

DRAMA FOR THE YOUTH IN CITY RECREATION

A THESIS

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BY

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CHAPTER

ORIGINAL STATEMENT

I. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Faculty

People

Most

Recreational

Child

Child

Department

II. THE

and

action

Approved for the Major Department

Karl C. Buehler

Approved for the Graduate Council

Leo J. [Signature]

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PART I

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT DRAMA AND RECREATION

CHAPTER I

DRAMA'S CONTRIBUTION IN THE CITY

RECREATION PROGRAM

People of the United States are acquiring more and more leisure time. Not only do they work fewer hours in a day and fewer days in a week, but they have more and longer vacations. In spite of the fact that individuals are living longer and remaining vigorous in their later years, they are retiring from active work much earlier.

The following is an editorial, typical of numerous articles appearing at present:

General Motors has rejected a United Auto Workers invitation to start consideration of a shorter work week. This is only a temporary delay in a trend that is sure to continue.

The big unions have publicly declared that the 4-day week is a primary goal. Those who believe the proposal fantastic should remember that the 8-hour day and the 5-day week were rarities a decade and a half ago, and that not until the end of World War II--a dozen years ago--did the 40-hour week become commonplace.

With that in mind, it does not seem risky to predict that another decade will find the 4-day week the rule in major industry.

Modern machines make it possible for a man to produce far more in far fewer hours, and one of the things he will insist on producing is more leisure for himself.

Serious studies just as well begin, not only on how the economy can best adjust itself to this new work

week; but also on how the best is to be gotten out of this increasing leisure.¹

Most arts are learned in early life. It is possible for people in their later years to find new interests and to develop new skills. Often an article appears about some elderly person who has discovered latent talent or started a fresh project. However, the very fact that such an incident is considered news and worth reporting shows that it is an exception to the general rule. Experts who worry about the early deaths of men who retire at sixty-five continually admonish younger workers to develop hobbies and interests before they become elderly, so that retirement will be something to approach with eagerness instead of dread. Yet, how many people learn to swim, play tennis, dance, paint, or speak publicly after they have reached their twenties? Of course there are some, but again they are the exception--ones often pointed out as being unusually ambitious or self-assured. No, most people continue with skills and arts they learned as they were growing up.

Recreational groups are tackling the leisure question.

Solution to the ever-increasing problem of leisure has been sought in the past few years by many clubs, civic groups, and organizations. Chief among these have been the recreation

¹Face It; The Four Day Work Week Is Coming, editorial, The Hutchinson News, May 13, 1957.

commissions established by many cities throughout the nation. These are usually tax-supported and offer opportunity to anyone who wishes to learn. Several full pages of a newspaper may be required to list all of the activities, crafts, arts, sports, and other interests that are made available for anyone looking for something to occupy his time. Most recreational directors see to it that every age group is included in the setup.

Children of intermediate age need help. Although everyone now has more leisure time than formerly, there is one great group that needs more attention than others. The youngsters of the upper grades, when released from classes at the end of the school year, find themselves facing days full of many empty hours. At first they are delighted with the prospect of long lazy days ahead, and for a while neighborhood games will suffice. In previous summers they had played all day and been satisfied, but now that they are older they are eager for new interests, and the same old play of former years soon begins to pall. If no outlet for their abundant energies is provided for them, they will hunt their own. General devilment can easily become juvenile delinquency.

In an article on "Boredom" this question is asked: Do children suffer from boredom more easily than adults? The answer given:

Just about twice as quickly, tests show. They rarely can sustain attention on any subject. Adolescents and teen-agers are especially sensitive to boredom. That's why they so often seek thrills in bizarre behavior, in reckless driving or in experimenting with liquor. In fact, boredom is said to be at the root of much juvenile delinquency.²

Therefore, it is imperative that someone see that children have something constructive to occupy them, and, for the happiness of all their future years, that they are given every opportunity to develop their abilities as soon as they have matured sufficiently.

Although the recreational picture has been enlarged to include all ages and many areas of pursuit, professional leaders have found that the peak of interest comes in the summertime and from the school children. Consequently most cities set up a separate recreational program to run approximately eight weeks during the summer months. Even towns as small as one or two thousand population have found a recreational project worthwhile.

Drama can help the pre-teens. Although most recreation commissions offer a wide variety of sports or skills and numerous selective activities, drama is one avenue of interest that is often neglected. Many cities offer a type of drama such as story-telling or informal classes in which children

²Churchill, Judith, Is Boredom Bad for You? McCall's Magazine, April, 1957, p. 53. Permission to use granted by McCall's.

make up their own plays and create their own stories. This creative drama is of value and has its place. However, that appeals mainly to pre-school youngsters and children in the lower grades. When the average child is ready for the fourth or fifth grade, he is eager to perform for a group. He is excited at the prospect of moving beyond his acquaintances and performing for the public.

Dramatic classes may mean that a number of youth may find a creative avenue of occupation instead of whiling away the hours meaninglessly. The handicapped child may find a place in drama when he is unable to take part in any other recreational facility. Imagine what it can mean to a crippled child to perform in a radio play where the invisibility makes him equal to normal children! Also many youngsters who care little for sports or handicrafts find drama the one class in which they can take an interest and feel at home.

Here, then, in drama is an opportunity to give valuable training to youth just at the time he most needs occupation, has time for it, and is at an educable age at which he can absorb the proffered knowledge.

CHAPTER II

THE VALUE OF DRAMA FOR THE AVERAGE YOUNGSTER

The first impression anyone gives upon meeting a stranger is the way he looks--including his physical features and his grooming. However, the next impression, the one he gives when he speaks, may be more profound and more lasting. The stranger may not be conscious of the fact that the reason for a poor opinion may have been the slurred words, the poor grammar, lack of animated speech, or inadequate attempts at conversation.

A person's speech is one of his most important aspects all his life. The earlier a person develops good speech habits the easier it will be for him to maintain them continually. Yet how difficult it is to convince anyone that he should make the effort to change! Or, when convinced, how difficult for him to effect a change! High school and college teachers often sigh when they hear students who have been in their speech classes all year continuing to speak in the slovenly manner they used when they enrolled.

A person's speech has been a part of himself as long as he can remember and he regards it much like a member of his body. Whether a girl has thick ankles or beautiful legs, she knows that either is an unchangeable part of her

own personal self. She seldom realizes that she need not consider her speech in the same way.

Speaking habits can be changed by education in drama.

Many people do not understand that dramatic training can influence a person's speech, and, indeed, his whole personality. Take, for example, the story--a true one--of Ted. The director in the tale is the author of this work. Ted was a gangly, awkward teen-ager, extremely shy. He gave an impression of shiftiness, bordering on untrustworthiness, because it was impossible for him to bring himself to lift his head and look anyone in the eye when talking.

The drama director was surprised when Ted joined her group until he said that he would like to build scenery but not take part in anything else. The director welcomed him and soon found that Ted was an able worker and most dependable.

As often happens in drama classes, boys were scarce, and, when one in the cast of a play dropped out, the director pressed Ted to take the part. Shaking his lowered head, he refused. When all the other children grew persuasive, asking why not, Ted looked down, unable to speak clearly enough to explain his fears. Nervous and reluctant, he soon found himself pushed into the part of the villain. Never

would anyone have chosen Ted for such a role--or, for that matter, any role at all!

