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Cricket County Academy

A one-act hillbilly comedy

by Eddie McPherson



Meriwether Publishing Ltd.

Contemporary Drama Service

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DEDICATION

To Katie and Heather. Katie just got her license and Heather her first cell phone. I'm not sure I like the idea of you growing up.

Don't forget me.

SYNOPSIS

The hillbilly Taylor clan from Cricket County (the boonies of boonies) came into a great deal of money when their penny-pinching Uncle Zeke passed on to the great beyond a couple of years back. The ironic thing is that Uncle Zeke left his dear country family a lot of money. *A lot* of money that no one ever knew he had. So, in an attempt to finally get his country cousins a decent education, Elkin Taylor decides to enroll his kinfolk in Gold-Leaf Academy, a highbrow private school close to the city.

An epic proportion of mishaps and misunderstandings is served up with hilarious results. It turns out, though, that the city folks learn a few lessons from the down-to-earth Cricket County philosophy. Proof that sometimes oil and water *can* mix quite successfully.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

COUNTY BUNCH:

ELKIN: Head of the clan

FESTER: Simpleminded with a heart of gold; he's quite the gentleman

GLEND A MAE: Fester's cousin; she doesn't take anything from anyone

BRENDA MAE: Glenda Mae's identical twin who looks nothing like her

CITY BUNCH:

MRS. LANGLEY: Principal of Gold-Leaf Academy

MS. WARD: Drama teacher at Gold-Leaf Academy

KAYLA: A drama student who falls for Fester

HANNAH: Kayla's best friend

ZACK: Big man on campus of Gold-Leaf Academy; bully

MICHAEL: Zack's best friend

EMILY: Part of Zack's crowd

BROOKE: Part of Zack's crowd

EXTRAS: Drama students

PRODUCTION NOTES

The scene is a theatre classroom in the private high school (or middle school) of Gold-Leaf Academy. A bare stage area with folding chairs, a tall ladder, and a sign reading "Sign Up Now for the Spring Dance," are all you need to perform this one-act, which makes it easy to perform virtually anywhere. The characters are stereotypical and the situations ridiculous. Exaggerated facial expressions and dramatic body language will add fun to the lines.

Easy-to-obtain props

box of props and costumes containing a plastic ax, a pointed princess-type or lady-in-waiting hat, a long, tangled "hag" wig, and two straw hats
schoolbooks
a couple of one-dollar bills
ax
cardboard ax wrapped in newspaper
toothpicks
various scripts
homemade slingshot
bottle of aspirin
clipboard
financial document
large brown paper bag
braided yellow yarn
partial page costume
sandwich or some other type of finger food
several pairs of dark sunglasses,
fedora

Music

Fun, upbeat, instrumental bluegrass-type music for scene changes and end of play.

Costumes

The country bunch should wear simple clothing: denim or gingham dresses, overalls, flannel shirts, rope belts, etc. Fester needs a cap. He later appears in white long johns, a white ruffled shirt, work boots, and a prince hat, complete with a large feather. Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae wear black cloaks and witch hats later in the performance.

The students at Gold-Leaf Academy wear simple uniforms, i.e. white button-down collared shirts and khaki pants for the guys and white blouses and khaki skirts for the girls.

Mrs. Langley dresses appropriately business-like.

Ms. Ward may wear something a bit more artsy and/or flashy.

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SCENE ONE

(Before the curtain rises, fast bluegrass music plays to set the mood for the play. AT RISE: The scene is a theatre classroom in a private school. Black curtains hang on the Upstage wall and chairs are haphazardly scattered about the stage. A tall ladder leans somewhere against the Upstage wall. A box full of props is located Stage Left. A sign somewhere reads: "Sign Up Now for the Spring Dance." ZACK and MICHAEL enter Stage Left carrying schoolbooks. They stand Center Stage.)

ZACK: You should have seen the new kids who just registered! I couldn't stop laughing when I saw how they were dressed. Picture this: patch-covered overalls, denim jeans with ropes for belts, flannel shirts, and gabardine dresses. And when they passed me in the hall, one of them looked at me and said, "Howdy thar."

MICHAEL: "Howdy"? Do people really talk like that? *(Quickly looks around.)* Where are they? I want to get a good look at these hillbillies.

ZACK: Mrs. Langley is showing them around the school. You won't be able to hold in the laughter when you see them. *(They set their books on a chair.)* Come on, let's grab some lunch.

MICHAEL: *(Shaking his head and laughing)* Gabardine? *(In a country twang)* Yeeee-haaaaw! *(They laugh and exit Right. KAYLA and HANNAH enter Stage Right.)*

HANNAH: There he goes. Why didn't you say something?

KAYLA: I lost my nerve.

HANNAH: He will never ask you to the spring dance if you don't at least try and let him know you're interested.

KAYLA: I'm tired of having to fight for his attention. You saw how he ignored us just now.

HANNAH: To be honest, I can't blame you.

KAYLA: I can be just as stubborn as he can. Why can't it be like the good old days when the boy called on the girl and

1 had to ask her parents for permission to take their
2 daughter on a date? What happened to the days when the
3 boy opened a door for the girl or pulled out her chair at
4 the dinner table? Can you see any of the guys around
5 here doing that?
6 HANNAH: Are you trying to say guys actually did all those
7 things at one time?
8 KAYLA: Yes, I read it in a history book once.
9 HANNAH: Let's see if your theory holds water.
10 KAYLA: What do you mean?
11 HANNAH: I'm going to try an experiment, and here come two
12 perfect subjects. (*ZACK and MICHAEL enter Right.*)
13 ZACK: I forgot my money. (*He opens one of his schoolbooks and*
14 *pulls out some bills.*)
15 HANNAH: Hello, boys. (*KAYLA stands back and watches*
16 *curiously. HANNAH refers to a table and chair sitting nearby.*)
17 I was just going to sit in that chair right there and rest
18 for a while. But it seems to be sitting up against this
19 table.
20 ZACK: (*To MICHAEL*) Let's go. (*Stops suddenly.*) Wait, I just
21 remembered something.
22 HANNAH: You did? (*Throws KAYLA an "OK" sign.*) I wonder
23 what that could be.
24 ZACK: (*Crosses to the chair and pulls it out.*) Well, you see — I
25 was thinking ...
26 HANNAH: (*Sly grin, flirty*) Yeeees?
27 ZACK: There are never enough seats in the lunchroom, so I'd
28 better take this chair to sit on. C'mon, Michael — I'm
29 starved. (*They exit Right with the chair.*)
30 HANNAH: (*Shouting after them*) But ... (*Turns to KAYLA*) You're
31 right, chivalry is dead. I think I'll drown my sorrows in
32 some mashed potatoes and horse meat. You coming?
33 KAYLA: (*Sighs.*) I'm coming. (*They exit Stage Right. After a*
34 *moment MRS. LANGLEY enters Stage Left followed by*
35 *ELKIN, FESTER, GLENDA MAE, and BRENDA MAE.*)

1 *FESTER carries an ax.*
2 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Come along this way, please. (*Stands Center*
3 *Stage as the others surround her.*) And this is your theatre
4 class. Ms. Ward, our drama teacher, is wonderful.
5 **ELKIN:** Did you hear that, Fester? This here is the the-ate-her.
6 You'll get to watch all your favorite picture shows in
7 here.
8 **FESTER:** Gollee.
9 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Hands on hips*) If it's such a all-fired fancy
10 movie the-ate-her, where's the giant movie screen?
11 **GLEND A MAE:** And the popcorn machine? You can't watch a
12 picture show without a bag of buttered popcorn a-sittin'
13 on your lap.
14 **MRS. LANGLEY:** I'm afraid you don't understand; it's theatre
15 as in *stage* productions. You know, pretend? As in putting
16 on a *play* ?
17 **ELKI N:** Ohhhh, *play*. That's even better; we *love* to play up in
18 Cricket County. Kick the Can; Red Rover, Red Rover;
19 Cow Patty Toss; all the regular stuff.
20 **BRENDA MAE:** I'm the best cow tipper in our parts. There
21 ain't a cow alive that I can't knock over with a good
22 runnin' start.
23 **GLEND A MAE:** And I can swing from vines for miles without
24 ever touchin' the ground.
25 **MRS. LANGLEY:** You mean like Tarzan?
26 **GLEND A MAE:** Maybe, does he go to this here school, too?
27 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Tarzan is a *character*.
28 **ELKIN:** Ah, don't be too hard on him — he probably just
29 needs a little extra attention. But don't fret none — I'm
30 sure he'll get along just fine with the twins here if he
31 likes to swing from vines.
32 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Look, Mr. ...
33 **ELKIN:** Taylor. Elkin Taylor.
34 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Mr. Taylor, perhaps you should reconsider
35 having your country cousins attend our school. I'm not

