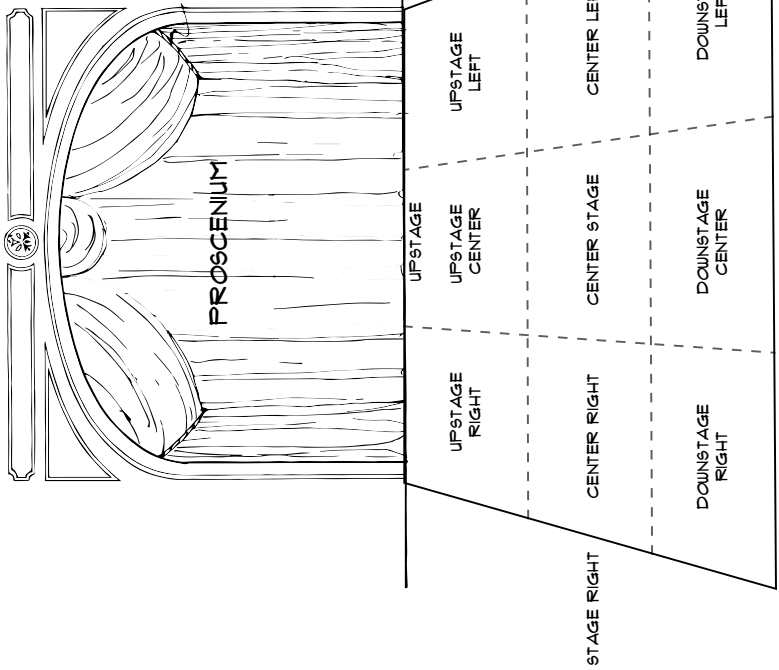


Suggestions for Actors

- Begin by reading the script at least two times without any action, just focusing on the text.
- Discuss simple actions or gestures that can be incorporated to help show the action of the script.
- Designate a stage area and an audience area.
- Try acting it out multiple times on stage, incorporating actions and gestures.
- While acting it out, make sure to hold books at chest level so that faces can be seen and make sure to always face the audience.
- Use a loud, strong voice that can be heard by everyone on stage and in the audience.
- Pay close attention to the other actors and listen to the story being told.
- Repetition is the key to a successful performance. The more rehearsal, the better the performance will be. Rehearse as many times as possible!
- Be kind and respectful to the audience.
- Remind the audience that they should be quiet and respectful to the play.
- When performing, remember to tell the story and have a great time.
- When in rehearsal or in performance, always be ready to play your part!

Suggestions for the Audience

- To be a member of the Audience is to be audient (listening).
- Find your seat promptly, get comfortable, then turn your full attention to the stage.
- Pretend that everyone is not pretending. Forget that you are in a room watching a play.
- Look and listen as if you are in the scene with the actor yet have no lines.
- If something is genuinely funny, laugh.
- Show warm appreciation to the actors when they finish.



AUDIENCE

Thumbelisa: List of Characters
(in order of appearance)



Strange Woman



Frank Pham



Restaurant Guests



Waitress



Thumbelisa



Sparrow



Mama Pigeon



Sheldon



Mothman



Thelonius



Rats



King Whiskers



Prince of The Fairies

ACT IT

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Level 1

Act I

A choice was made.



I chose to cook.



Our love did fade.



True love I forsook.



He became a champ.



The best in the city.



But he was alone.



What a pity.



He wished for a child.



To call my own.



She popped out of a dumpling.



Now I'll never be alone!



Father!

Act I

A strange woman sits on a bench near the restaurant. Meanwhile, Frank works in his kitchen. They are thinking of each other.



Many years ago, Frank Pham made a choice. He chose to marry his work instead of me.



I only had room in my heart for my love of cooking.



So he opened a restaurant. He became a chef.



I am known for my Chili Chicken!

A line forms outside the restaurant.



We want Chili Chicken!



I am a champion chef, and yet I want more.
I want a child. I'd teach her to make Chili
Chicken. Which reminds me — I am out of
chili paste!

*Frank goes to the store. He crashes into the
strange woman.*



Are you all right?



Yes, I think so.



I am sorry to have nearly run you over. I
was thinking of a little girl.



I see...



Aside. Her eyes remind me of my young
love. *To the Strange Woman.* Please. Dine
at my restaurant tonight, free of charge.

