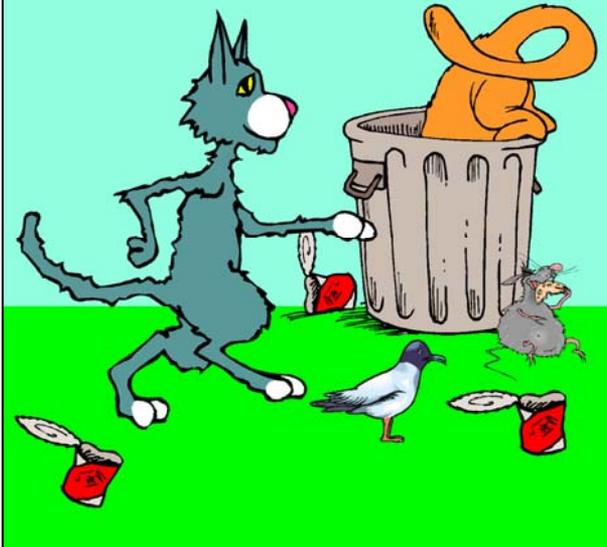


Mama Tomcat's FLYING SCHOOL THE MUSICAL!



Spring Hermann

Music and lyrics by Stephen Murray
Adapted from Luis Sepúlveda's novel,
The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught her to Fly

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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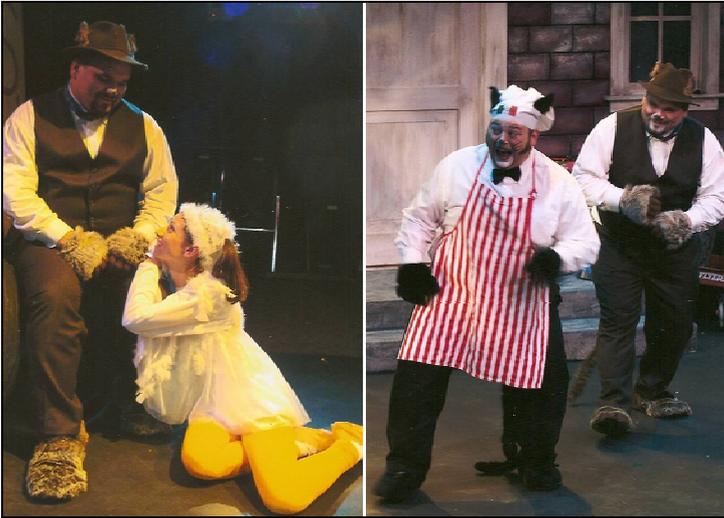
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*Thanks to everyone
at the Bonderman, CWU, UNH, and Pollyanna
for helping Mama Tomcat to fly.*

*Thank you,
Mr. Sepulveda,
and thanks to Professor Catherine Kurkjian,
who saw in this novel
the potential for a great children's play.*

Mama Tomcat's Flying School: The Musical!

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Mama Tomcat's Flying School: The Musical! was first performed by the Playhouse on Park Youth Theatre Series, Hartford, CT, 2009.

Mama Tomcat's Flying School The Musical!

Runner-up, Anna Zornio Playwriting Competition, University of New Hampshire, 2009

MUSICAL COMEDY. Adapted from award-winning author Luis Sepúlveda's novel *The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught Her to Fly*. Zorbo the tomcat, used to living "the cat's life" with his buddies Sal, Einstein, and the Admiral on Boston harbor, never planned to settle down. Yet when a seagull is downed in an oil slick and deposits her egg on Zorbo's porch, what can a guy do? Promise to hatch it and raise the gull! Zorbo's pals help him "sit on" the egg, so that when the baby gull they name Lucky arrives, she insists on calling Zorbo "Mama." The challenges of finding Lucky food, protecting her from bad rats like Sneaky and hungry cats like Trash-heap, and learning to love Lucky change all the tomcats' lives. Even Zorbo's dates with his beloved Lucinda have to take a back seat when it comes time to teach Lucky the skill of flying. Will the Flying School be a flop? Will other gulls give Lucky the right advice? And will Lucky's dear Mama Tomcat be able to help her take wing and soar? Audiences of all ages will fall in love with this humorous, heart-felt musical and its cast of adorable, whimsical characters. Perfect for touring. Includes eight original songs by Stephen Murray.

Performance Time: Approximately 60 minutes.



Luis Sepúlveda

ABOUT THE STORY

Award-winning author Luis Sepúlveda was born in northern Chile, lived in Germany for 10 years, and now lives in Gijón, Spain. His first children's novel, *The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught Her to Fly*, has sold more than 1.5 million copies worldwide. Mr. Sepúlveda's short stories, novels, plays, and essays have been published in more than 30 countries.

Characters

(3 M, 3 F, 4 flexible)

(With doubling: 1 M, 2 F, 3 flexible)

LUCKY: Orphaned baby seagull; female.

ZORBO: Tomcat who has agreed to care for Lucky and teach her how to fly; male.

SAL: Tomcat who works at an Italian restaurant and Zorbo's best friend; male.

EINSTEIN: Intelligent, book-loving cat who works in a museum and knows how to read; flexible.

ADMIRAL: Cat who works at the harbor and loves to tell tales of his seafaring days as a ship's cat; male.

TRASH-HEAP: Scruffy, hungry, street cat who loves to eat birds; flexible.

