

# *The Magic Fish*

An opera for young audience  
in 3 short acts without intermission

by

The Brothers Knable

Based on a story by the Brothers Grimm

Music by Sunny Knable  
Libretto by Jim Knable

ca. 50 min.

Commissioned by  
Half Moon Theatre, Poughkeepsie, NY

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## Cast of Characters:

Otter/Girl ... soprano

Mother ... soprano

Father ... baritone

Boy ... tenor

Magic Fish ... bass/baritone

This is the vocal score. To obtain parts for chamber group or full orchestra, contact [sunnyknable@gmail.com](mailto:sunnyknable@gmail.com).

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## Act I

### Introduction - Largo (♩=60)

(Otter appears.)

Otter: *spoken mp*

Otter (O.)  
Mother (M.)  
Boy (B.)  
Father (F.)  
Magic Fish (M.F.)

Once, as long ago as yesterday,

*pp* *sfz* *sfz p*

*blurry Ped.*

O.  
O.  
O.

there was a boy. He was the son of a fisherman, and his wife. They lived in a humble little cottage by the sea. The fisherman caught all day. His wife made the fish into stews that she sold at the market. The fisherman taught the boy how to fish. They were all... very... happy.

*mp* *p* *mf* *p*

*piu mosso* *rall.*

*dim.* *pp*

### Scene 1a - Allegro (♩.=120)

(The happy family has gathered, Father teaching  
Boy to fish while Mother stirs a stew pot.)

M. *Mother: mf*

Well, it is nice cook-ing fish for a

*p* *f* *mf*

*legato con poco Ped*

M. *Father: mf*

stew. Yes, and it gives our fam - i - ly some - thing to do. I

M. And I love mak-ing stew.

F. love to fish the day a way.

F. *4* Boy, this is the way your par-ents live. We hope you know we do it

24

M.   
 B.   
 F.   
 all for you don't you?   
 We I know, Fa - ther.

27

M.   
 B.   
 F.   
 love you. It's true we love you.   
 I know, Mo - ther.   
 It's true we love you.

30

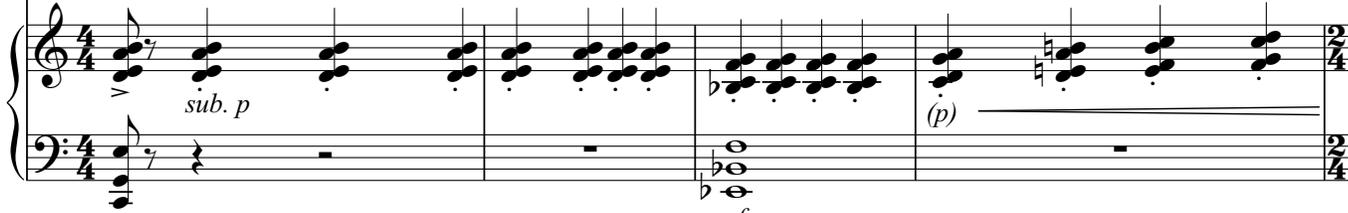
M.   
 B.   
 F.   
 And I love you too.

32 *f* *(Father exits.)*

O. 

F. *f* One day\_ while the fish-er-man was off to sea...*f* And his wife was off sell-ing stew at the mar-ket  
Off to sea!

*sub. p* *(p)* *mf*



36 *(Mother exits.)*

O. 

M. *mf* Get yer hot\_ fresh\_ stew!  
And the boy went fish-ing on the beach by him-self.

*mf*

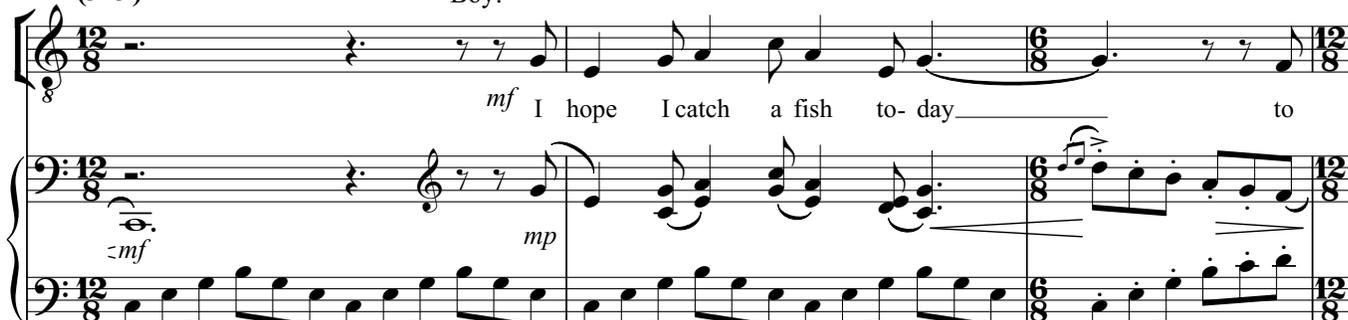


41 *(♩=♩)* Boy:

B. *mf* I hope I catch a fish to- day\_ to

*mf* *mp*

*legato con poco Ped*



44

B. make my fa - ther proud of me\_ to give my mo - ther fish to cook\_



47  
B.

and help my lit - tle fa - mi - ly

50  
O.

*mf* That is what he said each time when he cast his fish - ing line.