He gives her his card. The Strange Woman takes it and disappears. Frank returns to the busy restaurant.



Two Chili Chickens!



Two Chili Chickens!

Later at the end of the night.



Frank, take a look at this.



What is it?



She holds up a plate with a dumpling on it. It was so strange. This woman came in. She had your card for a free meal. She ordered dumplings. She ate all but one. Then she told me to return this one dumpling to you. She said you have more room in your heart now. She shakes her head. She leaves for the night.



What? This dumpling is shaking? And what is that noise? It sounds like a bird.

The dumpling shakes harder as the noise grows louder. The dumpling explodes. Out pops a little girl.



Father!



Aside. There must be more room in my heart now. I love this little girl so much. *To the child.* My child. I will call you Thumbelisa.



Act I

A strange woman dressed in a cloak sits on a bench near Frank Pham's restaurant. Meanwhile, Frank Pham works in his kitchen. Each is thinking of the other.



Many years ago, Frank Pham made a choice. He chose to marry his work instead of the beautiful young woman who had hoped to be his bride.



I only had room in my heart for my love of cooking.



So he opened a very successful restaurant and became a champion chef.



I am known all over the city of Chicago for my Lemongrass chili chicken!

A line forms outside the restaurant.



We want Chili Chicken! We want chopped chives! We want Chem chep!



I am a champion chef, and yet I want more. I long for a child. I'd teach her the secret ingredient for Chem chep. Which reminds me — I am out of chili paste!

Frank Pham leaves the restaurant and goes to the store. On his way back he crashes into the strange woman who was sitting on the bench near his restaurant.



Are you all right?



Yes, I think so.



I am sorry to have nearly run you over. I was thinking of a little girl.



I see...



Aside. The twinkle in her eyes reminds me of my young love from so many years ago. *To the Strange Woman.* Please. Dine at my restaurant tonight, free of charge.

He gives her his card. The Strange Woman takes it and disappears. Frank looks around, puzzled, and then returns to the busy restaurant.



Two chili chickens!



Two chili chickens!



Chem chep!



Chem chep!

Later at the end of the night.



Frank, you're going to want to take a look at this.



What is it Chelsea?



She holds up a plate with a single dumpling.

It was the strangest thing. This woman who was dressed in rags came in. At first I was going to ask her to leave, but she had your card for a meal free of charge. She only ordered dumplings. She ate all but one. Then she called me to her table and told me to return this one dumpling to you. She said you had a bit more room in your heart now. Very strange. *She shakes her head as she leaves for the night.*



What? This dumpling is quivering. And what is that noise coming from inside? It sounds like the sweet chirping of birds.

The dumpling shakes harder as the chirping grows louder. Finally the dumpling explodes and out pops a little girl.



Father!



Aside. There must be more room in my heart now, for I love this little girl completely. *To the child.* My child. You are just bigger than my thumb. I will call you Thumbelisa.

Act II

I may be small, but my heart is not



She knows what she wants. And she wants a lot.



To share my life with someone like me.



To live, love, laugh, and be truly free.



Free!



If only I could use this tiny little voice, to let the world know I want to make my own CHOICE...



She wants to make her own choice.



I want to make my own choice.



She wants to make her own choice.



CHOICE!

Act II

Thumbelisa sits on a windowsill, listening to the song of a sparrow.



I have such a happy life. Yet, I am no bigger than a thumb. I am lonely. How I long for a friend my own size!



Shouting out. Be careful Thumbelisa!

A mama pigeon lands on the windowsill.



You sing so sweetly. I know the perfect friend for you.



Really?



Put on your shoes and brush your hair. Come meet my son.



No Thumbelisa! She is tricking you!



What?



Shush!

The pigeon flies away. She carries Thumbelisa in her beak. They land at the train stop.



Mama!



Sheldon my son! Look what I have brought for you! A bride! She sings so sweetly.



Bride!



Bride? But I do not choose to marry a pigeon!



Shush! You have NO CHOICE. You'll make the perfect bride for Sheldon. Sing for Sheldon.



Sing!



But—I—



You have NO CHOICE!



Singing sweetly.

I may be small, but my heart is not.