SNEAKY: Scruffy rat who likes to eat food out of garbage cans; flexible

SHIFTY: Scruffy rat and Sneaky's friend; flexible.

LUCINDA: Zorbo's girlfriend; female.

LADY GULL: Lucky's mother, a seagull, who is a victim of an oil spill in the Atlantic Ocean.

Options For Doubling

LADY GULL/LUCINDA (Female role)

TRASH-HEAP/EINSTEIN (Flexible role)

SHIFTY/SAL (Male role)

SNEAKY/ADMIRAL (Male role)

SONGS

- 1.) "A Cat's Life" (Zorbo, Sal)
- 2.) "A Seagull Must Fly" (Lady Gull)
- 3.) "Please Hatch" (Zorbo)
- 4.) "The Rats Will Play" (Shifty, Sneaky)
- 5.) "Bugs and Worms" (Zorbo, Sal, Einstein, Admiral, Lucky)
- 6.) Napping music.
- 7.) "The Admiral's Tale" (Admiral)
- 8.) "Mama Tomcat's Flying School" (Zorbo, Einstein, Sal, Admiral)
- 9.) "Watch Me Fly" (Lucky, Admiral, Sal, Einstein, Zorbo,)

Setting

Boston's North End.

Set

Townhouse porch and street. There is a large geranium planter and a large garbage can out front.

Steeple deck of the Old North Church. There is a white wooden railing with an image of church bell behind it.

PROPS

Book

Paint bucket labeled "paint remover"

Egg, large enough to contain Lucky

Chart showing days that egg was turned and kept warm

Bucket of squid tails and fish heads

Notes, for Einstein

SOUND EFFECTS

Music to indicate time is passing

Sound of tapping, egg cracking

Tiny squawk

Sound of gulls calling

Scary music

Car horns

Dogs barking

Celebratory music

Seagulls calling and chattering

Seagulls calling and taking off

Church bells

**"FLYING HIGH, INTO THE SKY,
SOARING, GLIDING WAY UP HIGH,
YOU'VE GOT TALENT AND AMBITION,
WE WILL GIVE YOU FREE TUITION
TO MAMA TOMCAT'S FLYING SCHOOL."**

Mama Tomcat's Flying School The Musical!

AT RISE: A street in Boston's North End. There is a townhouse with a porch. Beside the porch there is a large geranium planter and garbage can. Partially concealed by the planter and garbage can, Lady Gull is quietly cowering. Two large scruffy rats, Sneaky and Shifty, are snooping around beside the porch.)

SNEAKY: Hey, look, Shifty. Zorbo's gone. He must be out on the prowl. Let's check his garbage can.

SHIFTY: *(Nervously looks around.)* Hurry up. That tomcat is one tough dude. *(Indicating garbage can.)* Smell anything good in there?

(Sneaky loudly sniffs the garbage can.)

SNEAKY: Naw. Not much. *(Sniffs around the can.)* But I do smell something...bad...

SHIFTY: Sure. The best garbage always smells bad!

SNEAKY: It's something else. *(Sniffs.)* It's from over here...

(Sneaky discovers Lady Gull. Sneaky and Shifty creep over and stare stupidly at Lady Gull.)

SHIFTY: Whoa! It's a seagull...just lying around. Hey, Sneaky, how about we make some seagull stew for lunch? Heh, heh. *(Advances toward Lady Gull.)*

SNEAKY: Sure, but why does she smell so bad? Hey, Lady Gull. We're a couple of bad old rats. Why are you just sitting there?

SHIFTY: *(To Lady Gull.)* Ain't you scared we'll eat you?

(They freeze. Two cats, Zorbo and Sal, enter SL.)

ZORBO: Salvatore, thanks for the great lunch! Mmmm, all those meatballs!

SAL: We got lucky today, hey, Zorbo? My boss put out some great leftovers!

(Song: "A Cat's Life.")

ZORBO: (Sings.)

Life's pretty good,
I've got reason to smile.
The city's where it's at,
When you're a cat,
And that is that.
I'm livin' the high life in tomcat style,
I'm a happy little kitty,
In the city sittin' pretty.
A feast to be found in ev'ry garbage can.
It's great to be a kitty-cat Bostonian.
It won't take a genius to see,
It's the cat's life for me.

SAL: (Spoken.) Right, Zorbo!

ZORBO: (Spoken.) Sal, old buddy, how ya feeling today?

SAL: (Spoken.) You know, I can't complain. I got it really good. (Sings.)

I've got a great job.
I've got a great boss.
I catch for him the mice.
He treats me nice. It's paradise.
A plate full of meatballs with extra sauce.
Share with you, I shall,
'Cause I am Sal,
And I'm your pal.

ZORBO: (Sings.) Could it get any better?

SAL: (Sings.)

I don't think it can!
I'm proud to be a Feline-American.

It's really quite easy to see,
It's the cat's life for me.

ZORBO/SAL: *(Sing.)*

It won't take a genius to see,
It's the cat's life for me!

(Zorbo spots Sneaky and Shifty by his garbage can.)

ZORBO: *(To Sneaky and Shift, shouts.)* Hey! *(Snarls, raises paws to show his claws.)* Are you rats crazy?! Get out of my territory!

SNEAKY: Sure, Zorbo. We just thought we'd take this smelly seagull off your hands—

SHIFTY: *(To Zorbo, grins weakly.)* Clean up the garbage for you.