Timid retiring Ted was certainly not villainous. Again and again the instructor explained to him that he was no longer Ted, that now he was a mean, base person with extreme desires and the force and courage to fight anyone who crossed him. Ted bowed his head and mumbled his words. Stopping him, the director asked him to concentrate on looking at the person to whom he was speaking while saying his lines. After many rehearsals Ted was able to keep his head up most of the time while on stage. By frequent repetition and constant insistence that he say every word clearly, the director taught Ted to speak so that he could be understood. Finally she made Ted see that a scoundrel would not merely say the words but would put emphasis and meaning into them.

All of this took a lot of time of the director and of the other children. Yet the director, the children, and Ted all felt triumphant when he gave a creditable performance at the final production. A critic might have considered the villain somewhat insipid, but those who knew Ted were amazed and delighted at his accomplishment.

Ted continued to keep his head down and to avoid conversations, but the next time a play was cast, Ted accepted a part with only a little protest. This time he found it easier to hold his head erect while onstage and sometimes

even looked directly at people when offstage. Eventually he began to make remarks during rehearsals, and the students found his dry wit--especially from Ted--quite entertaining.

Thus, through drama, Ted's whole personality underwent a change. By being someone else at times, he could bring himself to do things that he found impossible to do as Ted. After being compelled to hold up his head, trained, cajoled, and nagged into speaking clearly and expressively for increasingly lengthy periods, he found himself transferring these habits into his everyday actions. This did not happen all at once; in fact, it took several years. Ted has never become a true extrovert, but he is much happier today than he was before he entered into dramatic activities.

Very few individuals have the extreme problems that Ted had. Nevertheless this illustrates what drama can do for a person. A parent or teacher can nag a youngster to stand up straight, to smile and look pleasant, to speak clearly, but rarely does it have any effect. On the other hand, when someone takes the time to see that he does these things for short periods, but at certain times and on specified words, he does learn that it can be done--and by him. Without realizing it, he improves during unspecified times.

No one wants to make show-offs of children. Moreover, few parents expect their children to become actors or actresses. Yet it is worthwhile to be able to speak

before a group. Consider for a moment another illustration.

Lloyd was a good student. When he was required to make speeches in class, he made them, and they were good. But he spoke before a group only when he had to. As he grew older he avoided public speaking; he refused when asked to be toastmaster; at business meetings of organizations he never voiced an opinion.

Lloyd became an excellent businessman, holding the respect of all the community. He was a man of wisdom and good judgment. He could have wielded great influence which would have been helpful to many people, but he never had the nerve to speak up and let people know what he thought. He had gotten completely out of the habit of talking before a large group and the mere thought of doing it made his stomach queasy. Yet, at one time he had been able to express himself before an audience. He had simply gotten out of the habit.

This shows that it is worthwhile to be able to speak before a group. Everyone is nervous and afraid to some extent. The only way to get over it is by going ahead and performing anyway. The more a person does it, the easier it becomes. And it is never too early to acquire the ability.

By the time children reach the upper grades they are developing talents which are worth putting before an audience. At the same time they are becoming aware of the

audience and beginning to withdraw from performing. Now is a good time to give them poise by putting them before the public before they develop the habit of withdrawing.

Nobody cares much for a deadpan face. Not that it is disliked; usually it is just unnoticed. Along with inexpressive features one usually finds an inexpressive voice, and consequently a colorless personality. The author cannot help but think of Laura.

For a long time the director scarcely realized that Laura had enrolled in her drama class. Not that Laura was a quiet little girl, but the others were much more outstanding. Outstanding? Well, the others were more animated and overshadowed Laura.

When the director asked Laura to read aloud, she read the words smoothly enough, but they were neither distinct nor expressive. When Laura was placed in a speaking choir, she realized that her words did not have the inflection given by children standing next to her. By careful coaching the director taught Laura to put meaning in her words and to read clearly.

The instructor asked Laura if she did not believe a person would smile while speaking certain sentences. Laura practiced smiling. "Now, let's see you open your mouth big. Open your eyes wide," instructed the director another time. "Look surprised." Laura did as she was told.

As in the case of Ted, Laura learned to be a more interesting person. While practicing for radio plays her reading improved until it was pleasant to listen to. When she had children of her own she was able to read stories to them, sounding like a fierce lion or a timid lamb. Her reading was enjoyed by the whole family.

Could these people have improved without drama? In any other training it would have been difficult to teach Ted to hold up his head without demoralizing his self-respect. By practicing to put on a radio play Laura was taught carefully how to speak definite words distinctly. She was made to see that mere reading was not enough. She learned to think through the meaning of her lines and to express that meaning with her voice. Could a teacher have taught it as easily in a class in reading? Laura was looking forward to performing on the radio. She knew her parents, relatives, and friends would be listening. She had a real incentive to read well. The same motives might apply equally well to the instructor so that she spent more time and effort helping Laura than she would have in an ordinary class.

If Lloyd had started early to appear before audiences and had found satisfaction in it, he might well have continued all his life to speak with ease before a group.

Portraying various characters helps in understanding others. Preachers, leaders, and officials of many countries

proclaim that if people only understand each other they will have no trouble living side by side. If that is true of nations, the same is true of communities and small groups. People need to understand their neighbors, and this comprehension cannot be started too early.

How can a person learn to grasp the emotions and feelings of someone totally different from himself--possibly a kind of person seldom encountered? One of the best ways is to take the role of that person in a play. To act a part successfully a performer must understand the motives and desires of the character he is playing. Only by studying how a person feels, can an actor say his lines effectively. As he puts himself into a part it becomes natural to feel the emotions he is portraying. Consequently it becomes easier to glimpse into the souls of similar people he might meet later.

In drama can be found a great opportunity to stimulate the natural creative ability of the children of the upper grades. They have not yet left the fairy tale world of imagination. They can distinguish fact from fancy, but their interest in fancy has not yet been stifled by a crass world. Many youngsters find in a drama class an outlet for an active imagination that is a source of enjoyment to many of their playmates and other spectators.

Children should learn to be at ease in the public eye. At an earlier age they probably took part in creative play; they may have attended classes in story-telling. Certainly at school they have acted out stories and devised their own plays. Now as they progress through the grades they are apt to become conscious of "self". Many a youngster who previously performed readily will now hesitate before a group. Before the habit of withdrawing becomes ingrained, he should be pushed to the front to develop poise. Everyone wants to be important, and it certainly helps a child's ego to see his name on a program and to appear before an audience.

Drama has many values unrealized by the children. They must learn to cooperate with others. They have known this before, but it is brought directly home to them when they see that a production cannot go on if any one person decides not to do his part. Thus they learn that each must work for the good of the whole.

Well-put is the following paragraph from a report by the National Workshop on Recreation:

Working toward a performance has many desirable outcomes for the child. Most important is the good time which keeps the child at a job until it is so well done it may be presented for others to enjoy; there is the co-operation which must be part of the venture if it results in a performance; there is the stimulus to developing skill in speech and movement. Thinking

as well as speaking is improved by understanding and memorizing the lines of a good play.³

³National Workshop on Recreation. The Recreation Program (Chicago: The Athletic Institute, 1954), p. 82. Permission to quote granted by The Athletic Institute.

CHAPTER III

ESTABLISHING A DRAMA PROGRAM

An effective drama program has three minimum requisites: a place for meeting, some equipment and material, and a good director.

