

# PUSS IN BOOTS

Adapted for stage by Felicia Pfluger  
From James Gardner's Politically Correct Bedtime Stories

## Cast:

Narrator  
Puss in boots  
Youngest Child  
Eldest Sibling/Photographer  
Haberdasher/Incumbent  
Reporters 1/Factory worker  
Reporter 3/ Customer  
Middle Sibling/ Reporter 2/Retiree

## Props:

Brief case  
Podium  
Camera

## Costume Notes:

Cat suit/Tail  
Pin Striped Blazer

**Narrator:** In a land, not-so-**very** far away lived a man... and his three offspring.  
After the father had achieved his inevitable non-essentialness, his estate  
was divided among his children:

*The Three children step forward and turnaround from the shadows when mentioned...*

**Narrator:** The eldest inherited the oil company

*The eldest shows joy at inheriting the hugest share.*

**Eldest:** YES!!! That will do

**Narrator:** The next eldest got the publishing company and media holdings.

*The Middle child rubs the youngest child's face in his luck.*

**Middle Child:** (*Sniveling*) I guess it isn't **too** bad..

**Narrator:** ...and the least eldest got... a **cat**.

*The Cats crawls on stage left, not looking at all unique.*

**Cat:** **Meow.**

*Youngest child looks dejected.*

**Youngest:** I always knew Dad believed in a familial hierarchy system based on a Eurocentric age progression focus. But...A cat? Why... a cat?

**Narrator:** Forgetting for a moment the hours of companionship, and contentment that an animal companion can bring, the “least eldest” accepted the hierarchy enough not to compel him to contest the will in probate.

**Youngest:** “Listen, brothers, while you’ll be able to support yourselves with your share of the inheritance, I’ll be lucky if I can **breed** this cat or put it in **commercials**. Don’t **force** me to sell him to a **cosmetics company** just to get a return on my assets.”

**Narrator:** His brothers ignored him and told him:

**Older Siblings:** Have your lawyer call our lawyers

*The older siblings exit Stage Right*

**Narrator:** The cat **took obvious offense** at these flippant, glib remarks.

*The cat growls menacingly*

The cat scolded this silly, shortsighted human.

**Cat:** *(Licking her emotional wounds)* Pffft, Pffft. It’s just **like** “your kind” to treat someone with **four** legs like a **resource** for you to **exploit**. WE are not put here for your enrichment, Bub, **material**... or **otherwise**. In fact, I’m sooooo disgusted that now I’m not going to tell you how **I** was going to make you a great and **powerful** person.

**Narrator:** **More** than the fact that the cat **could** speak, these last words sparked the interest of the ambitious yet meagerly synapsed young person.

**Youngest:** *(Prostrating low and apologetically)* Oh, Ms. Puss, my dearest and trusted friend, how did you plan to do this?

**Cat:** I don’t think that you **want** to know. *(Growing in volume and agitation)* You obviously haven’t the foresight and fortitude it would take for a successful career in **public service**.

**Youngest:** *(Begging)* Oh, please!. I’d LOVE to go into politics. I’m not much suited for **anything else**, and my brothers...

*(Looks ashamed and awkward)*

**Youngest:** might be able to give us a jump-start in the contributions area.

**Cat:** *(Sighing and meowing)* My heart does go out to you, a poor idiot left on his own. *(Resigningly)* Very well, I will help you.

**Youngest:** *(Joy and Relief flood the youngest)* Thank you, Ms. Puss!

**Cat:** For me to get started, I need two things:

**Youngest:** Yes. Yes? *(Continues to nod and agree to all the terms).*

**Cat:** First... a blue pinstripe suit-Armani – Nothing less will do.

Plus... a briefcase – and some fancy stitched boots and...

Second... a promise that you'll **never make a single solitary utterance in public without my OK!**

*The Youngest nods vigorously in full supplication.*

**Narrator:** The “wholesome-looking” young person readily agreed, especially since they never had much that was **important or original** to say anyway.