ZORBO: Seagull?

(Zorbo looks at Lady Gull, who looks up at him.)

LADY GULL: *(Weakly.)* Please, Mr. Tomcat. Help me...

ZORBO: Just beat it, you rats. Or you'll be the garbage. *(Sneaky and Shifty nervously back off and exit. To Lady Gull.)* You better take off, too, Lady Gull, before I forget I just had a big lunch.

LADY GULL: *(Sighs, coughs.)* I can't fly. I can't go on.

ZORBO: Why not?

SAL: *(Points.)* She's got gunk all over her feathers.

ZORBO: Phew! It's oil. Yuck. *(Grossed out and doesn't want to touch Lady Gull. To Lady Gull.)* What happened?

LADY GULL: *(Weakly.)* An oil slick. I got off my flight plan in the Atlantic. Landed in the oil. Took all my strength to make it to Boston. Now...I'm done for.

SAL: Lady, don't say that. Zorbo, do something for her.

ZORBO: What can I do? *(To Lady Gull.)* Want some of my kitty snacks? Some water?

LADY GULL: Thanks, Mr. Tomcats. You're both very kind, but I'm too weak to eat.

ZORBO: It's the oil that's making you sick?

SAL: Maybe we can wash it off.

LADY GULL: You can't wash off oil. That's why it's a bird-killer.

ZORBO: Nobody's dying on my porch, lady. Let me think...
(Pause.) Sal, we need to get hold of Einstein. He's the smart one. And the Admiral, he's seen everything. They'll know what to do.

SAL: I'll get them. You look out for her. (Races off.)

LADY GULL: (To Zorbo.) Your friend will hurry back?

ZORBO: (Tries to calm her.) Yeah, Sal's very speedy. And Einstein and the Admiral work down at the harbor. It's only a block away. Good old Sal...always ready with a free meal from his restaurant. He'll come through for you. (Anxiously looks up and down the street.)

LADY GULL: If they don't come back...in time...there's something important I have to ask of you.

ZORBO: You just take it easy, okay? They'll get here. Any minute. (Spots them.) I can see them now!

(Sal, Einstein, and the Admiral run on. Einstein is holding a book. The Admiral is carrying a paint bucket labeled "paint remover.")

SAL: Lady Gull, this is Einstein and the Admiral. They got a great idea to get the oil off. Hurry, Admiral!

ADMIRAL: Salvatore, lower your sails a minute! (Puts down the bucket.) My boss at the fish market just repainted the sign. He used oil paint. Then he cleaned his brushes in paint remover.

EINSTEIN: So I said, "Paint remover should remove oil from the bird." But the Admiral had no paint brushes.

SAL: So I said, we all got brushes right here! (Indicates tail.) We'll soak our tails in the pail, then brush them on the gull!

ADMIRAL: Let's get at it. Reminds me of the time when I was a ship's cat, and we painted the ship's galley...

(Admiral, Sal, and Einstein go to the pail and vigorously dip their tails in it. They then swish their tails over Lady Gull's feathers during the following exchange.)

ZORBO: *(To Cats.)* Let's get at this. Do her wings. Hurry up on the tail feathers!

LADY GULL: Mr. Zorbo, you are so kind.

ZORBO: *(Suspicious.)* Maybe...but not usually to birds.

LADY GULL: You saved me from the bad rats.

ZORBO: I was getting rid of them anyway.

LADY GULL: Now you try and save me from the oil.

ZORBO: Naw, those guys figured it out.

LADY GULL: You are all I have now. I trust you. You must take my baby.

ZORBO: *(Double-take.)* Baby?! What baby?! *(Sal rolls a large egg onstage.)* All I see is an egg.

EINSTEIN: Zorbo! That is her baby.

ZORBO: I don't know anything about babies. See, I'm a tomcat—

LADY GULL: I'm begging you...promise me three things.

ZORBO: *(Frustrated.)* Like I said, I'm a tom—

LADY GULL: *(Urgently presses on.)* Promise you won't eat the egg and you will protect it.

ZORBO: *(Frowns.)* Not eat the egg? Well, okay. But why?

LADY GULL: And promise you will feed my chick once it hatches.

ZORBO: Hold it, lady. Hatches? Feed it? Can't it just peck around or something?

LADY GULL: No! And promise you'll teach it to fly.

ZORBO: *(Explodes.)* Fly?! Are you nuts? What do I know about flying!

SAL: Lady Gull, don't little birds learn how to fly all by themselves?

LADY GULL: No. Their parents must show them.

ADMIRAL: Ma'am, can't your chick live on the ground with us? We get around without flying.

(Song: "A Seagull Must Fly.")

LADY GULL: (Sings.)

A seagull must soar,

A seagull must fly,

A seagull is only at home in the sky.

We stretch out our wings to an infinite playground of air.

A seagull is free, a seagull's unbound,

We can't be expected to live on the ground.

My chick must take flight,

You must help my child to get there.

She should travel far to wonderful places,

Gracefully glide in the wide open spaces,

See the majestic ocean from high above.

She should circle a tree, play tag with a cloud,

Race with the wind, fly high and proud,

The great gift of flight is this mother's expression of love.

My seagull must fly, my seagull must soar,

That's all I request. I won't ask for more.

My seagull must fly... (Softly.) My seagull must fly...