A meeting place is seldom a problem. Nearly any community has a school auditorium or civic building that is little used during the summer. A lodge hall with a stage can be a happy choice. If necessary a gymnasium can be used, but the feeling of real theater is lost in such a location and the acoustics are certain to be bad. Few recreation commissions who are familiar with their own facilities need to ponder long in selecting a place for drama assembly.

Equipment need not be a problem either. A very effective program can be carried on by spending little on scenery or costumes. On the other hand some extra stage effects can greatly enhance the program and thrill the children. But the performance is the main thing and youngsters of the upper grades are not demanding in expensive accoutrements and scenery. In fact most of the theatrical effects are new to them and whatever is at hand is brilliantly exciting.

Most auditoriums have some scenery available with flats and drops for indoor and outdoor settings. These can

be adapted to nearly all children's plays. If the stage has a cyclorama, any setting can be established by merely using furniture for indoors or setting up a tree, log, or bush for outdoors.

Costumes are seldom of any expense to the recreation commission for nearly all parents will go to lengths to find something suitable for their children. If the parent is not cooperative, someone else in the community usually is. Again, the children are easily satisfied. A long skirt makes a girl feel like a princess, and epaulettes and crown make a boy feel like a king. Suggestions for costumes and make-up are given more fully in the chapter on the guide for operation.

The success of the drama classes depends on the director. Although a meeting-place and various equipment are essential, the major concern of the recreation commission will be the hiring of an able director; for the true success of a drama program depends almost entirely on the ability of the leader. Thus it behooves the authorities to find the best possible director.

They should try to hire a college graduate, preferably one with a major in speech and drama. Better yet would be one who has also had experience in teaching or working with youngsters. The director must be one who sees the values in drama, and he or she must, like any good teacher, love children.

This work can be done equally well by a man or woman. However, since the work is part-time, unless combined with other recreational jobs, it is usually easier to find a woman to fill the position. To avoid awkwardness in reading, the director is referred to as "she" in the ensuing pages but does not mean that the work is feminine.

A logical choice for a director would be among teachers who want summer employment. Or it might be possible to find an educated housewife who would like a part time job. Since the classes will probably meet only a few hours during the week, the work of preparation can be done in her own home. Sometimes a college student, unoccupied for the summer, may be sufficiently experienced and talented to lead the drama group. But high school students should not be considered. They lack the maturity and knowledge to give the youngsters the discipline, authority, and training they need.

By inquiring for someone who has taken part in plays or community theater projects or for someone who is prominent in any branch of drama, the recreation authorities may unearth a good director.

Expenses must be considered. Naturally a good dramatic program will cost something. Since it has been established that the success of the project will depend on the director, that person's salary should be the first consideration. A community usually obtains the caliber

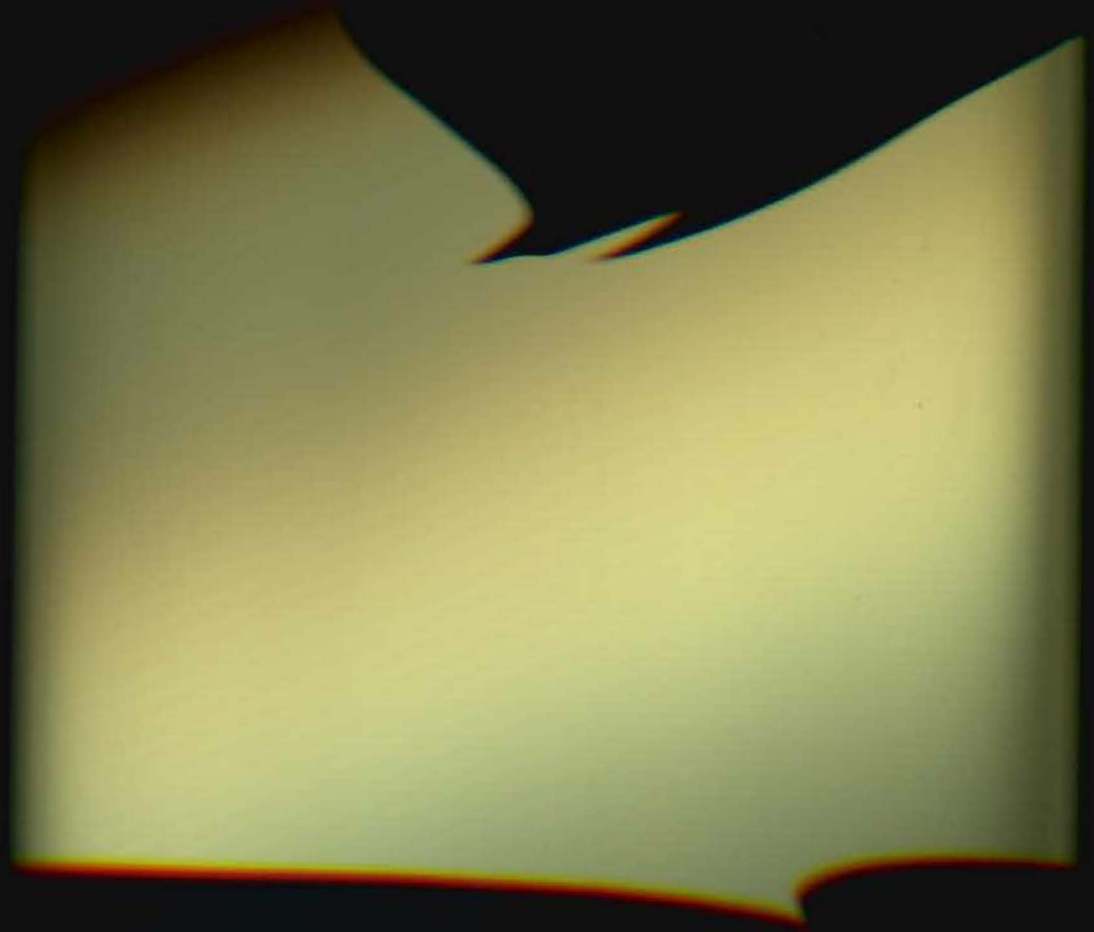
The children will enjoy one and a half to two hours.

The group will meet for two, or three hours.

They will not be working in the field.

THEY WILL NOT

BE



of talent in proportion for what it pays. If a director is well-paid, she will feel responsible for putting on a worthwhile program. Moreover a truly capable director can establish an effective program with little other expense.

The drama director should not be paid on the same hourly basis as all the other recreational leaders. The one in charge of drama will put in many uncounted hours of preparation that would not be necessary for the instructor, for instance, of swimming. Before the opening of the summer classes the drama leader may need to spend days reading and choosing material. After she becomes acquainted with the pupils, she must continue to read in order to find selections suitable for her group. She must see that copies of scripts and plays are available for the children's use; this may entail typing on her own part. She may spend hours consulting with parents or contacting them by phone about costumes, properties, transportation, and other numerous details.

Moreover, the drama director should be on a higher salary scale than many other recreation employees because she needs to be more mature and specially talented and educated.

The salary will vary according to how often the classes meet. The group may meet two, three, or five times a week. The children will enjoy one and a half to two hours,

but will become restless after that. If the classes are large, an assistant will need to be hired. If more than fifty enroll with more than thirty-five actively attending, additional help will be required.

There will be some other minor expenses. Copies of plays and scripts must be available. The cost may depend somewhat on the facilities of the local library. There may be a little expense for typing and mimeographing. Publicity is usually free, but there may be some advertising and printing of programs. There may be royalties to pay, but plays for children usually have low fees or none at all.