1 sure it would be such a good fit after all.
2 **ELKIN:** What makes you think they wouldn't fit in?
3 **FESTER:** When's recess, Ms. Lanky?
4 **MRS. LANGLEY:** *Langley.*
5 **FESTER:** I want to show the other fellers how to throw a ax
6 so it sticks tight in the trunk of a oak tree.
7 **BRENDA MAE:** And I can teach the kids how to spit snuff
8 through their front teeth.
9 **GLENDA MAE:** Not to mention the true art of frog giggin'.
10 **ELKIN:** *(To MRS. LANGLEY)* Listen to that. And you was
11 afraid they wouldn't fit in.
12 **MRS. LANGLEY:** I'm sorry, Mr. Taylor — perhaps next year.
13 **ELKIN:** I just have to keep lookin'. Ever since we come into
14 all that money after poor old Uncle Zeke passed to the
15 great beyond, I promised myself I would get my family
16 out of the backwoods of Cricket County and get them
17 some decent schoolin' ...
18 **MRS. LANGLEY:** It's just that ...
19 **ELKIN:** And your fine school is exactly what they need to get
20 them suffocated — right gang?
21 **FESTER, BRENDA MAE, and GLENDA MAE:** *(FESTER's ax in*
22 *the air)* Suffocated?!
23 **MRS. LANGLEY:** I think you mean *sophisticated*. *(To FESTER*
24 *and the GIRLS)* Excuse us a moment, will you? *(As MRS.*
25 *LANGLEY pulls ELKIN Downstage, the other three find a box*
26 *of props and costumes and start rummaging through it.)* Mr.
27 Taylor, I can certainly appreciate the sudden and
28 unexpected wealth you inherited from your deceased
29 uncle, but I'm a little concerned about you spending all
30 that money in one place.
31 **ELKIN:** Don't fret over that none. 'Cause Cousin Oswald —
32 that's my cousin from the city who takes care of all our
33 financials — says that with all them diamond mines, coal
34 mines, and oil fields they found on my uncle's property,
35 we won't never run out of money.

1 MRS. LANGLEY: It's just that — (*Becomes somewhat choked up.*)
2 did you say ... coal?
3 ELKIN: Mines, yes ma'am.
4 MRS. LANGLEY: And diamond ... ?
5 ELKIN: Mines, yes ma'am.
6 MRS. LANGLEY: And oil ... oil ... ?
7 ELKIN: Fields, fields — yes ma'am. Is somethin' the matter,
8 Mrs. Lanky?
9 FESTER: (*Approaching*) Maybe I should rare back and slap
10 her on the jaw.
11 MRS. LANGLEY: That won't be necessary. I'm fine. (*Catches*
12 *her breath.*) I only have one thing to say to you, Mr.
13 Taylor.
14 ELKIN: Uh-oh.
15 MRS. LANGLEY: Welcome to Gold-Leaf Academy! I'm sure
16 your dear family will achieve the highest quality of
17 academic success as we work hand-in-hand to assist
18 them in realizing their lifelong aspirations.
19 ELKIN: Don't worry 'bout all that. Just give 'em a good
20 education, and I'll be tickled to death.
21 MRS. LANGLEY: (*Laughing*) Aren't you witty?
22 ELKIN: No ma'am, I'm Elkin.
23 MRS. LANGLEY: Don't worry about a thing, Mr. Taylor — we
24 will take good care of your sweet, naive little family here.
25 ELKIN: Much obliged to you, ma'am, 'cause they're as nervous as
26 a one-eyed cat watchin' two rat holes. You know, what with
27 them not havin' formal schoolin' or nothin'. They just ain't
28 as lucky as me to have natural smarts. (*In an effort to prove*
29 *it to her, he clears his throat.*) The president of Mexico is
30 Manual Labor.
31 MRS. LANGLEY: They don't have to be educated as long as they
32 have money — I mean, determination. (*Turns to FESTER and*
33 *notices his ax.*) But I'm afraid you will have to do away with
34 that weapon.
35 FESTER: This ain't a weapon, silly — this here's a ax. I use it to

1 chop down trees and protect my family from wild animals
2 back home.

3 **MRS. LANGLEY:** I am sorry, but school policy won't allow such
4 items on our property, so if you would please hand me the
5 ax ...

6 **FESTER:** Cousin Elkin, she's takin' my ax.

7 **MRS. LANGLEY:** *(Pulling a plastic ax from the prop box)* Here
8 you go, Fester ... Here's an ax you can hold. They used
9 it in their production of *The Wizard of Oz*. And it's
10 harmless. Let me show you. *(She hits GLENDA MAE in the*
11 *back of the head with the plastic ax.)*

12 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Calmly)* What do you know about that?

13 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Well, it's almost time for your theatre class
14 to begin, so you may stay here until Ms. Ward arrives.
15 Mr. Taylor, if you'll follow me, I'll show you out.

16 **ELKIN:** *(Turns to his cousins.)* Y'all have a good day and mind
17 your teachers.

18 **FESTER, GLENDA MAE, and BRENDA MAE:** Bye, Cousin
19 Elkin. *(ELKIN exits Left with MRS. LANGLEY. As the girls*
20 *continue to rummage through the prop box, FESTER gives his*
21 *new ax a good looking over. He runs his thumb along the edge*
22 *of the blade.)*

23 **FESTER:** I've seen a sharper blade on a butter knife. *(He*
24 *thinks a moment then hits himself in the head with his plastic*
25 *ax. He looks over at GLENDA MAE and hits her in the head.)*

26 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Without looking up from her task of rummaging*
27 *through the costumes)* **Quit it, Fester.** *(FESTER looks at the*
28 *ax blade again, then hits BRENDA MAE in the head.)*

29 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Without looking up)* **Stop, Fester.**

30 **FESTER:** *(Looking at his blade again)* **This here ax is about as**
31 **useless as a pocket in a pair of underwear. I sure hope**
32 **this here school ain't attacked by no bobcats.**

33 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Putting on a princess hat)* **Look, Fester — I'm a**
34 **beautiful princess.**

35 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Putting on a long, tangled wig)* **Look, Fester —**

1 **I'm a old hag.**
2 **MS. WARD:** *(Entering Right and rushing to the twins)* **Oh, no, no,**
3 **no, no! We mustn't touch. Remember the rule of theatre:**
4 **If the prop isn't ours, we don't touch.** *(She places the hat*
5 *and wig back inside the prop box. She turns and sees*
6 *FESTER's ax.)* **That goes for you too, young man.** *(She tries*
7 *to take the ax, but FESTER won't part with it.)* **We must let**
8 **go.** *(He won't.)* **We must let go of the prop.**
9 **FESTER:** **It ain't a prop, it's a ax!**
10 **GLEND MAE and BRENDA MAE:** *(Standing on either side of*
11 *FESTER)* **Fester.**
12 **GLEND MAE:** **Remember what Cousin Elkin told us before**
13 **he left. Mind our teachers.** *(To MS. WARD)* **You'll have to**
14 **excuse Fester — he's so stubborn he'd argue with a fence**
15 **post.**
16 **FESTER:** *(Thinks a moment, then lets go of the ax.)* **Well, OK —**
17 **but only because I promised Cousin Elkin.**
18 **MS. WARD:** *(Places the ax back inside the prop box.)* **There we go.**
19 **Now, let us get a good look at our new pupils.** *(Walking*
20 *among them, giving them a good looking over as she peers over*
21 *the top of her spectacles)* **Hmmmm, I see that we've also**
22 **been rummaging around in the costume room.**
23 **FESTER:** **We have?**
24 **MS. WARD:** **These must be the costumes from our production**
25 **of *L'il Abner*. Because we're new, we'll overlook it this**
26 **time. But be assured that right after class we shall return**
27 **the costumes to where we found them. All right, we will**
28 **allow you to stay in our class as long as we abide by the**
29 **rules.** *(The school bell rings.)* **There's the bell for class**
30 **changes. Please have a seat until all our students have**
31 **arrived.** *(She exits Left.)*
32 **GLEND MAE:** **She sure does talk funny.**
33 **FESTER:** **Bless her heart, I don't think her ladder goes all the**
34 **way to the top of her silo.**
35 **BRENDA MAE:** **You mean, you think she might be ... ?** *(Makes*

1 *the “crazy sign.”*

2 **FESTER:** Put it this way: One plug ain’t firin’. (*Removing the*
3 *plastic ax from the prop box and holding it up*) She don’t
4 even know the difference between a ax and a prop.

5 **GLENDA MAE:** Listen, y’all — we’d better just sit a spell; we
6 don’t want to wear the dunce cap on our first day. (*ZACK*
7 *and MICHAEL enter Right, picking their teeth with*
8 *toothpicks.*)

9 **MICHAEL:** I didn’t think the school lunches could get any
10 worse.