I know what I want and I want a lot.
To share my life with someone like me.
To live, love, laugh and be truly free.
If only I could use this tiny little voice
to let the world know I want to make my
own CHOICE...

The two pigeons applaud.



That was a good show!



Show!



Thank you.



Now it is time to shop for the wedding.



Shop!

*They leave Thumbelisa alone. She shudders
and shrieks.*



HELP!

Act II

Thumbelisa sits on a windowsill, listening to the song of a sparrow. She sings along, and then relaxes in the sunshine. A Mama Pigeon listens in from the sidewalk below...



I have such a happy life with my father. He shelters me and lets me ride in his shirt pocket. And although my love for my father grows, I do not. I am just bigger than a thumb and I am so lonely. How I long for a friend my own size!



Shaking and shouting out in alarm. Be careful Thumbelisa! Watch out!



Mama Pigeon flies up to the windowsill.

You sing so sweetly. And here you are, wishing for a friend, when I know the perfect friend for you.



Really?



Put on your shoes and brush your hair and come meet my son Sheldon.



No Thumbelisa! She is tricking you!



What?



Shush!

The pigeon flies away, carrying Thumbelisa in her beak. They land at the Argyle train stop and are greeted by Sheldon (Mama Pigeon's son).



Mama!



Sheldon my son! Look what I have brought for you! Your bride sings so sweetly, you'll never be shunned again.



Bride!



Bride? But I do not choose to marry a pigeon!



Shush your mouth! You have NO CHOICE!
 You'll make the perfect bride for my son.
 Poor Sheldon, he's shunned by the other pigeons because he croaks instead of coos.
 But with you singing sweetly by his side,
 he'll be the envy of the Argyle train stop!
 Sing for Sheldon, Sugar pie.



Sugar pie!



But—I—



You have NO CHOICE!



Singing sweetly.

I may be small but my heart is not
 I know what I want and I want a lot

To share my life with someone like me
To live, love, laugh and truly be free
If only I could use this tiny little voice
to let the world know I want to make my
own CHOICE...

The two pigeons applaud.



That was quite a show!



Show!



Thank you.



Now it is time to shop for everything we'll
need for the wedding. And we'll have none
of your shenanigans while we're shopping,
Sugarplum.



Sugarplum!

||

Thumbelisa is left stranded on the roof of the train platform. She shudders and begins to shriek.



HELP!

Level 1

Act III



I'm no thief!
I am Mothman!



He's no thief!
He is Mothman.



Climb on my back.
I have a plan!



Thank you for saving me Mighty Mothman.
I will only marry someone I choose.



That's good thinking.
That's a plan that can't lose!



Mothman is gone.
Now I am lost and so cold.



Come with me Thumbelisa.
I will give you a home.

Level 2

Act III

At the train stop. Mothman rescues Thumbelisa.

III



Stop Thief!



Thief!



I'm no thief. I'm Mothman!



Mothman!



Climb on my back!

Mothman thumps his wings. They land on a train car.



Thank you for saving me!



No thanks are needed. Mothman is always happy to help.



I was going to marry that pigeon. I had no choice. If I marry, it will be to someone I choose.



That sounds like good thinking. Now hold tight! This train is going fast!



What a thrill! I've never been on a train.



Where would you like to go from here?



I want to go there... *she points to the beach.*
Mothman flies her there.

He flies away and then time passes.



I spent the summer making myself a boat. Now it is time to set sail. I must find my way back to my father.

More time passes.



I am so lost!

III

Even more time passes. Thumbelisa leaves her boat. She is lost.



OH WOE IS ME!



Me thinks I hear a damsel in distress!



What was that?



Do not fear. Thou art a tiny lady just bigger than a thumb. Come away with Thelonius! You will be safe and out of harm's way.

Thumbelisa reaches out and takes the paw of Thelonius.

Level 3

Act III

Atop the Argyle train platform. Mothman, a large moth, has landed to rescue Thumbelisa.

III



Stop Thief!



Thief!



I'm no thief. I'm Mothman!



Mothman!



Climb on my back!

Mothman thumps his wings and they escape the two shrill pigeons, landing atop a moving train car.



Thank you for saving me Mothman! My name is Thumbelisa.



No thanks are needed, Thumbelisa. Mothman is always happy to help.

III



I was going to have to marry that terrible pigeon. I had no choice. When and if I marry, it will be to someone I choose.