For an example, say that the drama classes meet three times a week for eight weeks for an hour and a half each session, plus a few extra rehearsals for some of the performances. Suppose that the guide for operation given in Chapter VI is followed fairly closely. About a total of fifty children are enrolled. Such a dramatic program could be put on for a minimum of \$150 to \$200. A less ambitious schedule would cost less, a more elaborate one, more.

Most recreational set-ups are financed by taxes, but if the budget does not allow for drama it is possible to look elsewhere for support.

Civic clubs are often looking for a worthwhile project to sponsor. Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, Exchange, and other men's clubs may listen to a plea for help and be glad

to underwrite a worthwhile program. They can be proud when the performing youngsters proclaim that their progress has been made possible by certain organizations. In the same manner women's educational clubs may be glad for an opportunity to advertise their worthy generosity.

Philanthropic individuals, when convinced of the merit of a project, may gladly pay for all of it. Parents, too, grateful for the help given to their children, may want to assure the availability of a drama class.

Although a drama program needs financial support, it is not so expensive that the lack of money should be a deterrent.

PART II

HELPS FOR THE DIRECTOR OF A DRAMA SECTION

IN CITY RECREATION

CHAPTER IV

GOALS TO KEEP IN MIND

Before the director makes any plans for her drama classes she should realize that there are certain goals she should keep in mind throughout the summer.

Opportunity for giving more drama education than school teachers have. As illustrated in Chapter II by stories of people who have been helped by drama the director can see that the children improve their enunciation, interpretation, and poise.

By insisting that the sounds of every important word be voiced clearly, the director can show many children for the first time that they habitually speak indistinctly. Youngsters resent being nagged and seldom pay any attention to the admonitions of parents and teachers to talk clearly. When instructors are teaching reading, they have little time to pay much attention to clear enunciation. However, when a drama coach is rehearsing a group for a performance, the youngsters welcome suggestions and do not mind repeating certain words until the director is satisfied. They may think she is unduly particular, but as they listen to the corrections of others they will gradually realize that the careful enunciation need not be stilted and is truly more easily understood. The wise director will limit her

criticisms to the lines of the role and will say nothing about any student's ordinary conversation. She can only hope--as often happens--that the use of clear speech will eventually carry over into the pupil's everyday language. It is not unusual to hear the students laughingly exaggerating their t's and d's as they talk to each other in mockery of the way the teacher has told them to speak. The director should be happy to hear this, for even this exaggeration helps the youngsters to accept clear enunciation as normal.

Some youngsters naturally read with effective interpretation. Others need help in understanding that a natural conversation does not sound as if it is being read. Many times a director needs only to explain how a character feels to bring about the desired interpretation. Other times she will have to say the lines herself to show how they should be given. It is better to give a poor reader or actor only a few lines and work with him until he can give those lines well than to give him a bigger part than he could possibly learn to say effectively. Although it may seem paradoxical, the student who is already a good reader often learns the most because he quickly grasps any suggestions and makes the most of them. However, no student should be neglected; for the director may be surprised to find that some quite slow pupil can give an outstanding performance when someone takes time to put him through each sentence and action

carefully. The response and gratitude of the slow child and his parents will be ample return for the time spent. Even if they should say nothing, the satisfaction of the accomplishment will be reward enough.

Every child should take part. It is easiest for any teacher to let the most talented and brightest children do the performing. Their outstanding abilities seem to outsiders to reflect the accomplishments of the instructor. It does not take as much time and effort to coach the intelligent children as it does the less bright ones. Yet every child who has enrolled in drama wants to perform, and he should be given a chance--several chances if possible.

If the director will promise the children at the first meeting that each one will have a chance to be in at least one radio play and some public performance, she is apt to feel duty bound to see that such opportunity is given. This will probably mean longer search for sufficient parts, but no child should be neglected. Of course the longer parts will have to be given to the better students who can master them in a short time, but short parts can still be good ones. The director may find herself writing in extra lines and roles to fit her group. More of this method is given in detail in the chapter on a guide for operation.

Not only must each child have a part, but each should take part. Occasionally a few timid children will ask to be allowed to sit and watch the others. The leader should try to draw them out of their shyness and persuade them to appear before others. Even though they can be induced at first to take only a very inconspicuous part, they are relieved and proud to find themselves in the public eye. These bashful children have a much greater need for recognition than the bolder ones who grab the limelight easily.

Make sure everyone has fun. The goal the children had in mind when they enrolled was most likely to have fun. Therefore the group could scarcely call the summer program successful and want to come back next year unless they do have fun.

This should not be difficult for a good director. She herself naturally enjoys drama, and the youngsters who chose to enroll consider drama fun. Even if some recalcitrant child is forced to attend by some determined mother, the director should try to see that the opening activities provide such a good time that the pupil's continued attendance will be his own choice. If some of the games and favorite plans of the director seem to bore the children, she should quickly discard them and try something else. The group is usually easily interested if it is offered a variety and not kept too long at one type of drama.

Children should develop poise. The director should try to give every child as many chances as possible to overcome his natural stagefright by appearing in public. The director's goal should be to help the children develop ease in performing for an audience. If she carries out the aforementioned goals, this final one should be a by-product without extra effort on the part of the director.

Stated thus, these goals may seem difficult and lofty. However, a good director always works towards these even though she may not ever have them consciously in mind. Not all of these can be attained for every child, but if they are pushed at every opportunity by the director, many youngsters can be helped to improvement. At the end of the summer the director and children alike will feel that the adventure in drama was worthwhile and enjoy the satisfaction of a sense of accomplishment.

CHAPTER V

PROBLEMS THE DIRECTOR WILL FACE

There are a number of problems with which a director of a drama group for city recreation is bound to be confronted. It will be easier for her if she realizes what they will be before she finds herself in the midst of them.

Discipline? Anyone who has handled a group of youngsters is apt to wonder if he is likely to have trouble disciplining the group. Happily, in a city drama class it should be easy to keep the problem from arising.

The students have met in order to have fun with drama. If anyone wishes to run, shout, rough-house, or be rowdy in any way, the leader can tell him that if he continues such actions he will have to leave. In a public school the teacher is bound to see that each pupil is educated whether he wants to be or not. In a city recreation class each individual is free to choose his own classes. And if he shows by his actions that he is not interested in drama, the director should at the first indication of a lack of interest ask him to leave.

This gives the instructor a powerful weapon in controlling the group. If the youngster truly desires to take part in the dramatic activities, he will settle down immediately and do as the director asks. Otherwise he

might as well go elsewhere, for his presence will only disrupt the group. If someone does insist on misbehaving the director should be firm in making him stay away even though she had hoped to use him in future programs. It will be a strong deterrent to others who might be inclined to cause trouble.

Some teachers especially enjoy instructing these summer classes because they can relax since they are teaching only those who have a genuine interest in the subject.

Changing personnel of group. By far the greatest problem which will confront the director will be that of the changing personnel of her group. As the years pass it is becoming an increasingly difficult one.

Nowadays the directors of the various activities in a city recreation program have one big complaint in common: their pupils are so busy and so involved in a great many activities that they find it impossible to sustain a continuous program.

The first week may find fifty students enrolled in drama. The next week there may appear ten new ones while twenty who were present the first week are absent. The next week part of the twenty may be back but a different group will be absent. The instructions the director gave last week will have no meaning for part of the group. Her plans may have included a performance by certain members who are

now absent. A director can easily despair, tear her hair, or decide she might as well quit, unless she is mentally prepared for such a contingency.