11 **ZACK:** (*Seeing the country bunch and stopping MICHAEL*) There
12 they are. The hillbilly kids I was telling you about earlier.

13 **MICHAEL:** What are they doing wearing the *L’il Abner*
14 costumes?

15 **ZACK:** Those *aren’t* costumes; that’s what they wore to school.

16 **MICHAEL:** You’re kidding.

17 **ZACK:** Let’s have a little fun, shall we? (*He crosses to the country*
18 *bunch, followed by MICHAEL. ZACK fakes friendliness.*)
19 Hello, there. You must be the latest addition to our
20 student body.

21 **GLENDA MAE:** No sir, we’re the new kids. I’m Glenda Mae,
22 and this is my twin sister, Brenda Mae, and this is my
23 cousin, Fester. That’s his ax.

24 **FESTER:** (*Holding up the plastic ax*) This ain’t my real ax. See?
25 (*He hits GLENDA MAE in the head. GLENDA MAE just*
26 *smiles. ZACK and MICHAEL look at one another and grin.*)

27 **ZACK:** Where are you guys from?

28 **BRENDA MAE:** We’re from God’s country, better known as
29 Cricket County. (*To ZACK*) And quit lookin’ at me that
30 way; I ain’t the least bit interested in city fellers.

31 **ZACK:** How am I looking at you?

32 **BRENDA MAE:** With burnin’ desire. Stop it, I said, or I’ll hit
33 you so hard your kids will be born dizzy!

34 **ZACK:** (*Confused*) I’m not looking at you that way!

35 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Referring to MICHAEL*) This one’s doin’ it too,

1 Brenda Mae. Y'all act like y'all ain't never seen a pretty
2 lady before. Like we say in the country: When you've got
3 a hammer, ever'thing's a nail.
4 **ZACK:** What the heck does that mean?
5 **GLENDA MAE:** And you call yourself educated.
6 **ZACK:** *(Walking around FESTER)* Isn't it strange how they
7 think they have the right to march in here on their first
8 day of school and order us city slickers around? *(Comes*
9 *up behind FESTER and snatches the plastic ax from him.)*
10 **MICHAEL:** It surely is.
11 **FESTER:** *(Looking at ZACK, confused)* Hey now, that's my ax.
12 **ZACK:** Oh yeah? Well, why don't you come over here and take
13 it? *(FESTER tries to take it, but ZACK throws it to MICHAEL.*
14 *FESTER runs to MICHAEL to get the ax.)*
15 **FESTER:** Give me the ax.
16 **MICHAEL:** It's right here, Jethro. *(He holds it out to FESTER*
17 *but then pitches it to ZACK.)* Oops, too slow.
18 **GLENDA MAE:** Y'all quit playin' around and give Fester his
19 plastic ax!
20 **MICHAEL:** Who's going to make us? *(BRENDA MAE stomps*
21 *MICHAEL's foot, causing the ax to fall into her arms.)*
22 Ahhhhhh!
23 **BRENDA MAE:** Who else you see standin' here? *(Handing*
24 *FESTER the ax)* Here you go, Fester.
25 **ZACK:** *(To BRENDA MAE)* You'll be sorry you did that.
26 **BRENDA MAE:** *(To ZACK)* You don't scare me none. I've
27 wrestled bobcats bigger than both of you put together.
28 **FESTER:** Much obliged, Brenda Mae. *(OTHER STUDENTS*
29 *enter Right, including KAYLA, HANNAH, EMILY, and*
30 *BROOKE. Each takes a seat on a folding chair as MS. WARD*
31 *enters Stage Left.)*
32 **KAYLA:** *(Bringing in the chair ZACK took out earlier, she speaks to*
33 *HANNAH.)* Look who has to bring in his chair ... again.
34 *(She slams the chair on the floor.)*
35 **ZACK:** What's the big deal? That's why we have girls around.

1 (MICHAEL gives ZACK a high-five.)
2 **MS. WARD:** (*Clapping her hands together*) **All right, people — we**
3 **have much, much, much to cover! Take a seat! Take a**
4 **seat!** (*Everyone sits as FESTER picks up his chair and stands,*
5 *holding it, looking around.*)
6 **FESTER:** **Got mine! Where do you want us to take it to?** (*The*
7 *kids laugh.*)
8 **ZACK:** **She wants you to sit on it, Jethro.**
9 **GLEND A MAE:** (*To ZACK*) **His name is Fester! And I told you**
10 **to quit lookin' at me that way! Like we say in the**
11 **country: If worms had guns, birds wouldn't pick on 'em!**
12 **MS. WARD:** (*Referring to FESTER*) **Did we see that, students?**
13 **Did we see how this brave soul chose not to give in to**
14 **convention? How he chose not to imitate the masses, but**
15 **instead stand alone, no matter how asinine he appeared?**
16 (*To FESTER*) **Do we have anything to say, young man?**
17 **FESTER:** (*Confused*) **You never told me where to take my**
18 **chair.**
19 **MS. WARD:** (*Becoming a bit impatient*) **We sit in it, young one.**
20 (*She takes and sets his chair on the floor.*) **Simply sit.**
21 **FESTER:** **Okey-doke.** (*He sits and throws his foot up on his knee*
22 *in an attempt to cross his legs. He lays the plastic ax across his*
23 *lap.*)
24 **MS. WARD:** (*Noticing the ax and extending her hand*) **May we**
25 **have the plastic property, please?**
26 **FESTER:** (*Misunderstanding*) **Oh, sure thing.** (*He takes off his*
27 *cap and hands it to her. The students laugh.*)
28 **MS. WARD:** **No, young one, hand us the fabricated cleaver**
29 **you clutch so passionately.**
30 **FESTER:** (*Misunderstanding*) **How did you know I had one?**
31 (*FESTER pulls a slingshot from his pocket and hands it to*
32 *MS. WARD. The students laugh.*)
33 **MS. WARD:** (*Becoming the least bit frustrated*) **Are we a comic?**
34 **A wit? A humorist?**
35 **FESTER:** **No ma'am, we're Fester, Brenda Mae, and Glenda**

1 Mae. *(The kids laugh.)*
2 MS. WARD: *(Realizes she's not going to get anywhere.)* Did we
3 hear this, students? We are a Taylor.
4 FESTER: *(Sincerely)* You're a Taylor, too? By cracky, ain't it a
5 small world? My mama's name is Imogene. What's your
6 mama's name?
7 MS. WARD: *(With distaste)* Imogene?
8 FESTER: The same as mine! We're like two peas in a pod? We
9 might even be related.
10 MS. WARD: I think we're delusional.
11 FESTER: You agree, huh?
12 ZACK: *(To FESTER)* Hey, Jethro, let the lady speak.
13 MS. WARD: *(To FESTER)* You may sit quietly, young one.
14 *(Takes a deep breath.)* Everyone, today we must finish the
15 scenes we began yesterday. Zack and Kayla, you are up.
16 Places! Places!
17 KAYLA: Yes, Ms. Ward. *(KAYLA and ZACK take their places with*
18 *their scripts and immediately jump into character.)*
19 MS. WARD: And ... curtain!
20 KAYLA: *(Quite dramatic to ZACK)* You're such a traitor! How
21 could you do this to me?
22 ZACK: I made a mistake — I'm sorry!
23 KAYLA: You have caused me to lose any high opinion I had
24 for myself. Thanks to you I have lost my self-respect, my
25 dignity, *and* my sense of value, and there's simply
26 nowhere I can turn for help.
27 FESTER: *(Standing and interrupting)* Don't you worry none,
28 Miss! We'll help you out. Glenda Mae, you look over there
29 for her re-spect, and me and Brenda Mae will see if we
30 can spot her sense and dignity. Spread out!
31 MS. WARD: *(Clapping her hands)* We *never* interrupt a scene.
32 *(Turns sharply to FESTER.)* You, sir, are a distraction!
33 FESTER: No ma'am, I'm a Baptist.
34 MS. WARD: Sit! *(They do.)* Kayla, Zack, please continue the
35 scene.

1 **KAYLA:** *(Back in character, to ZACK)* ... And there's nowhere I
2 can turn for help!

3 **ZACK:** All I ask is for you to give me one more chance.

4 **KAYLA:** Good-bye forever!

5 **ZACK:** *(Rushes to her and grabs her wrists.)* You listen to me!
6 Nobody breaks up with me and gets away with it! If I
7 can't have you, no one shall!

8 **KAYLA:** *(Struggling)* Let me go! You're hurting me! *(FESTER*
9 *stands and rushes to ZACK and KAYLA. He pushes them*
10 *apart, then turns and pushes ZACK down and holds the ax*
11 *above ZACK.)*

12 **FESTER:** You leave her be, you rascal! Now, I don't know
13 how you do things here in the city, but where I'm from,
14 you never hit no lady! *(To KAYLA)* You OK, ma'am?