ZORBO: (Spoken.) Lady Gull, I told you, I can't do flying. So forget it.

LADY GULL: Please! My chick must have the skies! (Gasps, wheezes.) Promise...before I die.

ZORBO: Take it easy. (Relents.) Look, I'll work on this flying thing. Somehow.

LADY GULL: Swear it!

ZORBO: I swear.

SAL: You better go lie down, Lady Gull.

ADMIRAL: (Assists Lady Gull.) Let me help you, ma'am.

(Admiral takes Lady Gull offstage.)

ZORBO: *(To Sal and Einstein.)* Sure, I feel sorry for the lady, but how am I going to hatch an egg? Or feed a chick?

SAL: Buddy, I'm here for you. You know me, I can feed anybody, anytime.

EINSTEIN: But flying?! That is the most difficult skill in the world. Even humans don't understand how a bird flies. *(To Zorbo.)* You should never have promised.

ZORBO: Hey, she made me! I'll find her and get off the hook on that one.

(Admiral enters.)

ADMIRAL: *(Sadly.)* It's too late. The Lady Gull has gone to the Great Golden Skyplace of Birds. She'll ne'er return to this earth.

(Einstein, Sal, Zorbo, and the Admiral bow their heads. They look up and stare at the egg.)

EINSTEIN: Zorbo, my friend, congratulations. It looks like you're a parent.

ZORBO: *(Panicked.)* I can't do this alone! Swear by the sacred Oath of Cats that you guys will help me. Swear! *(Gets the Cats to raise their paws and swear cat style. The Admiral and Einstein exit, soberly. With a confused look, Zorbo just stares at the egg. To himself.)* Now what do I do, huh? The only thing I know to do with an egg is eat it. And I'm getting kind of hungry. *(Looks up to the sky.)* Yeah, I know. Nobody's going to eat it. *(To egg.)* So how do I keep you warm and safe?

SAL: We're in this together. We'll figure it out.

ZORBO: Thanks, Sal. Man, how long have we been best friends?

SAL: Since we were kits, remember? We were both being chased by that ugly bulldog, and we raced up the same tree. That's when you found out you were so scared of high places!

ZORBO: I try to forget about that day. Oh, man! Too scary!

SAL: Don't feel bad. Everybody's scared of something, right?

That was the day your humans came along. They got a ladder and saved you.

ZORBO: Don't ever tell the other cats about my fear of heights. I got my reputation as a tough guy.

(Sal nods and crosses his heart. Einstein runs on carrying a book.)

EINSTEIN: Look, I found a book at my museum. It's on raising chickens.

ZORBO/SAL: Chickens?

EINSTEIN: Well, they're close to seagulls. It shows how you have to turn the egg every day. *(Points to a page in the book.)* See? And you have to kind of lie on it all the time.

(Zorbo awkwardly drapes himself on top of the egg. Einstein grins at the humorous spectacle.)

ZORBO: *(Sarcastically.)* Guess it's a good thing you can read. *(Threatening.)* And if you laugh at me, you're gonna pay.

(With muffled laughter, Einstein and Sal exit. Zorbo struggles with his awkward position on the egg. Music is heard to indicate time is passing as Einstein and Sal enter and show Zorbo ways to turn the egg, warm the egg, and to hug the egg. It is difficult, but Zorbo starts to get into his new job tending the egg. Music ends.)

ADMIRAL: *(Pats Zorbo on the shoulder.)* Hello, Zorbo, my lad. Doing your egg-sitting, are you? Argh, seeing you like that, doing your duty, reminds me of a sea story when I was a ship's cat—

ZORBO: Admiral, not now!

(Sal pulls the Admiral toward the exit.)

SAL: *(To Zorbo.)* We're on our way to the Admiral's Fish Market for lunch. His boss put out a pan of leftover fish heads. Want to come? *(Realizes.)* Oh, that's right. You have to stay with the egg. I'll try to bring you a few.

(Sal and the Admiral exit in a hurry.)

ZORBO: *(Glumly.)* Great. Man, is this egg going to take forever? *(Song: "Please Hatch." To egg, sings.)*
Got an itch on my tail,
Got a cramp in my leg.
I've been stuck here for weeks,
And I'm talking to an egg!
I've got better things to do,
Fences to climb, mice to catch.
So do me a little favor, won't you?
Please, please, please, please hatch!

(Spoken.) Come on, egg!

So I'm stuck on this porch,
I deserve a good meal.
Eating nothing but kibble?
Something's wrong with this deal.
There are trashcans to knock over,
There are couches I should scratch.
There are lady cats on whom,
My affection I'd attach.
I admit it, egg, you win,
This cat has met his match.
So give me a break, I'm begging...
Please, please, please, please hatch!
(Spoken, moans.) Come on, what'd I ever do to you? Just hatch for me please... *(Excited.)* Hey, look who's over there!
(Shouts, waves.) Lucinda!

(Lucinda enters.)

LUCINDA: Hiya, Zorbo!

ZORBO: Hi, Lucinda! How've you been, honey?

LUCINDA: Pretty lonely for you, baby. I thought you left town.

ZORBO: Naw, I'm here. Just been real busy at home...working for my humans.

LUCINDA: You old tomcat, you been going out with another girl!

ZORBO: No, not another girl! I missed you a lot, Lucinda.

LUCINDA: Me too, baby! How about I come on up to your porch for a visit?