It is natural for a director to be tempted to state to her group that they must attend classes regularly or not take part. This is a poor idea for two reasons.

First, the coming and going of children in the summer has become so universal that if she makes such a rule she will find her class depleted. Among the many things which will take a child from class are visits to relatives; attendance at camps such as church camps, scout camps, music and art camps, 4-H camps; medical and dental appointments; family vacations; participation in other recreation activities; music lessons; and, of course, some illnesses and other unforeseen happenings.

Secondly, in making such a rule the director is deciding that the youngsters should find her classes worth foregoing other activities mentioned. Is she right? Listen to the dilemma as one mother describes it from her viewpoint:

For several years my son took little interest in any of the free classes offered during the summer. I tried to tell him of the advantages, but my urging had no effect. His adamant attitude was that his friends were not taking part, and thus he would not either. Then the summer he was twelve he seemed to realize that opportunity would soon pass him by; suddenly he insisted on enrolling in baseball, tennis, archery, swimming,--and dramatics.

Some mornings his baseball team would have a game scheduled during the time the dramatics class met. Should I persuade him to desert his team during a crucial game? Sometimes during a tennis tournament a match would last long past the time for the drama group meeting. Should he quit and lose the match? When swimming classes are held, they meet everyday for just two weeks. Is it not essential that everyone learn to swim? When our Boy Scout troop went to camp for a week, would I want my boy to miss it? Our own family vacation came during the recreation program. For Father a substitute was hired, but should Sonny stay home? His teachers say he has real dramatic ability. Should he be denied the opportunity to develop it?

The answers are clear. All of the things mentioned above are important to a developing youngster. If at all possible, one opportunity should not be sacrificed for another.

The boy spoken of above may sound exceedingly busy, but his was not an unusual case. In spite of his many activities, he was able to attend over half the drama classes and took part in several radio plays. He chose to miss church camp in order to appear on a television program.

The director must realize that she will have to plan a summer program as best she can with whatever youngsters are available. It will mean that she must be quite firm in insisting that the pupils keep her informed as to the exact times they will be unable to attend. Usually she will cast on Monday a radio play which is to be given on Friday. Before giving out parts she should ask those who will be gone any part of the ensuing week to raise their hands. The

children should know that this automatically eliminates them. (However the teacher should assure them that if they are able to attend some other complete week that they will be given a chance to have a role then.) Whenever they rehearse during the week the director should repeat the necessity for continued attendance. Sometimes another one or two may find he will be absent and have to be replaced. Most children will try to cooperate; they soon learn that when one is unexpectedly delinquent, it inconveniences all of them and hurts the performance of the entire group.

A grand performance at the end of the summer gives the children a great feeling of accomplishment and does advance their education, but the director may have to forego such a program when she finds that spotted absences will make it impossible to conduct any semblance of continuous rehearsals. However, it is possible to plan a satisfactory performance of simpler numbers that will require fewer practices. Suggestions are made in the chapter on a guide for operation.

Lack of boys. In an average drama class about three fourths of the members will be girls. In any drama group the feminine side will probably predominate; but there are more reasons for the small enrollment of boys in the upper grades. They are reaching an age of self-consciousness; they are afraid they might be considered sissies; and the

recreation program usually offers a number of sports that particularly appeal to boys and are sure to conflict with the meeting-time of drama. On the other hand many outstanding athletes, used to playing before a grandstand, crave the limelight and thoroughly enjoy appearing on a stage. Often they are very good actors and pep up a meeting if they can be worked into the program. However, many boys who are not athletically inclined find worthwhile occupation of their time in drama.

Nevertheless, when the director makes her plans for the summer, she should keep in mind that she will have to find roles for many more girls than for boys--in spite of the fact that many plays and stunts seem to center around boys.

Final plans impossible to complete. The director should have tentative plans and ideas for the entire eight weeks' program before enrollment opens. Although she will need to read a number of plays and books, she will not be able to make specific plans until she knows her boys and girls. They will enjoy the classes more if she considers their tastes in her selections. Moreover she cannot know beforehand how many boys and how many girls will be taking part. And beyond that, she will have to revise plans week by week as the children and their interests change.

In spite of the drawbacks of these problems, a director who enjoys drama and children should be able to

produce a program that will both satisfy the youngsters and fulfill her ideas of a successful creative summer.

CHAPTER VI

WEEK BY WEEK GUIDE FOR OPERATION

The suggestions given in this chapter are designed to help the director in planning her summer program. This section is to be used as a guide giving ideas and helpful hints while being adapted to the abilities and tastes of the drama group and supplemented with other material. The outline as suggested here begins with informal or creative drama and progresses to formal drama.

Specific numbers are named in order to give an idea of the type of performance that may be given. If the class meets every day for a lengthy period, other material will have to be added or more time spent on the suggestions given herein. Conversely, if the group meets infrequently for short periods, only part of the guide can be followed.

Eight weeks' plan in brief. Following is a resume of a complete eight weeks' drama program. The director can use this for a quick reference at any time during the season.

- I. Work of director before opening of classes.
 - A. Read and choose a number of radio scripts.
 - B. Find several suitable plays.
 - C. Make arrangements with radio station.
 - D. Make arrangements with television station.
 - E. Inquire about organizations who might desire numbers.
 - F. Arrange for typing and mimeographing scripts.
 - G. See about publicity.
 - H. Talk to other recreational leaders about cooperating on final program.

- II. First week.
- A. Enrollment.
 1. Name.
 2. Age or grade.
 3. Interests.
 - B. Introduction and explanation of plans.
 - C. Get acquainted games.
 1. How do you feel?
 2. Pass it along.
 3. Pantomime partners.
 - D. Act out nursery rhymes.
 - E. Assigned playmaking.
 - F. Improvisations by children.
 1. Pantomime.
 - a) No words.
 - b) By numbers or alphabet.
 2. With words.
- III. Second week.
- A. Continue many of same games, guided by desires of children.
 - B. Radio play.
 1. Rehearse during latter part of period.
 2. Broadcast at end of week.
- IV. Third week.
- A. Continue in similar manner as second week.
 - B. Add choral speaking.
- V. Fourth week.
- A. Continue in same manner.
 1. Dramatic games.
 2. Pantomimes and improvisations.
 3. Dramatic stunts.
 4. Choral speaking.
 - B. Discuss plans for public programs.
 1. Read selected plays.
 2. Act out parts and exercises.
 - C. Rehearse and give radio play.
- VI. Fifth week.
- A. Continue with games and radio play.
 - B. Choose numbers for any programs.
- VII. Sixth week.
- A. Give final radio play.
 - B. Cast numbers or plays for programs.
 - C. Practice numbers.
 - D. Perform for civic groups.
- VIII. Seventh week.
- A. Rehearsal for TV performance.
 - B. Rehearsal for final program.
 - C. Television performance.

- XI. Eighth week.
- A. Rehearsals.
 - B. Final performance.
 - C. Picnic or party (optional).

The director should make some plans before the drama classes open. She must make sure she has sufficient available material including radio scripts, plays, dramatic games, choral numbers, and pantomimes. She will continue to read and choose material after she becomes acquainted with the group, but she will not want to wait until after the beginning of classes to find material.