15 **MS. WARD:** *(To FESTER)* See here, young one. We cannot
16 allow you to continue these disruptions.

17 **FESTER:** You tell him, Ms. Weird!

18 **MS. WARD:** My name is Ms. *Ward*, and we are speaking to *you*.
19 Zack and Kayla are merely conjuring a scene.

20 **GLENDA MAE:** If he was to ever grab me that way, I'd be on
21 him like a swarm of bees.

22 **MS. WARD:** *(Before thinking)* Could it be that we are depriving
23 some village of its idiots?

24 **FESTER:** Ahhh, you don't have to apologize, Ms. Weird.

25 **MS. WARD:** *Ward!* *(Opens a bottle of aspirin she pulls from her*
26 *pocket and takes a few, trying to remain calm.)* **Everyone take**
27 **a seat, please.** *(Everyone sits while FESTER picks his chair*
28 *up again. He looks around.)*

29 **FESTER:** Oh yeah, I keep forgettin'. *(He sets the chair down and*
30 *sits on it.)*

31 **MS. WARD:** *(Takes a deep breath)* It seems we need to clear our
32 minds, so we will continue with a few warm-ups before
33 moving on. *(KAYLA and ZACK return to their seats.)* All
34 stand and spread out, giving ourselves room to move
35 about. *(Everyone spreads out over the stage. As she coaches her*

1 *students, they do as she says.)* Now, we're all a great oak
2 tree. Spread our branches up to the sky. Spread them.
3 Spread them apart. Higher, people. Very good, Hannah
4 — stretch a little higher, Michael. That's it. Plant your
5 roots deeply into the earth, for the great wind is upon us.
6 The wind is strong. It blows us about frantically, but it
7 doesn't uproot us. It bends us forward, it bends us
8 backward — side to side — stronger and stronger!
9 Finally, we become uprooted and are slammed to the
10 earth. *(Everyone hits the floor.)* Excellent, people! Excellent!
11 *(She applauds.)* Glenda Mae, Brenda Mae, what wonderful
12 moves!
13 **GLENDA MAE:** That was fun!
14 **BRENDA MAE:** Yeah, let's do it again. *(She stands and starts over.)*
15 It bends us forward! It bends us backwards!
16 **EMILY:** Did you hear that, Brooke? *(Mocks BRENDA MAE.)* That
17 shore was fun. *(A few kids laugh.)*
18 **BROOKE:** *(With a twang)* If she keeps a-talkin', she's liable to
19 ruffle my feathers. *(The kids laugh.)*
20 **MS. WARD:** Students, it's time to relax. Let us assume our
21 positions. *(The students sit on the floor cross-legged, holding their*
22 *palms upward with their middle fingers touching their thumbs.*
23 *The country cousins see this and follow suit.)* Let our minds drift
24 along. Think of nothing. Clear our consciousness. The
25 foundation of self-discipline for any actor is inner reflection.
26 Now, breathe in. Breathe out. Ommmm.
27 **ALL:** *(Together)* Ommmm.
28 **MRS. LANGLEY:** *(Enters Left carrying a clipboard and makes her way*
29 *to MS. WARD.)* Ms. Ward, may I speak with you for a
30 moment, please?
31 **MS. WARD:** *(Trance-like)* Ommmm. Coooontinuuueeee,
32 stuuuudentssss. *(She crosses to MRS. LANGLEY as the students*
33 *continue "omming" underneath the conversation.)* Yes, Mrs.
34 Langley?
35 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Ms. Ward, have you cast your spring show yet?

1 MS. WARD: Oh, yes — I'm posting the cast this afternoon.
2 MRS. LANGLEY: You mustn't post the cast just yet. Not until
3 our new students have had a chance to audition.
4 MS. WARD: But the auditions have been over for days.
5 Perhaps I can fit them into the fall show.
6 MRS LANGLEY: (*Holding up some type of financial document*)
7 Listen to me. They may not appear to be, but our new
8 students over there are worth *lots* of money. I just had it
9 checked out, and it's true. It's *very* important that they
10 succeed here at Gold-Leaf Academy. We need their
11 endowment.
12 MS. WARD: I am truly sorry, Mrs. Langley — but I assure you
13 it's quite too late to recast the show.
14 MRS. LANGLEY: Allow me to put it in words you will
15 understand: Those so-called hillbillies have more than
16 enough money to fund that new state-of-the-art theatre
17 we have been dreaming about but could never afford.
18 Their Cousin Elkin is checking us out to see if we're the
19 right school for them.
20 MS. WARD: (*With wide eyes*) State-of-the-art theatre?
21 MRS. LANGLEY: You could finally put on the shows of your
22 dreams.
23 MS. WARD: As I was saying before, those new students are
24 the best little actors I have seen in years! Of course they
25 will get parts in the show.
26 MRS. LANGLEY: Good parts?
27 MS. WARD: Only the best for our three wonderful, *wealthy*
28 thespians.
29 MRS. LANGLEY: Glad you see it my way. I can see that
30 brand new theatre already. I'll leave you to your
31 students. (*She exits Left.*)
32 STUDENTS: (*Still in their trance*) Ommmm. (*FESTER snores.*)
33 MS. WARD: (*Clapping her hands*) All right, students. (*FESTER*
34 *quickly stands and holds his ax over his head, looking around.*)
35 FESTER: Where's that bear?

1 **BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE:** *(Standing on either side of*
2 **FESTER)** It's OK, Fester — there ain't no bear; you was
3 just dreamin' again.
4 **MS. WARD:** A quick bit of news, students. It seems we won't
5 be able to post the cast list quite as soon as we expected.
6 *(The students grumble their discontent.)*
7 **ZACK:** But we have been waiting for days to see if we got the
8 part we auditioned for.
9 **MS. WARD:** But don't forget that patience is a virtue. We have
10 one last exercise for today, students. We're all part of a
11 grand choo-choo train. Line up, and we'll take a lap
12 around the school grounds. Hurry, now. Hurry. *(The*
13 *students line up holding to the shirttail of the person in front*
14 *of them.)* And away we go. Chug, chug, chug, chug —
15 chug, chug, chug, chug — chug, chug, chug, chug ...
16 **FESTER:** *(Pretending to pull a cord)* Whoooo Whoooo! *(ZACK,*
17 **MICHAEL, EMILY, and BROOKE** are at the end of the line.
18 *When everyone leaves, they stay behind.)*
19 **ZACK:** How do you like that? I can just taste that Prince
20 Charming role, and she's making me wait even longer
21 before posting the cast list. It's not fair.
22 **EMILY:** If Brooke and I don't get the parts of the witch
23 sisters, I'll quit drama class for good.
24 **ZACK:** There's something fishy going on. Why did Mrs.
25 Langley come in whispering that way?
26 **MICHAEL:** I don't know — but I have a feeling it has
27 something to do with the new kids.
28 **BROOKE:** It makes me sick just to look at them.
29 **ZACK:** Don't worry, I don't intend on standing around being
30 made to look like a fool.
31 **EMILY:** I like it when Zack gets that look in his eye.
32 **MICHAEL:** I can see the wheels turning from here.
33 **ZACK:** *(A smile erupts.)* Let's go before Ms. Ward notices us
34 missing. *(They line up.)* Chug, chug, chug, chug — chug,
35 chug, chug, chug — chug, chug, chug, chug ...

1 **MICHAEL, EMILY, and BROOKE:** *(Together)* **Whoooo, whoooo!**
2 *(They exit as fast bluegrass music plays and the lights fade to*
3 *a quick blackout.)*

4

5

6

SCENE TWO

7

8 *(A few weeks later. This scene is performed in front of the*
9 *curtain or extreme Stage Left or Stage Right. KAYLA and*
10 *HANNAH enter Right carrying schoolbooks.)*

11 **HANNAH:** Do you know your lines for scene four?

12 **KAYLA:** I think so. I stayed up all night studying.

13 **HANNAH:** I wonder if the hillbillies will know *their* lines
14 today.

15 **KAYLA:** I don't know, but ...

16 **HANNAH:** But what?

17 **KAYLA:** Well, I was thinking ... don't you think Fester is ... I
18 don't know, somewhat ... charming?

19 **HANNAH:** Fester's a lot of things, but I'm not sure charming
20 is one of them.

21 **KAYLA:** I know it sounds silly, but there's just something
22 about him that's ... different.

23 **HANNAH:** Wait a minute. *(Getting a closer look)* Did I see a
24 twinkle in your eye just now?

25 **KAYLA:** *(Blushing)* Did you?