ZORBO: Don't come over here! I'm still real busy! I'll catch you later.

LUCINDA: *(Insulted.)* Well! Fat chance, Zorbo. We're through!

(Zorbo sighs and waves goodbye to Lucinda as she exits.)

ZORBO: *(To egg.)* Great. There goes my girlfriend. You're sure ruining my love life. *(Looks around the street past the porch. To himself.)* I'm talking to an egg. *(Pause. He listens, sniffs, and stares at the egg.)* You better come out soon because I have *had* it! Are you really in there?

(Shifty and Sneaky sneak on SL just as Zorbo wraps himself around the egg.)

SNEAKY: *(To Shifty.)* Hey, where's old Zorbo today?

(Song: "The Rats Will Play.")

SHIFTY: *(Sings.)* We walked right in, and the cat didn't chase us.

SNEAKY: (*Sings.*) We walked right in, and the cat didn't face us.

SHIFTY: (*Sings.*) I didn't hear a sound.

SNEAKY: (*Sings.*) I guess Zorbo's not around.

SHIFTY/SNEAKY: (*Sing.*)

The cat's away,

So the rats will play.

SHIFTY: (*Sings.*) I lived in fear that Zorbo would fight me.

SNEAKY: (*Sings.*) I lived in fear that Zorbo might bite me.

SHIFTY/SNEAKY: (*Sing.*)

While he's on vacation,

We'll end our starvation.

The cat's away,

So the rats will play.

Excuse us if we intrude,

As we steal all your food.

And through the walls we'll roam,

We'll make ourselves at home.

We'll invite friends for lunch,

Rats will come by the bunch.

With this cornucopia, it's a rat-topia!

We waltzed right in, and the cat didn't chase us.

We waltzed right in, and the cat didn't face us.

We didn't hear a sound.

I guess Zorbo's not around. (*Shifty and Sneaky look left and right.*)

The cat's away...

So the rats will play!

(Suddenly, Sneaky and Shifty notice Zorbo as he stretches and rises from the egg.)

SNEAKY: Hey, Zorbo! You *are* here! We've been cleaning out your food cellar, Mister. And you're lying around your porch...hanging out with an egg. You've gone soft.

SHIFTY: We thought you got lazy.

SNEAKY: Now it looks like you're mostly crazy!

ZORBO: (*Shouts.*) You rats get out of here! Right now!

SHIFTY: (*Hungrily.*) How about we take that egg off your paws?

SNEAKY: (*To Zorbo.*) Sure, we can eat it raw.

(*Zorbo rises up, arches, extends his long front claws, licks his lips, and lets out a loud "hiss."*)

ZORBO: (*Threateningly.*) You guys think I've gone soft? That this egg's for you to munch? You guys come near my egg...and *you'll* be my lunch! (*Yowls in a threatening way.*)

SHIFTY: (*Backing off.*) Easy, Zorbo. Sneaky, we better head out.

SNEAKY: Zorbo, you want to be pals with an egg...go right ahead! (*To Shifty.*) Pals with an egg! That cracks me up! Get it? Egg? *Cracks* me up!

(*Sneaky and Shifty roar with laughter.*)

ZORBO: (*Shouts.*) Get out of here! Or someday you'll pay! Big time!

SHIFTY: Yeah, we're leaving...for now. So long, Zorbo. (*Salutes.*) So long, egg!

(*Rats exit, laughing.*)

ZORBO: (*To egg.*) You hear that? Those two will blab this all over Boston. The other rats will call me "The North End Nut Case"!

(*Einstein enters.*)

EINSTEIN: How's it going, Zorbo?

ZORBO: How do you think! My life is a mess! I don't know how birds do it! I've saved this egg from wind and rainstorms. Today, two rats tried to eat it, and my girlfriend blew me off! I don't know how much longer I'm gonna last here.

(Einstein whips out a chart.)

EINSTEIN: You're doing a great job. See here... *(Points to chart.)* ...I made a chart showing the days you've turned the egg and kept it warm. You're almost at the hatching date.

ZORBO: Can you egg-sit while I grab a bite?

EINSTEIN: That's what I'm here for. Take a break.

(As Zorbo stretches and gets ready to leave the porch, Einstein sits near the egg. The egg starts to roll a bit on its own.)

ZORBO: Einstein, I turned the egg for today.

EINSTEIN: I didn't touch it. It moved!

ZORBO: It doesn't move. It's an egg.

EINSTEIN: I know that! But it moved. I think it may be time for...it to hatch!

ZORBO: Whoa! You think so? *(Sound of tapping, then cracking, and then a tiny squawk. Excited, Zorbo and Einstein stand and wait to see what will emerge from the egg.)* Look! The shell is cracking! It's breaking apart!

EINSTEIN: It's the miracle of birth. The chick is coming!

(Lucky crawls out of the egg. Lucky's fuzzy feathers are damp and rather yucky. Hardly able to walk, Lucky toddles up to Zorbo and stares at him. Stunned, Zorbo stares back at Lucky.)

ZORBO: So you're the little chicky, are you? *(To Einstein.)*

Last time I saw one of these, I ate it.

LUCKY: *(To Zorbo.)* Hello...Mama.