If there is a local radio station, she should call the manager, tell him about her class, and ask if there would be time available for her group to perform. She may write to a nearby television station to inquire if they have some program that would have an opening for her class. However she may prefer to wait until she is acquainted with her pupils before undertaking plans for such an appearance. Since television programs are usually planned a number of weeks ahead, the director must not put off contacting the station for long if she hopes to have her group scheduled during a specific week.

Not everything mentioned in the above outline as work before opening of classes will need to be accomplished that soon. The director must keep the items in mind and see that they are taken care of when the opportunity presents itself in the early weeks.

Publicity is an important part of the success of the season's undertaking. The director should not wait for someone else to take charge of news stories for her drama program. She may be asked for information about her general plans at the opening of the summer and about the number who took part at the end of the season. The teacher will probably have to take the initiative in securing more publicity. However, most newspapers are glad to print any information, provided it is news. Therefore the director must not be laggard in getting stories to the printer.

Several days before the children are to give a radio play, the newspaper should have the name of the story, the station, the time, and a list of those taking part. If the group appears on television, the leader should be sure the details are in the paper ahead of time. A grand final program deserves several write-ups: one stating that a program will be given and another with details and names.

If the director feels that she is too busy or does not have the ability to write news stories, she can phone the newspaper and ask for a reporter to take her story. Most news writers will take lengthy information over the phone and do the wording themselves.

The first week. The first sessions should constitute "get acquainted week." Usually on the first day enrollment takes place and not much more than that. The director will

want to take the name of each child and his age or grade. She may want to list any special interests or types of dramatic work he is looking for. She may want to keep a space on the enrollment sheet where she can list after each name the times the pupil will be absent. She may tell the children a little about the things they will do in their classes. Usually the youngsters will leave in a short time.

The next day, after greeting the group, the director should address all of them with an explanation of her plans for the summer. She should make it clear that her plans are tentative and will depend on their abilities, desires, and cooperation. As an example, her opening words might run something like this:

"Good-morning, boys and girls. With such a nice group as this, we should be able to do a lot this summer and to have a very good time. Now I know you may be wondering just what we will be doing; so I will tell you.

"This first week we will play different kinds of dramatic games. In fact we shall play some this morning after I finish telling you about my plans for the summer. I'm sure most of you have big imaginations and like to act out things; so we will have a good time getting acquainted.

"Then next week we will start on our radio plays. We will put on a radio play each week at Station -----.

Of course you can't be in a play every week, but I promise

that every one of you will get to be in at least one radio play if you continue to come to class. Now I know that many of you will have to be absent some times, but you can still be in a play if you can come to class every day of the week you are in the cast. When you are to be heard over the radio you must be sure to attend all the rehearsals because we won't have time to rehearse very many times.

"We will try to have some brief numbers worked up so that we can give a few programs for some of the various organizations around town. Then I am hoping that we can appear on a television show. At the end of the summer we will give a final performance. I'm not sure yet whether it will be a play or not. That will depend on whether enough of you can be here for several weeks' rehearsal."

During these remarks there will be exclamations and numerous questions. A thrill of anticipation will run excitedly through the group at the mention of radio, television, and public performances. The director should not sound threatening when she tells the youngsters their performing will depend on their attendance. She should merely be matter-of-fact. Otherwise the students are apt to be frightened when they find later that they must miss some classes.

The teacher will want to elaborate on these opening words.--In fact there will be enough questions that she will

be forced to. Always she should make it clear that these are merely hopes and plans, and that probably not all of them will materialize. She will not want the pupils to feel disappointed at the end of the summer nor that they have been cheated. Of course she should make sure that she carries out all specific promises.

The children are ready for action immediately. If they were in school they might be willing to listen to lectures on drama or acting; but this is summertime: they want to get out of their seats and begin movement.

Since the children may not know one another, it is best to open with games in which all can take part. (These games may lead some of the pupils to suggest other games which come to their minds. However, the teacher should insist on playing games which are related to drama. Other types of recreation belong with other groups.) If the class is meeting in an auditorium, the empty stage is a good open space for play. (See Figures 1 and 2.)

Pantomimes which are concerned with eating never fail to stir up an immediate interest among hungry adolescents. The suggestion of eating hamburger sandwiches immediately arouses a jolly mood among most junior high school groups and indirectly leads into pantomimes of fine detail. "Would anyone care for a tender, juicy hamburger sandwich?" a leader may ask in a friendly way to motivate group thinking. "Suppose we each have one right now," she continues while the enthusiasm is strong. "We will use these hot buns and these sizzling hamburgers here on the griddle. Each one may fix his sandwich in the way he likes it best."

A leader indicates the imaginary food as she speaks, and she encourages the students to make sandwiches and then to eat them. After the boys and girls have finished eating sandwiches, she may suggest that they eat chicken drumsticks. She will encourage them to show the difference between these two pantomimes, and she will call attention to actions which are distinct and precisely done.⁴

A game that many drama classes enjoy is called "Dramatic Adverbs":

One player leaves the room. The rest select some suitable adverb. The player returns and tries to discover what the word is by asking questions and observing the manner of reply. In answering each player must act in such a manner as to suggest the word. For instance, suppose the word is "sadly." Each response must be in doleful manner until the player guesses the word. The player who furnishes the clue to the word leaves the room and the game continues. The questioner, perhaps, asks some such question as, "Can you give me a clue to the word?" The player asked assumes his saddest expression as he answers: "I am sorry, my dear friend. It grieves me beyond measure that I cannot disclose the word to you."

Suggested words are as follows: sweetly, excitedly, angrily, laughingly, crazily, haltingly.⁵

Some children call the game "How do you feel?" using adjectives such as embarrassed, dizzy, sick, cranky, happy, sleepy, silly, tired, worried, ornery. (See Figures 1 and 2.) If there is a large group the leader may want to send

⁴Ruth Lease and Geraldine Brain Siks, Creative Dramatics in Home, School, and Community (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1952), p. 79. Permission to quote granted by Harper & Brothers.

⁵E. O. Harbin, The Fun Encyclopedia (New York: Abingdon, Cokesbury Press, 1940), pp. 522-23. Copyright 1940 by Whitmore & Smith. By permission of Abingdon Press.

two or three from the room at once. A child is more self-conscious if sent alone. Moreover this gives everyone a chance at guessing without making the game too long.

Another good game is called "Pass It Along":

Players stand in a line. The first player pretends to pick up something and pass it to the player next to him. He will pick up different things in different ways. A big stone will be hard to lift. He will strain his back. He will grab the stone with both hands, fingers outstretched. For a pin, he will use his thumb and first finger. He will hold a baby in his arms and pass it gently.

The second player tries to pass the object in the same way that the first player did. When the last player receives the object, he tries to guess what he has. If he guesses wrong, each player up the line has a chance to guess. If no one can guess, the first player tells. Then he goes to the end of the line and the game begins again.

If there are a large number of players, divide into teams. One person tells the leader of each team what object he must pick up. See which team can guess what is passed down the line.⁶

The children may enjoy spending some time on variations of the game. For instance they may guess what food they are serving: the first player may peel a banana, eat it, and then give an imaginary banana to the next player. Other suggestions for food are noodles, sour pickles, soup, hot peppers or onions, corn on the cob, fresh orange.

⁶Bernice Wells Carlson, Act It Out (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 21. Copyright 1956 by Pierce and Washbaugh. Used by permission of Abingdon Press, publishers.

Or what kind of ball is he hitting or throwing to the next player? Is it a baseball, basketball, tennis ball, football, golfball, ping pong ball, medicine ball, large water ball?