26 **HANNAH:** I can't believe it. You have fallen for a true-blue
27 hillbilly.

28 **KAYLA:** All I'm saying is that he's a gentleman. Haven't you
29 noticed how he opens doors for all the girls in class? How
30 many times have you seen any of the guys around here
31 act like that?

32 **HANNAH:** You'd better not let Zack hear you talking that
33 way.

34 **KAYLA:** I don't care what Zack thinks anymore.

35 **HANNAH:** Now I've heard everything. So, are you telling me

1 that if Zack asks you to go to the spring dance, you're
2 going to turn him down? (*Touching KAYLA'S forehead*) You
3 don't seem to have a temperature. Stick out your tongue
4 and say "ahhhh."
5 KAYLA: Don't be silly. We've got to get to rehearsal.
6 HANNAH: Speak of the devil, here comes Zack with his gang,
7 now. (*ZACK, MICHAEL, EMILY, and BROOKE enter Right.*
8 *ZACK sees KAYLA.*)
9 ZACK: (*Sarcastically*) Well, well, well, if it isn't the star of the
10 school play, Her Highness.
11 KAYLA: We were just leaving, Zack.
12 ZACK: Go right ahead and leave — but if you go, you might
13 miss the news.
14 KAYLA: (*Not really caring*) News?
15 ZACK: That's right. About the spring dance. I'm available.
16 KAYLA: (*Nonchalantly*) That's nice. Well, see you at rehearsal.
17 ZACK: (*Stepping in front of her*) I don't think you get what I'm
18 saying. I'm available, and I'm taking you.
19 KAYLA: I appreciate the offer, Zack, but it seems I already
20 have a date to the dance.
21 ZACK: What do you mean? You *always* wait until the last
22 minute for the slim chance I might ask you.
23 HANNAH: Not this time, Zack. Her waiting days are over.
24 ZACK: (*Fist in his hand*) OK, who is he? I'll turn him into
25 mulch.
26 HANNAH: Don't worry about who he is. Let's go, Kayla.
27 (*Turns to the gang.*) See you all at rehearsal. (*KAYLA and*
28 *HANNAH exit Left.*)
29 ZACK: (*He can't speak for a moment as he watches them exit.*) But
30 she always waits for me to ask her.
31 MICHAEL: (*Crossing to ZACK, placing his arm around ZACK'S*
32 *shoulder*) Don't worry about it, Zack. We'll find out who
33 the scoundrel is and teach him a lesson he won't soon
34 forget. Then she'll go to the dance with you for sure.
35 EMILY: (*Somewhat flirty*) She's not the only fish in the ocean,

1 Zack. Maybe you should ask someone else this year.
2 BROOKE: Forget the dance for now. You know everyone is
3 laughing at us, don't you?
4 MICHAEL: *(To ZACK)* They're all talking about how the
5 hillbillies got the major roles in the play over you and the
6 girls here.
7 ZACK: Who in their right mind would have cast that bumbling
8 booby, Fester, as Prince Charming? I've been waiting all
9 year for that part!
10 EMILY: On top of that, those two backwoods twins landed the
11 witch sister roles over *us*!
12 MICHAEL: We *cannot* take this lying down.
13 ZACK: Don't worry, I don't intend to.
14 MICHAEL: Do you have a plan?
15 ZACK: Don't I always?
16 EMILY: Well, whatever it is, I want in on it.
17 BROOKE: So do I.
18 ZACK: Just follow my lead. Let's go. *(ZACK walks off Left,*
19 *strutting. Everyone tries his and her best to walk as cool as*
20 *ZACK, but aren't too successful. Fast bluegrass music plays as*
21 *the lights fade to a slow blackout.)*

22
23
24
25

SCENE THREE

26 *(FESTER, GLENDA MAE, and BRENDA MAE are On-stage*
27 *in partial costume. GLENDA MAE and BRENDA MAE wear*
28 *witches' hats and black cloaks around their shoulders.*
29 *FESTER wears a prince hat with a feather sticking from it.*
30 *He also wears white long johns with work boots and a white*
31 *ruffled shirt which falls somewhere between his waist and his*
32 *knees. He holds his ax, which is wrapped tightly with*
33 *newspaper. [This particular ax needs to be cut from cardboard*
34 *since people will be hit with it. It's important, however, that it*
35 *still has the shape of his original ax, which is the same size as*

1 *the plastic one.] At the moment, FESTER is hidden behind a*
2 *wall. MS. WARD enters Right. Other students as other actors*
3 *and stagehands in the production sit about the stage.)*
4 **MS. WARD:** Good afternoon, drama students. *(To the twins)*
5 **What wonderful witches you are going to make for our**
6 **Rapunzel production. Those ugly, fake noses look so real.**
7 **GLEND A MAE:** We ain't wearin' fake noses.
8 **MS. WARD:** *(Taken aback)* Oh my. *(Clears throat.)* You look just
9 wonderful.
10 **BRENDA MAE:** Fester told us we was born to play the part
11 of ugly witches.
12 **GLEND A MAE:** We've been practicin' our cackles. *(They put*
13 *their arms around one another and let out a loud, annoying*
14 *cackle.)*
15 **MS. WARD:** *(Looking around)* Speaking of Fester, isn't he here?
16 **BRENDA MAE:** Yes ma'am, *(Pointing to a wall)* he's back there,
17 but he won't come out.
18 **GLEND A MAE:** He's embarrassed about his costume.
19 **MS. WARD:** Fiddle faddle. Fester? Fester, come out and let us
20 see our wonderful Prince Charming outfit.
21 **FESTER:** *(From behind the wall)* No ma'am, I'd rather not!
22 **BRENDA MAE:** Come on out, Fester — we ain't goin' to laugh
23 at you!
24 **FESTER:** You will too!
25 **GLEND A MAE:** We won't neither! Get out here and let us take
26 a gander! *(After a slight pause, FESTER emerges very self-*
27 *consciously. There is a pause, then BRENDA MAE and*
28 *GLEND A MAE burst out with laughter.)*
29 **FESTER:** That does it! *(He starts to exit, but MS. WARD heads*
30 *him off.)*
31 **MS. WARD:** Now, Fester — the girls didn't mean to laugh at
32 you.
33 **BRENDA MAE:** Yeah, we didn't mean to laugh, Cousin Fester.
34 *(Pause, then another eruption of laughter)*
35 **FESTER:** If *they* laugh at me, ever'body else will too. I ain't

1 goin' to wear this sissy suit.
2 **MS. WARD:** But this is how Prince Charming dresses. Except,
3 where are the tights I gave you to wear?
4 **GLEND A MAE:** He said he was a-puttin' his foot down when
5 it came to wearin' women's underwear. So he wore his
6 new long johns instead. *(ELKIN and MRS. LANGLEY enter*
7 *Left. ELKIN carries an oversized brown paper bag.)*
8 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Ms. Ward, Mr. Taylor was wanting to sit in
9 on rehearsal today if you didn't mind.
10 **MS. WARD:** So good to see you, Mr. Taylor. Sit anywhere at
11 all. You are our honored guest.
12 **ELKIN:** Much obliged, ma'am. I'll sit over here with my lunch
13 and not make any sound a-tall.
14 **MRS. LANGLEY:** *(To ELKIN)* I'll be in my office if you need
15 me for anything. Enjoy rehearsal.
16 **ELKIN:** Okey-doke. Say hey to your mama and them!
17 **MRS. LANGLEY:** *(To MS. WARD)* I can see that new theatre
18 now. Ta-ta.
19 **GLEND A MAE:** Ta-ta and toe-toe!
20 **BRENDA MAE:** Toe-toe and see ya later! *(KAYLA and*
21 *HANNAH enter Right. KAYLA is wearing the same princess*
22 *hat that GLEND A MAE wore earlier.)*
23 **KAYLA:** Sorry if I'm late, Ms. Ward.
24 **MS. WARD:** Kayla, we're just in time for the tower scene.
25 *(HANNAH crosses to one side of FESTER; KAYLA to the*
26 *other.)*
27 **KAYLA:** Hello, Fester.
28 **FESTER:** Howdy, Ms. Kayla. Are you goin' to laugh at my
29 costume too?
30 **HANNAH:** I think it's endearing, Fester.
31 **FESTER:** *(To the twins)* See, I told you they'd make fun.
32 **KAYLA:** It's really, really cute.
33 **HANNAH:** Cute as a speckled pup.
34 **FESTER:** Speckled pup? That's about as cute as it gets, ain't
35 it? *(Drops his head, embarrassed.)* Aw, shucks.

