

ECONOMIC HARDSHIP

Boelts, M. Those Shoes. All Jeremy wants is a pair of those shoes, the ones everyone at school seems to be wearing. But Jeremy's grandma tells him they don't have room for "want," just "need," and what Jeremy needs are new boots for winter. When Jeremy's shoes fall apart at school, and the guidance counselor gives him a hand-me-down pair, the boy is more determined than ever to have those shoes, even a thrift-shop pair that are much too small. But sore feet aren't much fun, and Jeremy comes to realize that the things he has — warm boots, a loving grandma, and the chance to help a friend — are worth more than the things he wants. j PAR PIC Boelts

Brown, M. Stone Soup. When two hungry soldiers come to a town where all the food has been hidden, they set out to make soup of water and stones, and all the town enjoys the feast. jP Brown

Cooper, M. Gettin' Through Thursday. Since money is tight on Thursdays, the day before his mother's payday, Andre is upset when he realizes that his report card and the promised celebration for making the honor roll will come on a Thursday. j PAR PIC Cooper

DiSalvo-Ryan, D. Uncle Willie and the Soup Kitchen. A boy spends the day with his uncle in a soup kitchen where he works preparing and serving food for the hungry. j PAR PIC DiSalvo-Ryan

Friedrich, E. Leah's Pony. Amid the Dust Bowl of the 1930s, Leah's father is faced with the loss of the family farm and puts his farm and equipment up for auction, but Leah comes up with the money by selling her beloved pony. jP Friedrich

Greenfield, E. Grandmama's Joy Grandmama is sad because she can no longer afford the rent and she and Rhondy have to move. Rhondy tries unsuccessfully to cheer her up with a song, a dance, or a gift from the backyard; so she tries the one thing she's sure will work. Rhondy reminds Grandmama what she said about her when they first came to live together: "That's my joy, that's Grandmama's joy. Long as I got my joy, I'll be all right." j PAR PIC Greenfield

Hazen, B. Tight Times. A youngster isn't sure why a thing called "tight times" means not getting a dog. j PAR PIC Hazen

Hesse, K. Spuds. Maybelle, Jack, and Eddie want to help Ma by putting something extra on the table, so they set out in the dark to take potatoes from a nearby field, but when they arrive home and empty their potato sacks, they are surprised by what they see. jP Hesse

Locker, T. Family Farm. A farm family nearly loses their home until they hit on the idea of raising and selling pumpkins and flowers to supplement their corn and milk sales. j PAR PIC Locker

Maslac, E. Finding a Job for Daddy. A young girl helps her father look for a new job and lets him know that he will always have the important job of being her daddy.

j PAR PIC Maslac

Mills, L. The Rag Coat. Minna, a young Appalachian girl, wants very badly to attend school, but she doesn't have a coat. Her father has just died and her family cannot afford one. When a group of mothers who gather at her house regularly to make quilts hear of her predicament, they decide to help her. Minna is thrilled, but when the new coat is finished and she wears it to the one-room schoolhouse, she is teased by her classmates for wearing rags.

j PAR PIC Mills

Peterson, J. My Mama Sings. Mama has special old songs for all occasions, until the time comes when she has no song ready and her little boy supplies one.

j PAR PIC Peterson

Quinlan, P. My Dad Takes Care Of Me. When children at school ask the narrator what his father does for a living, he tells them that his father is a pilot rather than tell them the truth: his father has lost his job due to a factory closing.

j PAR PIC Quinlan

Schotter, R. Mama, I'll Give You the World. At Walter's World of Beauty, Luisa's secret plans are underway to create a very special birthday celebration for her hard-working, single mother who is employed there as a stylist.

j PAR PIC Schotter

Taback, S. Joseph Had a Little Overcoat. When Joseph's favorite overcoat gets old and worn, he makes a jacket out of it. When the jacket is more patches than jacket, Joseph turns it into a vest. When the vest's number is up, Joseph makes a scarf. This thrifty industry continues until there's nothing left of the original garment. But clever Joseph manages to make something out of nothing!

jP Taback

Williams, V. A Chair for My Mother. A child, her waitress mother, and her grandmother save dimes to buy a comfortable armchair after all their furniture is lost in a fire.

j PAR PIC Williams