The girls may prefer to be cleaning house. They can guess whether they are dusting, sweeping, washing dishes, hanging up clothes, scrubbing the floor, vacuuming a rug, or doing numerous other household chores.

Another good game which keeps all the children busy is called "Pantomime Partners."

Make a list of actions to pantomime--patting a kitty, throwing a baseball, fixing a car. Have half as many subjects as players.

Give each player a slip of paper with the subject he is to pantomime written on it. The subject should be kept secret.

At a signal all players start to pantomime. They must watch the other players at the same time. Each player tries to pick out the other player who is doing the same pantomime he is. The first pair to get together wins, but the game continues until all players are matched.⁷

The teacher may feel at ease in leading the children to improvisations of their own in the following manner:

"How many things can you say without using your voice?" Such an introduction brings out how much we all talk in pantomime, saying such things as "yes," "no," "come here," "go away," "I don't know," "hello," "goodbye," "I won't listen to you," "shame on you," "good for you," etc., without making a sound.

⁷Ibid., pp. 21-22.

After they have demonstrated the everyday use of pantomime, . . . we might say, "Let's imagine we had no language except pantomime. That is, we not only do not use our voice but we do not even use our body.

"Now this is a guessing game," we may say next. "I'm going to pantomime something, and if I do it well you should be able to guess exactly what each movement means. Then you may have turns." Our own participation has the effect of making the activity important and may do much in breaking down any barriers between us and the children if we enter into the play whole-heartedly. There is a certain advantage in not being too good at pantomime--a fact that should reassure the unskilled leader! If the children think you are too wonderful, some of them may be held back by the fear of being awkward in comparison.

We might, for instance, be searching for something (which must be definite in our own mind). Are we searching in a room, in a whole house, out-of-doors, in the woods--or where? Are we sure we shall find it or are we very anxious? Do we find it? Can the children tell by the way we react and handle it what it is and how we feel?

Or, we might make some soup, putting in certain ingredients, cooking and tasting it. Is it good? Or is something wrong? Do we know what to do to improve it? Do we improve it or not?⁸

The leader may suggest that each student pantomime the actions of some character in a nursery rhyme. The director should caution the children that they must not guess aloud until the performer has finished his actions.

At another time the children may pick their own groups and act out scenes from fairy-tales or well-known books.

⁸Winifred Ward, Playmaking with Children (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1957), pp. 66-67. Permission to quote granted by Appleton-Century-Crofts.

The leader will need to limit the scenes to three or four minutes and insist that the children take turns in order to keep a few exhibitionists from monopolizing the stage.

Before the teacher knows what is happening, the children are apt to be giving scenes from television shows. She should insist that they adhere to fairy tales and good literature. However, if the children are given a specific time for acting out television programs, it will be easier to restrict them at other times.

The leader may announce that on the following day the boys and girls may present some program from television. This time they will add speaking to their pantomime. But the only words they will be allowed to use will be numbers or letters of the alphabet.

"Babies aren't able to speak with words," the teacher may say. "Yet a baby can let you know how he feels by the tone of his voice. If you are an announcer awarding \$64,000 to a contestant, I want you to put so much excitement into your voice that we know what you are saying. Now I am going to tell you a story, but the only words I shall use will be numbers. You will probably know in a little bit what the story is from my voice, actions, and facial expression."

The leader will then tell a story such as "The Three Bears," "Little Red Riding Hood," or "The Three Billy Goats Gruff."

The children may like to play various kinds of charades. They may want to divide into groups and act out titles of books, songs, or nursery rhymes. They may prefer charades of one word.

The leader may want to try "Grab-Bag Pantomimes" which is played as follows:

Put a number of articles into a paper bag--one thing for each player. You can use anything that is not sharp: a pencil, a powder puff, a fancy handkerchief, a clothespin, a spool of thread, an eraser, an empty chewing-gum wrapper, a stick, a paintbrush.

Pass the bag to each player. Ask him to close his eyes and then pull out one article. This is his property, or "prop," for a pantomime.

Each player pantomimes a short scene, using the prop he drew. When he has finished, the other players try to guess what he was doing.⁹

"Trades" is another game that is often successful:

One player is King. All the other players choose trades. Each names his trade and shows how to do it. The carpenter pounds, the mason lays bricks, the farmer milks cows, the housewife sweeps, the baker kneads bread, the truck driver steers his truck, and so on. The King chooses a trade, too. He might dig ditches or plant a garden.

At the start of the game everyone goes through the motions of his trade. Suddenly the King stops doing his trade and begins to do someone else's trade. For example, he might pound like the carpenter.

Everyone except the carpenter stops work. King and carpenter work together for a few seconds. Then the King goes back to his own trade and everyone starts his work again.

⁹Carlson, op. cit., p. 24.

A player is out of the game if he does not stop when the King picks up a new trade, or if he does stop work when the King chooses his trade, or if he fails to start work when the King resumes his own trade. The game is most fun if the King changes trades often.

After the King has put two players out of the game, he chooses a new player to be King, and the game starts again.¹⁰

The teacher will want to choose games that appeal to her and interest her group. Some classes will be fascinated by specific games and enjoy playing them repeatedly for many weeks. The leader will find it is better to offer a variety and never dwell on any one type of recreation until the pupils are bored.

If the director will look through books on parties and entertainment she will find that many have chapters which contain numerous other ideas and suggestions.

The second week. At the first meeting of the second week, the teacher will introduce the radio play. Not many youngsters of this age have had any experience broadcasting and will be excited about all the mechanics of radio.

The teacher should remember there are a number of factors limiting the choice of a play for a group of upper grade school youngsters. Since their experience is limited, they will be unable to portray mature emotions. Also the script should have a number of characters in order to give

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 24-25.

parts to many children, but not so many that they will be unable to crowd into the broadcasting station. The play should have several roles which have few lines so that the very poor students can take part. No matter how inadequate a child is, he should have the satisfaction of saying the lines of an individual rather than always being one of the voices in a crowd.

Since many boys of the upper grades still have childish voices, it will be impossible for the unseen audience to distinguish the sex of the speakers. Finally, the youngsters probably will not read the play over more than three or four times; so nothing very difficult or lengthy can be undertaken.

Stories in which the characters are animals who speak are suitable because the sex of the animals is usually not made clear. If necessary the complete cast can be made up of girls without anyone's noticing the lack of boys. If boys are available, it does not matter whether they sound like men or not.

Fairy tales are another happy choice. They are within the realm of the children's understanding, and since witches, fairy godmothers, and wicked stepmothers are women, the casts are often predominantly feminine. And in the world of fantasy it does not seem to matter much if a prince's voice has not yet matured.

The director may wonder if it would not be better to broadcast only one or two times. For several reasons the answer is no. First, more children will have an opportunity to perform if there is a new cast each week. Also, there will be more chances for a number of children to have the experience of taking several different parts. Moreover the students tire quickly of reading the same play. It would be difficult to keep them interested in a longer play over a period of several weeks. It is better to choose a fifteen minute play and rehearse the group once each day before giving it.

It will be difficult to cast the first radio play since the director will probably know little about the abilities of the children. First the teacher will read aloud the complete script. She should read it well, for she will be giving the children their basic ideas for interpretation.