1 MS. WARD: (*Referring to the wrapped ax*) Fester, why are we
2 holding the ax?

3 FESTER: I thought maybe Prince Charmin' could use his
4 trusty ax instead of one of them there swords.

5 MS. WARD: But Prince Charming wouldn't carry an ax.

6 FESTER: That's why I wrapped it up. This way the audience
7 can't tell it's really a ax. (*He holds it up, but it's wrapped so*
8 *tightly that it's clear to see it's an ax.*)

9 MS. WARD: (*Not in the mood to try and translate FESTER'S logic*)
10 OK, people. Kayla, if you would climb to the top of the
11 ladder, please. That's where the tower will be just as
12 soon as we have it built. Fester, this is the scene where
13 you yell up to Rapunzel to let down her golden hair.

14 FESTER: I was thinkin' about that last night, Ms. Weird.
15 Maybe Ms. Rapunzel could throw me down a rope or a
16 bunch of work rags tied together instead of her hair. I
17 don't want to hurt Ms. Kayla's pretty little head or
18 nothin'.

19 MS. WARD: Don't worry, Fester — she won't be throwing
20 down her *real* hair. It's merely yellow yarn woven
21 together. See? (*She holds up yellow yarn that has been*
22 *braided.*)

23 FESTER: Why, that's plum clever. Look at that, Glenda Mae
24 —it's a roll of yarn. (*KAYLA starts to climb the ladder.*)
25 Here, Ms. Kayla — let me help you there.

26 KAYLA: Fester, you are the perfect gentleman. Thank you.

27 HANNAH: That is so sweet. (*FESTER rushes over to HANNAH*
28 *and holds her stool while she sits.*)

29 FESTER: Here, let me hold that for you.

30 HANNAH: Thank you, Fester.

31 MS. WARD: Are we ready to begin, Cassanova? Places,
32 everyone! Fester, you're at the foot of the tower. Glenda
33 Mae and Brenda Mae, you're Off Right until your
34 entrance.

35 GLENDA MAE: (*As they take their places*) I'm as excited as a

1 gopher in soft dirt.
2 **MS. WARD:** Begin from the top, please. (*FESTER starts*
3 *climbing the ladder.*) Fester, where are you going?
4 **FESTER:** To the top.
5 **MS. WARD:** The top of the *scene*.
6 **FESTER:** (*Climbing down*) Sorry.
7 **MS. WARD:** Hannah, you may begin.
8 **HANNAH:** (*Acting as the narrator, she becomes very dramatic.*)
9 After living in the tower for the longest time, poor, poor
10 Rapunzel was about to lose all hope of ever being
11 rescued ...
12 **FESTER:** (*Shouting*) Rapunzel!
13 **HANNAH:** Wait, Fester — I'm not to your part yet.
14 **FESTER:** Sorry.
15 **HANNAH:** One day a handsome prince rode by on his white
16 steed and heard Rapunzel crying from the tower ...
17 **FESTER:** (*Shouting*) Rapunzel!
18 **MS. WARD:** (*Louder*) Not yet, Fester.
19 **FESTER:** Sorry.
20 **HANNAH:** Prince Charming dismounted his steed and called
21 up to the fair damsel. (*FESTER is playing with his ax.*)
22 Fester!
23 **FESTER:** Yes ma'am?
24 **MS. WARD:** It's your line.
25 **FESTER:** Uhhhh ...
26 **HANNAH:** Rapunzel!
27 **KAYLA:** Yes?
28 **FESTER:** (*To KAYLA, pointing to HANNAH*) She wants you.
29 **HANNAH:** No, Fester — I'm *prompting* you. Look up to Kayla
30 and say your line.
31 **FESTER:** (*Shouting*) Your lyin'!
32 **MS. WARD:** Fester, your *line*, not "you're *lying*." Call her *name*!
33 **FESTER:** Sorry. (*Looks to the top of the ladder.*) Miss Kayla!
34 **MS. WARD:** Rapunzel!
35 **KAYLA:** (*To MS. WARD*) Yes?

1 **FESTER:** *(Pointing to MS. WARD)* Ms. Weird wants you.
2 **HANNAH:** Fester, you shout “Rapunzel!”
3 **FESTER:** OK. *(He stands there silently.)*
4 **HANNAH:** Well?
5 **FESTER:** Oh, you mean now?
6 **MS. WARD and HANNAH:** Now!
7 **FESTER:** Okey-doke. Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your
8 golden yarn.
9 **MS. WARD:** Fester, the line is, “Let down your golden *hair*.”
10 **FESTER:** Oh, I thought you said you changed it to yarn.
11 **MS. WARD:** No, Fester — it’s still *hair*.
12 **FESTER:** Okey-doke. *(Clears his throat.)* Rapunzel, Rapunzel
13 ,let down your golden hair.
14 **KAYLA:** Is that you, oh handsome prince?
15 **FESTER:** *(Quite monotone)* Yes-I-have-come-back-to-visit-you-
16 again-beau-ti-ful-prin-cess. Blows-her-a-kiss.
17 **MS. WARD:** We don’t memorize the stage directions, Fester.
18 **FESTER:** Sorry. *(He blows KAYLA a kiss. KAYLA catches it and*
19 *places it next to her cheek.)*
20 **KAYLA:** I will drop my golden braids so that you might climb
21 up to me, oh prince. *(She drops the braided yarn.)*
22 **FESTER:** *(Picks up the braids)* Uh-oh, Ms. Weird — she dropped
23 the yarn by mistake.
24 **MS. WARD:** Fester — that’s her *hair*.
25 **FESTER:** *(Getting a closer look)* No, ma’am — I’m pretty sure
26 it’s yarn.
27 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Entering with hands on her hips)* Play like it’s
28 hair, dummy!
29 **FESTER:** Sorry.
30 **HANNAH:** So, the handsome prince climbed Rapunzel’s
31 golden locks of yarn — I mean, hair — until he reached
32 the tower’s window. *(FESTER climbs the ladder and stands*
33 *beside KAYLA as HANNAH continues.)* Once he reached
34 Rapunzel, he looked deeply into her eyes and uttered
35 life’s most beautiful words ...

1 **FESTER:** Howdy there, Punz.
2 **MS. WARD:** No, Fester — not, “Howdy there.” Haven’t you
3 studied your lines?
4 **FESTER:** Yes, ma’am — It’s just that I’m as nervous as a tick
5 on dip day.
6 **HANNAH:** *(In an attempt to keep the rehearsal moving)* He looked
7 deeply into her eyes and uttered life’s most beautiful
8 words ...
9 **FESTER:** I shore do like you.
10 **HANNAH:** *(Prompting him)* “I love you,” Fester.
11 **FESTER:** Aw, shucks — you hardly even know me.
12 **MS. WARD and HANNAH:** *(Together)* That’s your line!
13 **BRENDA MAE:** *(From backstage)* Hurry up, Fester!
14 **FESTER:** Aw, shucks — I love you. *(He puts his head down on*
15 *top of the ladder, embarrassed.)*
16 **MS. WARD:** *(Standing)* This is where the royal page enters to
17 warn of the witches’ approach to the tower. Has anyone
18 seen Zack?
19 **KAYLA:** He’s always late and holding up rehearsals.
20 **ZACK:** *(Entering from Right quickly followed by MICHAEL. ZACK*
21 *is acting extremely and suspiciously sweet. He wears a partial*
22 *servant’s costume.)* I’m really, really sorry I’m so late, Ms.
23 Ward — we came up on a homeless person on the street
24 and stopped to buy her a hot meal.
25 **MICHAEL:** We did? *(ZACK stomps MICHAEL’s foot.)* Ahhhh!
26 *(MICHAEL catches on quickly and limps to his seat.)* That’s
27 right, we fed the homeless.
28 **MS. WARD:** Actually we are just in time. Take our places,
29 please, for our entrance.
30 **ZACK:** Yes ma’am — right away. Sorry, everybody.
31 **FESTER:** *(Waving frantically)* Hey there, y’all — we’re up here
32 in the tower, but really it’s just a ladder.
33 **MS. WARD:** Go ahead please, Zack.
34 **ZACK:** *(Running into the scene in character)* Your Highness! Your
35 Highness!

1 **FESTER:** (*Reading from his script*) **I-am-up-here-in-the-tower-**
2 **my-page-what-news-do-you-bring-to-me? Looks-down-at-**
3 **his-servant.**

4 **MS. WARD:** Don't say the stage directions, Fester.

5 **FESTER:** Sorry.

6 **ZACK:** The evil witch sisters are approaching the tower! You
7 **must flee at once before they find you here!**

8 **FESTER:** **You-are-right-my-page.** (*As he climbs down the ladder*
9 *and stands beside ZACK*) **I-will-climb-down-and-hide-from-**
10 **those-evil-sis-ters. Climbs-down-the-tower.**

11 **ZACK:** They are only a few yards away. Let us hide. (*They slip*
12 *off Stage Left. BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE enter*
13 *looking around and rubbing their hands together.*)

14 **GLENDA MAE:** I thought I heard voices out this way, sister.