(Zorbo and Lucky stare at each other. Lucky then gives Zorbo a big hug. Zorbo tries to push Lucky away but can't seem to detach himself from the chick. Celebratory music is heard. Einstein calls out for Sal and the Admiral. Sal and the Admiral enter and admire the newly hatched chick.)

SAL: Look at her! *(To Zorbo.)* I never thought she'd be so cute. Last time I saw one of these—

ZORBO: I know. You ate it.

SAL: *(To Lucky.)* Hi! I'm your Uncle Sal. You are one lucky gull to have Zorbo take care of you.

LUCKY: Lucky. I'm Lucky. *(To Zorbo.)* Mama, I'm hungry. Lucky is hungry.

SAL: We all are! How about we go to Luigi's for some Italian food? That's where I work. My boss has plenty of moldy meatballs!

ZORBO: *(Joyfully.)* Yes! Oh, man, it's been a long time. Let's go, Lucky. Just follow us.

EINSTEIN: No, no! Stop! I already checked the museum encyclopedia, volume 2-B. "B" for bird food. Chicks can't eat what we do.

LUCKY: *(Pecking at Zorbo.)* Mama, Lucky is starving!

ZORBO: *(Deflated.)* Oh, great. What do we feed her?

EINSTEIN: Volume 2-B. Page 82. Small bugs and worms.

(Song: "Bugs and Worms." Cats act out scratching and catching.)

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: *(Sing.)* She likes bugs and worms.

SAL: *(Sings.)* Hunting them should be easy.

LUCKY: *(Sings.)* Bugs and worms!

ADMIRAL: *(Sings.)* Just the thought makes me queasy.

ZORBO: *(Sings.)*

Don't you worry, Lucky, there's no reason to squirm.

'Cause this here tomcat just went out and caught you a worm.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*) Bugs and worms.

LUCKY: (*Sings.*) This worm's really yummy.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*) Bugs and worms.

EINSTEIN: (*Sings.*) I feel sick to my tummy.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*)

No way I'm gonna try it if it's on a birdie's diet.

Don't want no bugs and worms!

LUCKY: (*Spoken.*) Mmmm...more.

ZORBO: (*To Cats, spoken.*) You heard her. She wants more.

ALL: (*Sing.*) Bugs and worms.

EINSTEIN: (*Sings.*) Do you think they're nutritious?

ALL: (*Sings.*) Bugs and worms.

LUCKY: (*Sings.*) I want more! They're delicious!

SAL: (*Sings.*)

If you liked that worm, here's something else you could try.

Just sink your beak into this big juicy fly.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*) Bugs and worms.

EINSTEIN: (*Sings.*) I think that they're yucky.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*) Bugs and worms.

ZORBO: (*Sings.*) But we'll catch them for Lucky.

LUCKY: (*Sings.*)

Wouldn't it be neat to munch on a mosquito?

I love those bugs and worms.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*)

Crickets, termites, maggots, weevils, hornets, and slugs.

Centipedes and millipedes, all kinds of bugs.

Caterpillars, moths, and beetles, grasshoppers, too!

Grubs, bees, ants, mites, we'll catch them for you!

LUCKY: (*Sings.*) You'll catch them for me?

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sings.*) We'll catch them for you.

LUCKY: (*Sings.*) Bugs and worms.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*) This will take some adjusting.

LUCKY: (*Sings.*) Bugs and worms.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*) These things are disgusting.

ADMIRAL: (*To Lucky, sings.*)

You've been such a fine lass, the Admiral's brought you a treat,

Here you are, a munchy, crunchy spider to eat.

ALL: (*Sing.*) Bugs and worms.

EINSTEIN: (*Sings.*) Do we have to repeat it?

ALL: (*Sing.*) Bugs and worms.

ZORBO: (*Sings.*) As long as we don't have to eat it.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*)

I'm not eating when you put bugs on the menu.

Don't want no bugs and worms.

Don't want no bugs and worms.

LUCKY: (*Spoken.*) I'm full.

ZORBO/SAL/EINSTEIN/ADMIRAL: (*Sing.*) She's full of bugs and worms!

SAL: (*To Lucky.*) Your Uncle Sal has to get back to work at his restaurant. See ya later, you pretty thing.

(Sal exits. Zorbo, still starving, tries to follow Sal.)

LUCKY: (*To Zorbo, calls.*) Mama, I want to cuddle with you and take a nap.

ZORBO: I guess that's all right. But here's the thing...I'm not your mama.

(Lucky cuddles with Zorbo. With interest, Einstein watches the following exchange.)

LUCKY: Yes, Mama.

ZORBO: No. I'm a tomcat. Your real mama couldn't stay...
(Thinks of what to say.) Well, you see, she passed on...to the

Golden Sky Place of Birds. I promised to bring you into the world. See, tomcats—

LUCKY: Mama Tomcat. (*Yawns, snuggles.*)

ZORBO: Right, that's it, *tomcat*. We can't be mamas. We prowl and yowl. We chase off the mice and rats. We defend our territory. We have dates with our feline friends. We make our humans happy. That's what we do.

EINSTEIN: (*To Zorbo, interjecting.*) According to most books, the first person a chick sees upon hatching into the world...is called Mama.

LUCKY: (*To Zorbo, cuddling.*) Mmmm...night-night, Mama.

ZORBO: Oh, man, there's way more to this parent thing than catching bugs and worms.

ADMIRAL: (*To Zorbo and Einstein.*) You two go over to Sal's and get some of those moldy meatballs. The Admiral's on deck duty! I'll tend the chick and keep this porch shipshape!