That sounds like good thinking. Now hold tight for this train is picking up speed!



What a thrill! I've never been on a train.



This is the Southbound Red Line. Where would you like to go from here?



I want to go there... *She points to the lake-front. Mothman flies her three blocks from the train to the beach.*



Be careful here Thumbelisa. The beach is beautiful, but the throngs of people could

easily crush you. *He flies away and then time passes.*



I have spent the whole summer making myself this little boat out of a thermos lid, a thimble, some thread, and a few sheets of thin fabric. Now it is time to set sail and find my way back to my father.

More time passes.



The wind has blown me in the wrong direction. I am so lost!

Even more time passes. Thumbelisa leaves her boat and wanders about, ending up on the lakefront outside a small theatre. Her clothes are threadbare and she is nearly frozen, half starved, and without hope. She throws herself against an orange traffic cone.



OH WOE IS ME!



Me thinks I hear a damsel in distress!

III



What was that?



Do not fear. Thou art a tiny lady just bigger than a thumb. I see the world doth threaten to crush thee. Come away with Thelonius, the Thespian squirrel, where you will be safe and out of harm's way.

Thumbelisa reaches out and takes the paw of Thelonius.

Level 1

Act IV



Who is it that can tell me who I am?



Where will I go next? What is a good plan?



Come with me. There is someone you should meet.



Where are we going? Under the street?



This is King Whiskers. He will marry you.



But he is not the the husband I choose!



Thumbelisa, you will be my bride!



Oh no! Help! I need a place to hide.

IV

Act IV

A cold wind blows outside the theatre.

IV



Performing King Lear. Who is it that can tell me who I am?



Aside. My mind is whirling. Why am I here? What will I do next? Where might I end up? *She sighs.*



Why so sad Thumbelisa? We need a bit of whimsy!



What?



Nothing says whimsy like a wedding! Follow me! I have someone I'd like you to meet. *He pushes Thumbelisa into the tunnel.*



Where are we going?



We are below the theatre. We must whisper.
The rats are close by.



Rats?

A thousand red eyes appear.



What is it? Is it a human? It is so tiny.
What is it doing here?



IT is to be MY bride!



Who is he talking about?



He is talking about you! You have been
chosen to be the Bride of King Whiskers.



Aside. What am I to do? Where can I hide?
Who will help me now? I must escape!

She runs into the tunnel. She finds the Sparrow.



Have you been following me? You must have been out in the cold looking for me. You are frozen. Oh, I pray it is not too late to help you!

IV

She covers the sparrow. Then from off stage...



Come Thumbelisa! You are a lucky lady! You have been chosen to be the Bride of King Whiskers!



Aside. But HE is not the husband I choose. *To the sparrow.* I'll be back. *She disappears into the tunnel.*

Level 3

Act IV

Winter has come and the cold wind blows outside the cozy theatre.



Performing King Lear. Who is it that can tell me who I am?

IV

Thumbelisa applauds Thelonius and then thinks...



My mind is whirling with questions: Who is it that can tell me who I am? Why am I staying with this squirrel? What will I do next? Where might I end up? Who will I become over time? *She sighs.*



Why so gloomy Thumbelisa? Maybe we need a bit of whimsy in our lives.



What?



Nothing says whimsy like a wedding! Follow me! I have someone I'd like you to meet. *He pushes Thumbelisa into a long, dark tunnel.*

IV



Where are we going?



Can you hear the whooshing of the water? We are below the theatre. We must whisper now. The rats are close by.



Rats?

A thousand beady, red eyes appear.



Is it a human? But it is so tiny. What is it doing here?



IT is to be MY bride!



Who is he talking about?



He is talking about you Thumbelisa! You have been chosen to be the Bride of King Whiskers.



Aside. What am I to do? Where can I hide? Who will help me now? My thoughts are a whirlwind! I must escape!

IV

She runs deeper into the tunnel and stumbles over the Sparrow, who has been following her and now is nearly frozen on the ground.



Have you been following me? Why, you must have been out in the cold looking for me instead of flying south for the winter. At least you found the warmth of this tunnel. Oh, I pray it is not too late to help you!

She finds scraps of paper and fabric and covers the sparrow. Then from off stage...