53  
O.

Sad - ly though, most of the time, he did-n't catch an - y fish.

56 (Boy pulls his fishing line, instead of a fish, there is an old boot.)  
O.

So he'd try and try a-gain

*f* *mp*

59 *mf*

B. *f* *mp*

I hope I catch a fish to-day to make my fa - ther proud of me to

62

B. *f* *tr*

give my mother fish to cook and help my lit - tle fa - mily

(Boy throws out his line. He pulls on it. Instead of a fish: a life preserver.)

**poco meno mosso** (♩=100)

66 *mp*

O. *p* *mp*

The son was feel - ing ver - y sad his fish - ing luck was most - ly

**poco accel.** . . . . . **a tempo** (♩=120)

70 *mf* *f*

O. *cresc.*

bad. But he de ci - ded one more time to try and cast his fish - ing line

74 (He throws it off stage. Something pulls on it.)

B. *f* It's pull - ing back as fish might do \_\_\_\_\_ I

*sub. p*

*molto Ped.*

77

B. give it slack then pull it to \_\_\_\_\_ I do just as my fa - ther taught.

80

B. \_\_\_\_\_ I think it is I think it is a fish I've

(Sure enough, the Magic Fish is on the other end of the line.  
The Boy yanks it and the Fish flops down at his feet.)

83 *ff*

B. got! \_\_\_\_\_

*ff*

85 Scene 1b - *meno mosso* (♩=100) *a tempo* (♩=120)

O. *mf* But it's not just an-y fish

B. *f* What luck what luck I've caught a fish!

*mp* *sempre legato* *p* *secco*

89 Magic Fish: *mf*

M.F. My dear boy you have reeled me in and here I lie no—

*sim.*

93

M.F. more to swim I— beg you though to— throw me back and—

*mp* *Ped.*

98

M.F. not to stick me in your sack! You

*f* *mf* *non-Ped.*

102

M.F.

see my boy, I'm a ma - gic fish and I would not make a good fish dish. So con -

106

M.F.

si - der this: let me go back quick, and I swear you'll get a re-ward for this.

*Red.*

112

B.

But I want to make my father proud and give my motherfish to cook...

5 4 3 2 5 4 3 2

117

M.F.

A no - ble de - sire and I wish I could sup - port it but

120

M.F. *as a fish I'd ra - ther not be cooked.*

122

B. *mp* *But I have tried so hard to catch a fish and*

127

B. *f* *you're the on - ly fish I've caught.*

M.F. *mf* *I'll tell you what, make a wish for a - no - ther fish,*

133

M.F. *throw me back and you'll get one then*

**meno mosso** (♩=80)

136 *(spoken out of rhythm)*

B. *But, I don't understand.* *(spoken out of rhythm)*

M.F. *I'm a magic fish my boy. I can grant wishes.* *Normally, I charge a small fee.*

139

B. *If I let you live you'll grant me a wish for another fish?*

M.F. *In this case, if you let me live, I'll give you your first wish for free. I'll*

143 *(to the audience)*

O. *I do not trust this fish. Do you trust this fish?*

M.F. *grant you a wish for an - y - thing — you want. Please make your decision quickly. I can not breathe out of water!*

*Red.*

146 *a tempo* (♩=120)

B.

Al-right, my wish is to catch a real-ly big fish

149 *mf*

M.F.

So you wish for a fish And I'll give you what you wish Now close your

154

M.F.

eyes and throw me back in

*rit.* *a tempo*

158 (♩=♩.)

(Boy throws Fish back into the water offstage.)

*f* *p* *f*

*Ped.* *8<sup>vb</sup>*

162

B. *f* I hope I catch a fish to-day \_\_\_\_\_ to make my fa-ther proud of me \_\_\_\_\_ to

(He throws his line in. He pulls it back quickly; a big beautiful fish plops down on the beach.)

167

B. give my mo ther fish to cook \_\_\_\_\_ and help my lit tle fa - mi - ly. Hello? Are you a magic fish too?

171 (Silence.) *f* (He holds up his fish.) *sub. p*

B. I guess not. I will help I will help my fam - i - ly I will help

M.F. (appearing mischievously) *f*

Fool - ish

175

M.F. boy you have thrown me back when you should have put me in your