15 **BRENDA MAE:** So did I, sister — but I don't see nobody
16 **nowhere out here.**

17 **ELKIN:** (*Standing and shouting to the twins*) **It was just your**
18 **imagination! Go back home!**

19 **MS. WARD:** Mr. Taylor — please!

20 **ELKIN:** Sorry, it seemed so real there for a minute. (*Sits,*
21 *embarrassed.*)

22 **MS. WARD:** Let us continue, please.

23 **GLENDA MAE:** Rapunzel! Rapunzel! Are you harborin' any
24 **rascals up in that there tower of yourn?**

25 **RAPUNZEL:** I don't know what you mean, oh evil
26 **enchantress. I think I will nap now.** (*She places her head*
27 *on top of the ladder and begins to snore.*)

28 **GLENDA MAE:** There is something strange going on here, evil
29 **sister. You look over there, and I will search over yonder.**

30 **ELKIN:** (*Standing and yelling*) **Be careful, Prince Charmin' —**
31 **here they come!**

32 **MS. WARD:** Mr. Taylor!

33 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Hands on her hips*) **Cousin Elkin — shush!**

34 **ELKIN:** Sorry. I keep forgettin'. (*He sits.*) **Carry on, y'all.**

35 **BRENDA MAE:** I smell a man, and his scent leads me right

1 here. A-ha! Just as I thought!

2 **ZACK:** *(Coming from his hiding place)* Please, evil enchantress.

3 His Highness didn't mean any harm. He was merely

4 taking a stroll by the tower.

5 **BRENDA MAE:** Stay there, and we will see if you are tellin'

6 the gospel truth. We'll hide in this here bush and you will

7 call up to Rapunzel and identify yourself. Come on, evil

8 sister. *(They hide. EMILY and BROOKE enter Right.)*

9 **EMILY:** Excuse me, Ms. Ward, but Mr. Palmer needs to see

10 you in the band room.

11 **BROOKE:** He said it was very important.

12 **MS. WARD:** Oh dear — he probably needs to talk about the

13 musical. Take five, everyone — we shall return

14 straightaway. *(She exits Right.)*

15 **KAYLA:** *(From the top of the ladder)* Zack, what are you four up

16 to?

17 **ZACK:** *(To KAYLA)* Be quiet, We have a few matters to discuss.

18 And since you won't stop long enough to talk to me, I

19 thought we would just take care of it right here and now.

20 Get down off that ladder!

21 **KAYLA:** *(Climbing down the ladder)* This is not the time to get

22 into it, Zack. *(ZACK drops his script without knowing.*

23 **FESTER** picks it up.)

24 **ZACK:** *(To KAYLA)* I want to know who you are going to the

25 school dance with.

26 **KAYLA:** It is none of your business.

27 **ZACK:** I'm making it my business.

28 **HANNAH:** Zack, you leave her alone.

29 **ELKIN:** Keep goin', y'all — it all seems so real! *(FESTER taps*

30 **ZACK** on the shoulder.)

31 **KAYLA:** Who I go to the dance with is between my date and

32 me.

33 **ZACK:** Tell me who he is.

34 **KAYLA:** Someone who knows how to treat a girl.

35 **ZACK:** Craig?

1 **KAYLA:** Craig's crazy.
2 **ZACK:** Larry?
3 **KAYLA:** Larry's lazy.
4 **ZACK:** Robert?
5 **KAYLA:** Ruthless. (*FESTER taps ZACK on the shoulder again.*)
6 **ZACK:** (*Turning sharply*) Fester!
7 **KAYLA:** (*Without thinking*) How did you know? (*Throws her*
8 *hand up to her mouth as everyone gasps.*)
9 **MICHAEL:** What?
10 **BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE:** What?
11 **ZACK:** (*Can't believe his ears*) Fes-ter?
12 **FESTER:** (*Handing ZACK the script*) You dropped this.
13 **KAYLA:** (*Crosses to FESTER, slips her arm through his, and lays*
14 *her head on his shoulder.*) Fester's fantastic. All right, so
15 the secret is out. Yes, I am going to the school dance with
16 Fester Taylor.
17 **GLENDA MAE and BRENDA MAE:** You are?
18 **FESTER:** You are?
19 **KAYLA:** That is, if you want to go with me, Fester.
20 **FESTER:** Well ...
21 **KAYLA:** I know I haven't had a chance to ask you, but I'd
22 really like to go with you if you wanted.
23 **FESTER:** (*Surprised at this revelation*) Well, grease my gears
24 and call me a tractor.
25 **ELKIN:** (*Takes a sandwich from the bag and starts eating it.*)
26 Shoot, this play is better than any old picture show.
27 **MICHAEL:** (*To ZACK*) Are you going to stand here and allow
28 her to make you look foolish this way?
29 **EMILY:** Of course he's not.
30 **BROOKE:** Yeah, of course he's not.
31 **ZACK:** (*Rolling up his sleeves*) Looks like somebody needs to
32 put this hillbilly in his place.
33 **KAYLA:** (*Shielding FESTER with her body*) You lay a finger on
34 him, and you'll be sorry, Zack Scott!
35 **ELKIN:** Hey, witches — why don't you cast a evil spell! That'll

1 show that old rascal! *(Laughs and takes a bite of his sandwich.)*
2 **ZACK:** Move out of my way! *(Pushes KAYLA over to HANNAH.)*
3 **FESTER:** Wait one cotton-pickin' minute! I told you before — that
4 ain't no way to treat a lady!
5 **ZACK:** *(Looking over at KAYLA)* I don't see a lady. *(Back to*
6 **FESTER)** Now, come on, Jethro — I've got to teach you a
7 lesson about moving in on another man's property.
8 **FESTER:** I'm a-warnin' you.
9 **ZACK:** What are you going to do, hit me with your plastic ax?
10 Ooooo, I — am — so — scared.
11 **FESTER:** I don't need no ax no way to take care of a city feller.
12 *(Pitches the ax to MICHAEL.)*
13 **ELKIN:** *(Still eating)* Go get him, Fester! Lock him up in that there
14 tower!
15 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Grabs the ax from MICHAEL.)* Give me that! You
16 pick on somebody your own size before I put you in your
17 place! *(She crosses and hits ZACK in the head with the wrapped*
18 *ax. ZACK stands up straight, crosses his eyes, and falls to the*
19 *floor.)*
20 **ELKIN:** Ouch! Way to go, ugly witch!! Boom! Bam! *(Laughs and*
21 *takes a bite of his sandwich.)*
22 **HANNAH:** Brenda Mae, what have you done?
23 **BRENDA MAE:** I just hit him with the plastic ax.
24 **MICHAEL:** *(Bends over ZACK, slapping him in the face.)* Zack, speak
25 to me. He's out cold!
26 **BRENDA MAE:** Who's next? *(MICHAEL, EMILY, and BROOKE back*
27 *away quickly into a huddle.)*
28 **MICHAEL:** Everybody look out, they're savages. Just ... just put
29 down the weapon! We don't want any trouble!
30 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Laughs.)* That just shows what you know. This
31 ain't a weapon — it's fake, see? *(She hits GLENDA MAE in the*
32 *head. GLENDA MAE stands up straight, crosses her eyes, and falls*
33 *to the floor next to ZACK.)*
34 **FESTER:** Brenda Mae, I think you need to give me that there ax.
35 **BRENDA MAE:** Now, why in the world did she fall down? It's

1 **just plastic.** *(She hits herself with the ax, stands straight up,*
2 *crosses her eyes, and falls over. FESTER crosses quickly and*
3 *retrieves the ax.)*

4 **FESTER:** Give me that! This ain't plastic! This is the real ax I
5 brung from home!

6 **MICHAEL:** Don't come any closer! We'll do whatever you say!
7 **Just put — down — the — ax!** *(MS. WARD and MRS.*
8 *LANGLEY enter Right. KAYLA and HANNAH think quickly.)*

9 **HANNAH:** *(Moving quickly to her reading position as KAYLA*
10 *moves quickly beside FESTER. She pushes his arm up into the*
11 *air as though he is holding it up in victory over the fainted*
12 *figures on the floor.)* **And so Prince Charming defeated the**
13 **evil witches and his sneaky page, who turned out to be**
14 **a secret agent. And the handsome prince and the**
15 **beautiful Rapunzel lived happily ever after!** *(ELKIN*
16 *stands quickly and applauds wildly, then places his fingers in*
17 *his mouth and whistles. MS. WARD and MRS. LANGLEY*
18 *begin applauding also.)*

19 **MS. WARD:** Did we finish the scene already?