*The Cat and Youngest goes Stage Right to the Habadasher to be measured and given the blazer.*

The cat was taken to a fancy haberdasher to be outfitted properly. When this was done, the cat told him...

**Cat:** Go home now – and wait. Practice looking statesman-like by riding horses, playing polo, and rugby, writing your memoirs, things like that.

**Youngest:** *(Looking uncomfortable)* But... I don't have any memoirs to write!

**Cat:** I said **practice** writing. If you think you'll ever have the chance to do your **own writing**, then we've got a problem already. *(goes Stage Left)*

**Narrator:** With that, Puss in Boots left to call his first press conference. The primaries for the senate race were only five weeks away at this point, and the field of candidates was already quite crowded. When Puss in Boots held his press conference, only a handful of reporters had the time or interest to show up. This hardly mattered, since it was to be rather short anyway.

*Cat goes to a podium stage left. Takes a presidential stance of power with slight condescension.*

**Cat:** I'd like to announce that my employer is not a candidate for the party nomination for the senate seat at this time. Thank you. No questions, please.

**Narrator:** And was the reaction was....**tremendous!** Breathless articles and news reports began to appear about the reluctant candidate.

*Reporters overlapping in excitement...*

**Reporter 1:** *(Stage Right)* Who was he?

**Reporter 2:** *(Stage Left)* What did he stand for?

**Reporter 3:** *(Stage Right)* What was the significance of the public groundswell that surrounded this strapping figure of youthful vitality?

**Narrator:** *(Meandering a bit on stage)* With just the slightest “spin doctoring” and some **wise** use of media time, Puss in Boots proceeded to forge the image of his human companion as a person forced into public life by the **WILL of the people**, who were disillusioned and were looking for a white knight (colorist though such concepts are) on a tall fiery charger *(As an aside to the audience)* “ditto heightist and speciesist, not to mention quite Eurocentric overall”.

*Youngest starts walking on Stage Right to puss, who walks on stage left*

**Narrator:** Within a few weeks and without uttering a word, the young person with the “movie star’esque” good looks won the party nomination for the senate!

*Youngest starts walking on Stage Right to puss, who walks on stage left*

**Youngest:** Wow, I can’t believe it! I guess I’d better start figuring out my position on the issues!

**Cat:** *(Hisses)* You do and I’ll break your neck !

**Narrator:** Hissed the cat.

*Cat hisses at narrator, who looks very uncomfortable.*

**Cat:** Let me worry about your **positions**, as well as your **beliefs** and you “off-the-cuff” **remarks** and your **spontaneity** and EVERYTHING ELSE!

*Cat Leans in threateningly to the Youngest*

**Cat:** *(Howling)* Youuuuuu just remember: Don't say a thing unless I tell you to!

**Narrator:** Now Puss in Boots began to work in earnest to get his constituent "meal ticket" elected to the senate.

*Both move down stage center and wave to audience*

**Narrator:** He issued position papers that were totally pointless yet exquisitely quotable.

*Both move stage left. Puss whispers in Youngest's ear. Youngest, with pomp and circumstance goes to the podium SL and says:*

**Youngest:** Adequate, timely measures will be used to accomplish far reaching change.

*Puss whispers in Youngest's ear once more. Youngest channels a politician once more.*

**Youngest:** Substantial relevancy IS the appropriate measure.

*Puss walks stage Left. Factory Worker, Retiree, and Customer move on stage applauding. All move stage center to shake hands vigorously with Youngest.*

*Photographer, with back to audience, takes photo shots of retiree with Youngest shaking hands.*

**Narrator:** He had the candidate photographed shaking hands with factory workers, retirees, and customers at luncheonettes.