ZORBO: Thanks, Admiral. Bringing Lucky into the world was hard work! (*Pause. Admires Lucky as she sleeps.*) She's not bad looking...for a little bird. Well, so long, Admiral.

(*Zorbo and Einstein exit.*)

ADMIRAL: (*To Lucky, sing-song.*) Once upon a ship, when I was a very young sailor cat, we sailed across the South Pacific. We had slow breezes, warm sunshine, gentle waves...rocking our ship back and forth. (*Yawns.*) And the whole crew of us...fell asleep.

(*Admiral falls asleep. Napping music. Admiral sleeps beside Lucky. Lucky wakes and sees that the Admiral is still sleeping. Lucky wanders over to street area. Lucky pecks and scratches at the dirt while she explores.*)

LUCKY: (*To herself.*) Naptime's over. I'll look for my *own* bugs and worms...like a big birdie. (*Trash-heap, a derelict cat,*

creeps on SL. To Trash-heap, cheerful.) Hello? Are you a cat like my mama tomcat?

TRASH-HEAP: Huh? *(Smiles.)* Oh, yeah.

LUCKY: I'm Lucky. Who are you?

TRASH-HEAP: Never mind, little chick. Want to play a game with me? *(Closes in on her.)* It's called, "Catch the Birdie."

ZORBO: *(Offstage.)* It was so great running into you, Lucinda.

LUCINDA: *(Offstage.)* Thanks for lunch, Zorbo. I'm glad we got back together.

ZORBO: *(Offstage.)* Me, too. Like I said, I had a *lot* to do at home.

LUCINDA: *(Offstage.)* You sure you're not seeing some other feline?

ZORBO: *(Offstage.)* No, honey, believe me. I'll try to get away tomorrow night. We'll hit the waterfront.

(Trash-heap sneaks up closer to Lucky.)

TRASH-HEAP: *(Pounces on Lucky.)* Gotcha! *(Smiles.)* Old Trash-heap is hungry.

LUCKY: *(Screams.)* Mama Tomcat!

(Zorbo runs onstage to rescue Lucky. Admiral wakes up in a panic. Zorbo smacks Trash-heap with his claws and Trash-heap releases Lucky. Lucky rushes over to the Admiral.)

ZORBO: *(Shouts.)* Trash-heap! Claws off her, or I'll tear your throat out!

TRASH-HEAP: *(Recovers his footing, shouts.)* Get lost, Zorbo! I got this bird first!

(Admiral protects Lucky during the fight.)

ZORBO: She's mine, Trash-heap! *(Threatens with claws.)*

LUCKY: *(To Zorbo, fearful.)* Mama, that cat hurted me.

TRASH-HEAP: *(To Zorbo, confused.)* Did she say “mama”?
(Stares hard at Lucky.) This here’s a gull, not a kit.

ZORBO: I know what she is! *(Roars.)* She’s mine! Get lost!

ADMIRAL: *(To Trash-heap, shouts.)* Or we’ll make short work of you!

TRASH-HEAP: *(Confused.)* I don’t know what’s going on here, but if you don’t cage this tasty birdy, somebody is going to have her for supper.

ZORBO: Just beat it!

ADMIRAL: *(To Trash-heap, shouts.)* Don’t ever come around this porch again!

TRASH-HEAP: I’ll go...don’t feel up to fighting you both. But I’ll be back. Count on it!

(Snarling, Trash-heap lumbers off. Lucky cuddles with Zorbo.)

ADMIRAL: *(To Zorbo.)* I’m sorry, lad. I dozed off. *(Gestures to where Trash-heap has just exited.)* I’m afraid other cats like Trash-heap may come.

ZORBO: *(Grimly.)* Yeah. We’ve got to protect Lucky.

LUCKY: *(Proudly.)* You’re strong and brave, Mama Tomcat. You made the bad cat go away.

ZORBO: *You were a bad little gull. Never leave the porch alone. You hear me? Always go with me or one of your uncle tomcats because most cats like Trash-heap, they like to eat little birds.*

LUCKY: *(Stunned.)* They *do*? You mean my uncle tomcats might want to eat me?

ZORBO: Not us cats...because you’re *ours*. Me, I’m more into mice anyway. Now, just do like I tell you! No leaving the porch alone!

LUCKY: Okay, I’ll stay on the porch. Mama, how come I don’t look like you and my uncles?

ZORBO: Because you’re a seagull. Someday you’ll be a big gull like your mother was.

LUCKY: So I won't ever look like you? But I want to! I want to be just like you.

ZORBO: Lucky, I told you, that can't happen.

LUCKY: (*Scowls.*) I *can* be like you. I'm growing up to be a cat. I'll eat cat foods and do cat things. Then we'll always be together.

ZORBO: (*To Admiral, sighs.*) Oh, man, this parent business...it just gets tougher.

(Underplay "Bugs and Worms" music. Sal and Einstein enter and help the Admiral teach Lucky to find her own bugs and worms. Zorbo applauds Lucky's efforts. Sal shows Lucky his bucket of squid tails and fish heads and offers her some. Lucky pecks at a squid tale and fish head. Music ends.)

SAL: (*To Lucky.*) You're getting to be such a big girl, sweetie. You've learned to eat squid tails and fish heads.