20 **ELKIN:** Oh, yes ma'am — it was plum excitin'! And it seemed
21 so real! You see, the evil witches and their partner who
22 was really a spy was defeated by Prince Charmin's trusty
23 sword — which is really a ax — and so now Rapunzel
24 can take Prince Charmin' to the school dance and live
25 happily ever after.

26 **MS. WARD:** School dance?

27 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Well, Ms. Ward, if your students can carry
28 on a rehearsal when you are out of the room, then it
29 appears you have trained them well.

30 **MS. WARD:** But ...

31 **ELKIN:** I couldn't be more tickled to have my cousins go to
32 your wonderful school, Mrs. Lanky. If they can't get
33 some smarts here — they can't get smarts nowhere!!

34 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Wonderful job, everyone! Just wonderful!
35 *(Turns to ELKIN.)* Mr. Taylor, if you'll follow me, please.

1 We'll take care of that permanent paperwork.
2 **ELKIN:** *(Turning back to the cast as he exits)* Good job,
3 ever'body! That there play was funnier than a wagonload
4 of monkeys.
5 **MRS. LANGLEY:** Carry on the marvelous work, Ms. Ward.
6 *(She exits with ELKIN.)*
7 **MS. WARD:** Well, everyone — it seems we were a success. I'm
8 so pleased, I'm giving everyone the afternoon off.
9 Besides, I still haven't been able to locate Mr. Palmer.
10 Everyone dismissed! *(She exits Right, as do any extras On-*
11 *stage.)*
12 **FESTER:** Glenda Mae, Brenda Mae — get up from there —
13 you'll get your fancy costumes dirty. *(They begin to stir and*
14 *then stand.)*
15 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Rubbing her head)* I sure do have a powerful
16 strong headache.
17 **BRENDA MAE:** My head ain't hurt this bad since I got kicked
18 by that mule last summer.
19 **MICHAEL:** *(Helping ZACK stand)* Zack, you OK?
20 **ZACK:** What hit me?
21 **EMILY:** *(Pointing to BRENDA MAE)* She did.
22 **KAYLA:** You had it coming, Zack.
23 **ZACK:** *(To KAYLA)* I must have been dreaming; I dreamed you
24 told me you were going to the school dance with Jethro.
25 **HANNAH:** You weren't dreaming, Zack.
26 **ZACK:** Are you trying to tell me you would rather go to the
27 dance with this backwoods yokel than with me?
28 **KAYLA:** Fester here is no yokel. He's a treasure.
29 **FESTER:** No ma'am, I'm a *Taylor*.
30 **KAYLA:** He opens doors for ladies; he pulls out chairs for
31 ladies; he even helps a lady climb ladders.
32 **ZACK:** Why?
33 **HANNAH:** Because that's what a *gentleman* does for a lady.
34 It's in all the history books.
35 **ZACK:** Sounds pretty radical if you ask me.

1 **KAYLA:** Why don't you try it? Who knows, you might even
2 like it.
3 **ZACK:** Me? *(To MICHAEL)* You try it.
4 **KAYLA:** *(To MICHAEL)* Pull the seat out for her.
5 **MICHAEL:** She has two hands.
6 **KAYLA:** You are impossible. Watch a pro at work. Fester, I
7 think I'll climb the ladder.
8 **FESTER:** Here, let me help you. *(She climbs to the top with*
9 *FESTER's help.)*
10 **KAYLA:** Why, thank you, Fester. *(To ZACK)* See what I mean?
11 **HANNAH:** Now you try, Zack. *(She drops her script. ZACK simply*
12 *stands and stares at the script on the floor.)* Well?
13 **ZACK:** You dropped something.
14 **HANNAH:** What are you supposed to say?
15 **ZACK:** You're clumsy?
16 **FESTER:** Here, let me get that for you. *(He picks up the script,*
17 *wipes it off, and hands it to HANNAH.)* Here you go, Ms.
18 Hannah.
19 **HANNAH:** See, Zack? *(ZACK rubs his head where he was clubbed*
20 *with the ax.)*
21 **MICHAEL:** Forget it, Zack. She's just trying to play you for a
22 fool. Are you going to allow Festus, Chester, or whatever
23 his name is to walk in here and dictate how we are
24 supposed to behave? They're all living in the dark ages.
25 You give them an inch, they'll take two and a half yards.
26 **ZACK:** They will? You're right, Michael. I was about to lose
27 what little dignity I had left. Come on, gang, let's get out
28 of here. I'm sick of this whole day!
29 **MICHAEL:** Now you're talking! *(They start to exit.)*
30 **ZACK:** *(Turning back to EMILY and BROOKE)* I said, let's go.
31 **EMILY:** No, Zack.
32 **ZACK:** Suit yourself. Stay here with the rest of the losers.
33 *(Snaps his fingers.)* Come on, Brooke.
34 **BROOKE:** *(Crossing her arms)* I don't think so.
35 **MICHAEL:** Don't worry, Zack — they'll come crawling back

1 **in no time.**

2 **ZACK:** They will? I mean, you're right — they will. Let's go.

3 *(They each put on dark sunglasses and exit Left, strutting more*

4 *than ever.)*

5 **EMILY:** There go the two most arrogant men on the face of

6 **the earth.**

7 **GLEND A MAE:** I knew they were scoundrels when they first

8 **looked at me with them lusty eyes on our first day.**

9 **KAYLA:** *(To EMILY)* You won't regret letting them walk off.

10 **EMILY:** It's just that they were my last chance of having a

11 **date to the school dance.**

12 **HANNAH:** Join the crowd. *(All the girls but KAYLA sigh*

13 *heavily.)*

14 **KAYLA:** Wait a minute; I just had the most wonderful idea.

15 *(Whispers to FESTER.)*

16 **FESTER:** Me?

17 **KAYLA:** It's the perfect solution. Everyone, follow us. *(They*

18 *exit Stage Right. A few seconds pass. ZACK and MICHAEL re-*

19 *enter Stage Left.)*

20 **ZACK:** I thought you said they would be crawling back by

21 **now.**

22 **MICHAEL:** Something fishy is going on here. Where did

23 **everyone go?**

24 **ZACK:** I don't know ... *(Pulls the plastic ax from the prop box)*

25 **... but I found the plastic ax.**

26 **MICHAEL:** *(Taking the ax)* That hillbilly is a walking disaster.

27 *(Offstage, one of the girls is heard saying, "Oh, Fester" as all the*

28 *girls giggle. FESTER enters Right wearing dark glasses and a*

29 *fedora sitting on one side of his head. All the girls are hanging*

30 *onto him.)*

31 **KAYLA:** Oh, handsome prince — you say the most charming

32 **things.**

33 **FESTER:** Duh! They don't call me Prince Charmin' for nothin'.

34 *(The girls giggle.)*

35 **ZACK:** Hey, wait a minute — where are you all going?

1 **KAYLA:** Fester's going to ask his Cousin Elkin to bring the limo
2 around for us. We're going shopping for dresses for the
3 school dance.
4 **EMILY:** Fester is going to be our date for the dance.
5 **FESTER:** Yep, I'm what they call Casanover. Let's go, girls.
6 *(They exit Left together as FESTER gives his own version of a*
7 *strut.)*
8 **GLENDA MAE:** *(As she walks past ZACK)* I said stop lookin' at
9 me like that!
10 **BRENDA MAE:** *(To MICHAEL)* You too, you snake! Like we say
11 in the country: Never try to teach a pig to sing ...
12 **GLENDA MAE:** It wastes your time and annoys the pig. *(They*
13 *put on their own sunglasses and hold their heads up as they exit*
14 *Left.)*
15 **MICHAEL:** I'm proud of you, Zack — you held your ground
16 and didn't go running after them.
17 **ZACK:** We sure showed them. No hillbilly is going to march
18 into our world and destroy what we have spent two
19 years building.
20 **MICHAEL:** You got that right!
21 **ZACK:** You bet! *(They high-five one another. They stand for a*
22 *second, then realize something.)* There's only one problem
23 **MICHAEL:** We don't have a date to the dance.
24 **ZACK:** And Fester has six.
25 **MICHAEL:** Do you think he knows something we don't?
26 **ZACK:** *(Something just dawns on him.)* Limo? *(They look at one*
27 *another, grab a couple of straw hats from the prop box and*
28 *place them on their heads, then quickly cross to the exit Stage*
29 *Left.)* Like we say in the city: *(In his best country accent)* We
30 shore dropped our sucker in the sand this time ... y'all.
31 **MICHAEL:** *(Yelling Offstage)* Fester!
32 **ZACK:** *(Throwing down the ax)* Fester, wait for us!
33 **MICHAEL:** We need to talk, good buddy!
34 **BOTH:** Feeeessteeerrrr! *(They exit as banjo music plays and*
35 *the lights fade to a quick blackout.)*