**Narrator:** They challenged the incumbent...

*Incumbent walks on stage right, waiving politically, goes towards the podium to shakes hands and is rebuffed.*

**Narrator:** To a debate and then backed out oat the last minute, declaring:

**Cat:** Such an event would be just an exercise in "politics as usual."

*(Puss waves incumbent away)*

**Narrator:** Their optimistically simple campaign slogan –"It's Time for a Change!"

**All:** *(Overlapping battle cry)* It's Time for a Change!

**Narrator:** Seemed to strike a chord with the optimistically simple voters.

Throughout the frenzy of the campaign, no one noticed or commented on Puss in Boots's lack of credentials. In fact, seduced by his easy and apparently candid manner, no one ever noticed that he was of feline descent at all. This was demonstrated the commentator's observation:

**Commentator:** *(Stage Right)* In this optically challenged land, this monocularly gifted individual should be first in line at the feeding trough.

**Narrator:** *(With full bravado)* Election Day drew near, with all the **mudslinging** and **innuendo** you could **imagine**. Puss in Boots's candidate, however, with his easy confidence and glint in the eye, seemed somehow... to rise above the fray.

*Building with tension and enthusiasm.*

This might have been due to the fact that he was still forbidden to speak his mind *(tongue in cheek)* or what there was of it – in any way, shape, or form.

*Puss goes to the podium once more in full charisma*

Puss in Boots, on the other hand, was always available to the media and ready with a charming, folksy anecdote

**Cat:** Chicken soup can help a cold – and we are your chicken soup, we are your comfort. Think of our country wide medical plan as your euphemistic chicken soup.

**Narrator:** Or some evidence that their opponent had:

**Cat:** Undergone electroshock therapy to stop the temporary lapses into dementia that made him want to release all the criminals from prison with a \$50 gift certificate and an automatic pistol.

**Narrator:** As the campaign came down to the wire, and with “the heartland-born-and-bred candidate” lagging in the polls, Puss knew it was time to stop “playing footsie”.

*Reporters come out and sit around podium facing puss.*

**Narrator:** Another press conference was called. This time announced to the media:

**Cat:** Our campaign honorably requests that our opponent step down from the race, so that we **won't** have to disclose possible evidence we **may** have found that **might** link our opponent to an **experimental, gender-reversing** medical procedure he **may** have undergone 23 years ago in an **undisclosed** overseas country, where the **majority** of the population speaks Swedish.

*Press reacts violently after "No questions, please."*

**Cat:** Thank you. No questions, please!

*Press reacts by listening to the incumbent as he takes the podium.*

**Narrator:** This insinuation, as you may have guessed, turned the entire campaign around. Rumors flew about the type of evidence Puss and his boss "may or may not" have had. Their opponent repeatedly chose to:

**Incumbent:** Deny accusations that I had once been a wommon and was now a man, that I was still a wommon now trapped in a man's body with a penchant for cross-dressing – not that there is anything wrong or unnatural, certainly, with any of these lifestyle choices.

**Narrator:** As usual, **emotions** rather than **reason** carried the day, and after all the ballots were counted on election day, Puss in boots and his ruddy, exuberant human companion...

**Cat:** **May I introduce your new Senator!**

**Narrator:** Had won by a comfortable margin.

*The crowd goes wild! The Senator and Cat rejoice.*

**Cat:** *(Pulling the Senator aside stage left)* "You see,? I told you I could be useful to you. You **may not** have the wealth of your brothers yet, but you **soon** will have, and even more clout, if you play your cards right. There is even some talk –initiated by **me**, of course, that you're going to run for president in the next election because the country's problems are too urgent and your ideas are too big to be **penned** up in the senate. What do you think of that?"

**Youngest:** Oh, my skillful, cunning cat. I can't thank you enough. Please accept my apologies for ever contemplating selling you to perfume researchers.

**Cat:** Just do as I say, and instead of **stealth** candidate, they'll be calling you...Mr. President. Now you better get up there and give them the victory speech **I** wrote for you.