LUCKY: Yep, I eat a lot of stuff that you do, Uncle Sal, except for moldy meatballs. Yuck! Soon I'm going to learn to catch mice!

(With this, Sal gives Zorbo a quizzical look.)

SAL: (*To Lucky.*) Mice? Now, sweetie, gulls don't do that...

LUCKY: But I'm growing up to be a cat.

ADMIRAL: (*Sniffs, tests the wind.*) Speaking of gulls, I feel autumn on the wind. Time is flying, like birds on the wing. The flocks will be heading south for the winter. Some gulls may be going too, Lucky.

(Sound of gulls calling can be heard overhead. All look up to the sky.)

SAL: (*To Lucky.*) The Admiral is right. (*Points to sky.*) See who's flying up there?

LUCKY: (*Looks up.*) Some gulls.

EINSTEIN: They might be your relatives. Can't you understand that?

LUCKY: (*Stubbornly.*) You are my family. (*To Zorbo.*) My Mama Tomcat. (*To other Cats.*) Uncle Tomcats. So there.

EINSTEIN: Yes, dear Lucky. But look up at those gulls. See how they dip and soar?

LUCKY: (*Looking up.*) Yesss...dip and soar.

EINSTEIN: Don't you wonder how they do that?

LUCKY: (*Nods.*) Sometimes I do flap my wings a little. But then I watch the birds, and it looks so scary up in the sky.

ZORBO: (*Looking up, to Sal.*) Yeah, it sure does!

SAL: (*To Lucky.*) Spread out your wings, sweetie. Show us what a big gull you are now.

(Lucky spreads her wings and does a hop-hop like a gull. Cats nod with approval.)

LUCKY: It does feel kind of good. I want to call out like gulls do. Oh, I don't know...

ADMIRAL: (*To Cats, aside.*) I was afraid we'd have a problem keeping Lucky. She doesn't know who she is!

ZORBO: Stow it, Admiral. She's mine. That's who she is, and if she is afraid to fly up high, so what!

SAL: But you swore to her mother, remember, that you'd teach her—

ADMIRAL: Listen to me, all of you. It's time for me to tell one of my sea stories.

(Zorbo, Sal, and Einstein groan.)

ZORBO: Admiral, we've heard them all before...

ADMIRAL: This one is about the flight of gulls.

LUCKY: Please, Uncle Admiral, tell me this one!

(Zorbo nods. Lucky, Zorbo, Sal, and Einstein gather around the Admiral. Song: "The Admiral's Tale.")

ADMIRAL: (*Sings.*)

Once upon a time on the old Sea Devil,
I served as the Captain's cat.
We were sailing in rough waters,
We were Madagascar bound,
When a storm nearly knocked us flat.
The waves were so high, they kept crashing o'er the rails,
They were battering the decks, they were tattering the sails,
We were lost at sea, couldn't tell where to go,
Which way would take us home,
We didn't know.

LUCKY: (*Spoken.*) Golly, Uncle Admiral, were you afraid?

ADMIRAL: (*Spoken.*) You bet your tail feathers we were afraid.

(*Sings.*) One wave smashed our compass like a savage beast,
We couldn't tell south from north,
We couldn't tell west from east,
We couldn't see sun nor stars to guide our way,
We were all quite sure that we had seen our last day.

The waves were so high, they kept crashing o'er the rails,
They were battering the decks, they were tattering the sails,
We were lost at sea, couldn't tell where to go,
Which way would take us home,
We didn't know.

LUCKY: (*Spoken.*) Golly, Uncle Admiral, how could you find your way home?

ADMIRAL: (*Spoken.*) That's just it, lassie. We couldn't.

(*Sings.*) We thought we were all goners.
We thought we'd all be drowned.
Then up above our heads, there arose a great sound.
A mighty flock of seagulls, flyin' stronger than the wind.
The lookout shouted, "Gulls aloft!"
And the crew all grinned.
The captain turned the wheel, and made a course correction,
Following those seagulls with a great sense of direction,

Seagulls always stick together,
And they always head for land.
I owe my life today to that sturdy seagull band.
Yes, little Lucky, it's true...
I was saved by a seagull like you.

LUCKY: (*Spoken.*) I'm glad you got home, but I keep telling you I'm going to grow up on the ground and be a cat...like all of you.

ADMIRAL: (*Exasperated.*) Zorbo, talk to her!

ZORBO: Lucky, you *have* to learn to fly. It's what your mother wanted.

LUCKY: (*Confused.*) Even if I wanted to fly, who would teach me? You have no wings. You have powerful legs. You can leap from fence to rooftop. You have sharp, strong fangs and claws. You can cut down your enemy. You have soft paws. You can move through the shadows faster and quieter than any mouse. You have all these great things, except...no wings.

ZORBO: Yeah, that's right. (*Determined.*) But you are *going* to learn. I'll have to teach you somehow...

EINSTEIN: When our humans need to learn something, they read books. They go to school.

LUCKY: But, Uncle Einstein, I don't have a school.

(*Zorbo gives Einstein, Sal, and Admiral a determined look.*)

ZORBO: (*To Lucky.*) You're learning how to fly, Lucky...even if we have to start our *own* school.

LUCKY: Mama Tomcat's Flying School?

ZORBO: (*Laughs at the sound of it.*) That's right. Mama Tomcat's Flying School.

[END OF FREEVIEW]