Come Thumbelisa! You must get to know your future husband. You are a lucky little lady to have been chosen to be the Bride of King Whiskers!

IV



Aside. But HE is not the husband I choose.
To the sparrow. I'll be back. *She disappears into the tunnel.*

Level 1

Act V



I am going to marry a rat.



Why would you want to do that?



Because I have no choice.



You need to find your voice.



I wish for someone my own size.



Thumbelisa, I have a surprise.



How can this be? Who is he?



I am the Prince of the Fairies.

I have a gift for you.



Thank you Fairy Prince.

This is the life I choose!



Act V

Spring has come. Thumbelisa sings in the tunnel.

V



I may be small, but my heart is not.
I know what I want and I want a lot.
To share my life with someone like me.
To live, love, laugh and truly be free.
If only I could use this tiny little voice
To let the world know I want to make my
own CHOICE...



The wedding is here. In just a few minutes
Thumbelisa will become a bride.



To the sparrow. What am I to do?



Why are you crying?



Today is my wedding to King Whiskers.



But he is not who you choose to marry.



No he is not. He was chosen for me. Now I am doomed to become Queen of the Rats!



Thumbelisa, you always have a choice.



What do you mean? What can I do? Where would I go? When could I escape?



Climb on my back, Thumbelisa. My wings are strong now. It is time for me to go. Come with me into the sunshine. Make your own choices.



I want to make my own choices. And I choose to be happy. *She climbs onto his back.*





Hold tight! *They fly through the wedding guests.*



This is not the life I choose!



Stop, Thief!

V



I can make my own choices!

They fly away into the sunshine.



What do you want to do Thumbelisa?



I want to be with someone my own size.
But that is impossible.



Impossible things happen every day!

The Sparrow flies to the Museum of Science and Industry, then to the Fairy Castle inside.



What is this?



A Fairy Castle.



It's beautiful.



It is. Thousands of people come to see it everyday. But there is something they never see. *He begins to sing. Out steps the Prince of the Fairies.*



He is just my size! And he has wings!



Welcome to the Fairy Castle! I am the Prince of the Fairies. I have a gift for you, if this should be the life you choose.

*He places his hand upon Thumbelisa's back.
She sprouts wings.*



This is the life I choose!



Level 3

Act V

Winter is ending and turning to Spring.

Thumbelisa sings in the tunnel while Thelonus and King Whiskers make the final wedding preparations.

V



I may be small, but my heart is not.
I know what I want and I want a lot.
To share my life with someone like me.
To live, love, laugh and be truly free.
If only I could use this tiny little voice
To let the world know I want to make my
own CHOICE...



The wedding is upon us. In just a few minutes Thumbelisa will be the beautiful bride of King Whiskers.



To the sparrow. What am I to do?



Why are you crying?



Today is my wedding to King Whiskers.



But he is not who you choose to marry.



No he is not. He was chosen for me. Now I am doomed to live my life in this dark tunnel as the Queen of the Rats!



Thumbelisa, you always have a choice.



What do you mean? What can I do? Where would I go? When could I escape?



Climb on my back, Thumbelisa. My wings are strong enough now and it is time for me to go. Come away with me into the sunshine. Make your own choices.



I want to make my own choices. And I choose wholeheartedly to be happy. *She climbs onto the Sparrow's back.*





Hold tight! *They fly through the wedding guests.*



This is not the life I choose!



Stop, Thief! You're stealing my bride.

V



I can make my own choices!

They fly away into the sunshine.



What do you want to do Thumbelisa?



What I really want is to be with someone my own size. But that is impossible.



Impossible things happen every day!

The Sparrow makes his way to the Museum of Science and Industry on Chicago's South side. He flies through the parking garage, into the lower level of the museum, and then into

a very dark room. There stands a beautiful Fairy Castle.



What is this?



This is from the collection of a woman named Colleen Moore. It came to the museum in 1949.



It is charming.



It is. Thousands of people come to see it everyday. But there is something they never see. *He begins to sing and is joined by another voice. Out steps the Prince of the Fairies.*



He is just my size! And he has wings!



Welcome to the Fairy Castle! I am the Prince of the Fairies and I have a gift for you if this should be the life you choose.

*He gently places his hand upon Thumbelisa's -
she sprouts wings.*



This is the life I choose!

V

THE END