*The crowd cheers!*

**Narrator:** The beaming politician entered the crowd to cheers and applause and pushed his way forward to the podium.

**Youngest::** To my family, friends, and supporters, I want to thank you all for your hard work and dedication, and I am pleased to tell you I have just received a phone call from my opponent conceding the election!

*(Applause, applause as puss goes off stage)*

He was a worthy adversary and fought the good fight, but his campaign was not about **issues** or **ideology**, or even ability or brainpower. It was about plain and simple message: It's time for a **change**!

**All:** Change! Change! Change!

*(applause, applause)*

**Youngest:** And now, if you'll let me, I'd like to depart from my prepared comments.

*(Sound effect of glass shattering and groans from the wings)*

I'd like to thank someone without whom this victory wouldn't have been possible: my campaign adviser, my confidante, and I'm proud to say, my cat –Puss in Boots!

*(Applause goes dead silent)*

**Narrator:** Had... they... heard him right? This Kennedyesque young figure, their bright and shining knight, their hope for the future, had let his *cat* run the campaign?

**Reporter 1:** What?

**Narrator:** Not that it was unprecedented-other non-human animals had held high appointed positions for years – but why had he kept it a **secret**? What kind of man was he to hide such information, and what else was he **hiding**?

**Youngest:** Puss, come out here and take a bow.



**Narrator:** Puss in Boots just stood in the wings, shaking his head, his paw over his eyes. He had had his doubts, but he never wanted to believe his master was so “cerebrally undercapitalized” as to spill the legumes at his own victory party.

*The people start grumbling in frustration and anger quietly*

**All:** **Booooo. Boooo.**

**Narrator:** The people in the crowd grew angry, even the cat lovers. They felt they’d been deceived, cheated, jilted, cuckolded.

They started to boo, tear down banners, and pop balloons as they began to look for payback. The new Senator had to make his escape through the rear behind the podium.

He looked for his cat everywhere with no luck. Then over in a corner, he saw a group of reporters and cameras gathered around, and there was Puss in Boots right in the center of them.

By the time the senator got to where the press had clustered around Puss, all he could hear was his cat saying...

**Cat:** ...to apologize to everyone who worked on this campaign and put their trust in this candidate, and also to you, you hardworking reporters.

*People start nodding in agreement with the Kitty.*

**Cat:** Had I know this pathetic schemer to be so unstable and duplicitous; I would never have become involved with his campaign. I hereby resign from his staff before any other damage is inflicted on the electoral system, or on the hearts and minds of the public. Thank you. No questions, please.

**Narrator:** The reporters ran off to file their stories. Puss in Boots walked slowly up to his former employer and said, sighing..

**Cat:** If only you’d stuck to the script. Good luck in office, if you survive the recount.

**Youngest::** *(In complete confusion, fall to knees)* But, I don’t understand. No one... figured out... you... were a cat... before now?

**Cat:** Do the words ‘credibility problem’ mean anything to you?

Nobody really *cares* that I’m a cat – not on the record, anyway- but now because of your **slip** of the brain, it looks like a big cover-up.

Fraud, nepotism, interspecies exploitation-your squeaky-clean image is “kaput”. If you had to tell them, a **weepy** confession would’ve been much better than a **bungled** disclosure.

That’s Spin Doctoring 101, but you... (*Tapping Youngest’s head*) you’re working with such low wattage, it slipped right by you.

*Curtains close behind the Narrator in preparation for the next script.*

**Narrator:**

Puss in Boots bid a farewell and walked away. He wrote a few magazine articles to tell his side of the sordid story, then got a job as a television pundit based in the capital.

The senator barely survived the inevitable recall vote, but questions about his judgement lingered and impeded any effectiveness in office he might have had over the next six years.

Almost from the day he was sworn in, he was treated like a non-ambulatory waterfowl, something Puss in Boots reminded him and the rest of the country about every time the pundit cat went on the air.

*Fine!*