program.

I am proud of how far the Trumbull Hall Troupe has come, and of the money we've raised for charity—but most of all, I'm struck by the tools we have given our cast members to carry with them through the rest of their lives. I've watched the ease our cast members have when it comes to speaking in public; I've seen children who were quiet as mice get up two years later and belt out a song; I've watched shy kids shrug themselves into a character and become someone completely different. I've witnessed upperclassmen mentoring underclassmen; I've seen how kids from different school districts learn how to collaborate instead of compete. I have watched kids take risks and exceed even their own expectations. The most magical thing happens in drama: By trying on another persona for size, these young actors learn more about themselves.

It has been thirty years since I played Eliza Doolittle, but if you beg me, I can still sing “Wouldn’t It Be Loverly” in a full-out Cockney accent. Every time I speak at a book signing, I am reminded of the first time I stepped onstage as a teenager, heart pounding, and looked out at an audience. I loved musical theater then, and I love it now, because drama brings back that childhood moment when the world is full of possibility and you can be anything and anyone you want. It's no coincidence that the art form you'll see here is called a “play.” To that end, I believe that theater for kids should be fun, energetic, and enjoyable. But I also believe Shakespeare when he wrote “all the world's a stage.” What if a silly fractured fairy tale does not just

entertain, but makes one shy kid who's watching think, *I'd like to be a part of that one day?* What if the message in *Over the Moon*—to be yourself and be proud of it—is absorbed by the audience and taken back into the real world? Frankly, I cannot think of a better way for life to imitate art.

Jodi Picoult

August 2010

### **CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)**

Hairy GodmotherA hairy, masculine godmother; narratorJohnny NovaRadio show hostStellaA star, and friend to LunaBellaA star, and friend to LunaLunaThe moon; disguised as a boy named Leo when in Hanoveria; in love with Prince JackNewsboyNewspaper salesperson in the townBakerBaker in the townFishmongerFishmonger in the townFlower LadyFlower lady in the townButcherButcher in the townFerociaQueen of Hanoveria, sister of HugoGertrudePrincess of Hanoveria, daughter of FerociaEunicePrincess of Hanoveria, daughter of FerociaFelicityA young lady of noble birth who is a bit of a tomboy; smitten with Leo FelicityPrince JackPrince of Hanoveria, nephew of Ferocia and son of Hugo; in love with FelicityMama BearBear who lives with Papa Bear, Baby Bear, Jean-Claude, and HugoPapa BearBear on the outskirts of HanoveriaBaby BearBear on the outskirts of HanoveriaJean-ClaudeServant to Hugo; was cast out of HanoveriaHugoKing of Hanoveria; was cast out after Ferocia's spell turned him into a giantPinocchioA wooden puppet, servant to FerociaCinderellaA princess married to Prince CharmingGrumpySon of Snow WhiteSneezyDaughter of Snow WhiteSnow WhiteA princess married to a different Prince CharmingSleeping BeautyA princess with narcolepsy, married to a princeTree 1A talking tree in the Enchanted ForestTree 2A talking tree in the Enchanted ForestHumpty DumptyA big egg traveling the country on a HarleyWolvesWolves of Hanoveria that attack FelicityLi'l Red From The HoodYoung hip-hop girl; interested in JackGoldilocksYoung girl with blond hair; interested in JackOld Woman Who Lives In A ShoeOlder woman; interested in JackPorkyOne of three pigs; construction workerHamletOne of three pigs; construction workerFrancis BaconOne of three pigs; construction workerBlitzerWolf who is foreman of a construction companyRapunzelGirl who escapes from her towerPrince SheldonPrince who was supposed to rescue Rapunzel from her towerMickeyOne of three blind miceMinnieOne of three blind miceAlgernonOne of three blind mice

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### **SCENE 1**

A cross-dressed HAIRY GODMOTHER enters, holding a book.

**HAIRY GODMOTHER**

(opening book)

Once upon a time. . .

(beat)

What? What's the matter? You've never seen a hairy godmother before?

(beat)

Maybe you were expecting someone -- a little different? Someone with a little less testosterone? Some sweet old grandma type with a blue cloak and a magic wand? A FAIRY godmother?

(beat)

Well, news flash: that was a TYPO!

(beat)

You can't believe everything you read in fairy tales. Jack and the magic beanstalk? We're talking genetically modified plants, here. And the three little pigs? They went on to become [Insert name of local development company].

(beat)

I hear what you're saying: the whole point of a fairy tale is that everyone knows the story. Sure as the moon's in the sky every night, Cinderella's always gonna lose her glass slipper and Rapunzel's always gonna have a grooming problem, and me, well, I'm gonna wave the wand around and sing "Bibbidi-Bobbidi-Boo."

(beat)

But what if the moon WASN'T in the sky? Because THAT'S a story I bet you've never heard. . .

He walks off, revealing:

**SCENE 2**

LUNA, the moon, and her friends, STELLA and BELLA, are up in the sky, listening to the radio.

**JOHNNY NOVA**

Howdy folks, welcome back to the number one satellite radio show in the galaxy. I'm Johnny Nova, comin' at you so bright you better keep your shades on!

**STELLA**

Guys, guys! It's on again!!!

**JOHNNY NOVA**

Now, let's get back to some of those hit Nep-Tunes. . .

**STELLA**

Hey, Bella, does this dress make my asteroid look fat?

**BELLA**

Honestly, Stella, you KNOW you're a heavenly body.

**LUNA**

People down there just don't get it!

**STELLA**

Don't tell me you're spying again.

**BELLA**

Oh, stop being such a blue moon! Humans mess everything up.

**LUNA**

Seeing them throw away love makes me want to just stop glowing! Seriously, girls, why else are we here?

Bella and Stella look at each other and shrug.

**BELLA**

The universal health care plan?

**LUNA**

No! All those wishes on a falling star. All those kisses in the moonlight. But each night I see humans throwing away true love.

*SONG 1: OVER THE MOON*

*LUNA:*

*When it comes to love, you shoot for the stars.*

*When it comes to love, no journey's too far.*

*Love is worth waiting for.*

*Love conquers all*

*right from the moment you fall.*

*LUNA WITH STELLA AND BELLA:*

*Someday I will find the guy of my dreams.*

*Someday I will find a fella who seems*

*like he was meant for me,*

*a perfect pair,*

*and then a lifetime we'll share!*

*CHORUS:*

*Every word he whispers*

*is a secret tune.*

*Every one of his kisses, I know,*

*will send me over the moon!*

*Maybe one day I will walk down a street,  
and, by chance, our eyes will happen to meet.  
And we will know right then  
we're meant to be,  
forever after happily!*

*And we will know right then*

*we're meant to be,*

*forever after happily!*

**JOHNNY NOVA**

This one's going out to all you lovers. . .

**LUNA**

That's it! Girls, I'm leaving. If people on Earth can't find true love, I'm going to find it for them!

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## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Anthony Pippin:**

As people who live in the modest era should be up-date about what going on or info even knowledge to make these people keep up with the era that is certainly always change and progress. Some of you maybe will certainly update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice for yourself but the problems coming to you is you don't know which one you should start with. This Over the Moon: A Musical Play is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, as this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

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**Bertha Morrison:**

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