Since the pupils might as well have parts they like, the leader should ask what role each would like to have. Then they should read aloud from portions of the script. Those who read smoothly with good interpretation will have to be awarded the best parts because there will not be time to perfect many lines of poor readers. Since the teacher will announce the cast immediately, she probably will be unable to choose as wisely as she will later when she knows

her pupils better. Often a stumbling reader can give an excellent interpretation after he has gone over the lines several times. Some students respond immediately to suggestions from a coach while others who seem to sound fairly effective at a first reading are unable to improve no matter how much a director works with them. The youngsters who turn out better than the teacher had anticipated can usually be given better parts in a later broadcast. This is another advantage of giving a number of radio plays.

Besides being able to read effectively, the radio actor must have a voice which seems to fit the character he is portraying. Some talented students will be able to change their voices to suit a part. For instance the teacher may say in a gruff rasping tone, "Today we will need someone to play the part of a wolf. Is there anyone who can sound something like the way I am talking?" Usually several will be eager to try; often some student can put a better snarl in his voice than the leader can. Naturally the director should be lavish with praise when it is merited.

Sound effects. Whenever possible the students should make their own sound effects instead of depending on recorded sounds. A certain pupil should be responsible for the sound although he may be assisted at times by members of the cast. They can use their imagination in figuring out how to simulate various noises. By holding a book close to a

microphone, flipping the pages slowly and then slamming the book shut, an audience can be made to believe that a door has been opened and closed. A wet finger rubbed over a balloon gives the impression of a gate creaking. Toy water birds blown at a distance from the microphone give a forest locale. Toy cars and trucks operated close to the mike can give a variety of sounds of wheels and machinery.

The group should practice at least once with something representing microphones. (See Figure 3.) Thus the teacher can work out where they can stand without having to push each other out of the way when it is time to move up to speak. The director should use the same number of microphones that will be available at the studio. She should explain how close they should be--eight to fourteen inches from the microphone. If some child has a light faint voice the director must insist that he keep his mouth very close to the mike. She should warn the children about the need to turn away if they need to cough or clear their throats. Also when they turn the pages of the script they should hold the paper away if it is apt to rattle.

During the rehearsal of the radio play, those not in the cast will have nothing to do. If there is an assistant, she can take over and lead the rest of the group in other activities or start the preliminaries for another radio play. If there is no assistant, the director should tell the

other children that they are welcome to watch the rehearsal. (If they actually pay attention, they can learn much from the suggestions of a good director.) If they are not interested in the practice, then the leader should make it clear that they should leave.

In order to keep all the children interested the other days of the week, the director should spend the first half of each period in games and dramatic activities. The last part will be spent on rehearsal for the radio play.

If possible it is best to arrange the broadcast for the last day of the week. If the recreation commission does not furnish transportation to the radio station, the children will be glad to ask their mothers to drive cars.

A tape recorder, if available, can be useful, but it has its disadvantages as well as advantages. It is a definite help in working out sound effects; the children can improve their speech after hearing themselves; and mistakes can be erased. On the other hand it usually takes a lot more time to prepare a tape. When mistakes are made--and there are bound to be many with youngsters of inexperience--the director feels that they must be corrected. When a play is broadcast directly, there is no chance to stop, and the minimum fifteen minutes is all that is used. Moreover the excitement of knowing their voices are going out over the air, being heard by friends and relatives, keys the children

up, and they give a better performance. Only the youngsters who are hearing themselves are much interested in listening to a playback.

The third week will proceed much as the second week. Again on Monday the teacher will read a new radio play and then cast it. She must emphasize that those who take part in the broadcast must be able to attend every day of that week. Each time she should assure them that if they cannot be present this time, they will be allowed to take part another time. If at the last minute someone is unable to come to class, the director may be tempted to read the part herself. She should avoid this, if at all possible, for it will do some child a lot more good to take the role even if the reading lacks polish.

The fourth week will continue in the same manner. By now the teacher will want to introduce new ideas and spend less time on games that have become overly familiar. The director should discuss with the children the possibility of giving brief programs and the desirability of a final program. The children will be enthusiastic and want to undertake nearly everything she mentions. The leader should warn the children that a final play will depend on whether they will be present during the last weeks. It may be difficult for them to understand that not only must they be present the day of the final program but also for nearly

all of the rehearsals preceding the performance. Many times those who are most insistent about having a grand finale are the very ones who find to their regret that they will be out of town during the required weeks.

Whether the numbers are ever used in a program or not, the children will enjoy going over many of them. For instance "Round and Round and Round"¹¹ may be repeated many times with various readers and actors. (See Figures 4 and 5.) This is fun whether there is much of an audience or not. If the group is asked to appear on a program the director can easily choose those who have turned out the best acting. "Soldier, Soldier"¹² is another the children can enjoy on the spur of the moment if the director remembers to bring enough copies for a chorus.

Brief numbers for a speaking choir can be used a part of each day. They are valuable in that every child can take an active part, and many timid children can learn to speak out clearly when they are part of a group. These numbers are very useful when the director wants to include every child in a performance.

There are a number of selections in which children enjoy taking turns on the solo parts. Many by A. A. Milne

¹¹Ibid., pp. 44-46.

¹²Ibid., pp. 28-30.

such as "The King's Breakfast,"¹² "Rice Pudding,"¹³ or "Shoes and Stockings."¹⁴ (See Figures 6 to 8.) Short nonsense verses such as those from "New Mother Goose Book"¹⁵ also amuse the children.

The leader should not plan to spend much over fifteen minutes on choral speaking at a regular class meeting. The children like it for a while, but many soon tire of it. If the group is working for a specific performance they can understand that they must work for perfection and will be willing to spend a longer time on it.

Whenever the children appear bored with one activity, the teacher should be ready to go on to another. If she has nothing else prepared, it is better to send the children home than to keep them after they have lost interest.

If the director is a good dramatic reader--and of course she should be--the children will enjoy hearing many plays read. During these middle weeks the teacher can read aloud many numbers which the students may or may not give later.

¹²A. A. Milne, When We Were Very Young (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1924), pp. 55-59..

¹³Ibid., pp. 48-51.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 71-72.

¹⁵Ben Aronin, Remington-Morse New Mother Goose Book (New York: Lexington Press, 1944).

The final weeks. If the group plans to appear on television or to give a final program it may be best to discontinue the radio plays after the sixth week. The group will need to concentrate on perfecting their numbers for the public.

Opportunities for performance. The children can gain poise and confidence by performing for various groups in the community. A ten or fifteen minute program can include pantomimes and choral numbers that the students have enjoyed in class. The director will probably have to refuse if an organization asks for a longer program. A public performance can be enhanced by the addition of costumes.

There are a number of associations that may provide opportunity for performance by a drama group. Fathers of the children may be present at civic clubs such as Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, Exchange, Elks, or Chamber of Commerce. Many institutions such as homes for the aged, hospital wards, military bases, and orphans' homes welcome any programs. The children might be asked to perform for women's clubs, luncheon groups, church societies, or nearby college study groups. Other recreational classes might offer a spot for a few numbers. For instance a brief dramatic performance such as "Round and Round and Round" might lend variety to a band concert.

The television program need not be elaborate. People in the television audience will not be watching the drama class in order to see a television play. They could see a much better performance if they switched to another channel. They will be more interested in the children themselves and the kind of things they have learned in class. Therefore, unless the need of the television station rules otherwise, it is best to plan an informal program interspersed with brief numbers the children have worked on during the summer. They can play some of their dramatic games, give a few choral numbers, and a simple playlet. If someone interviews several of the children, this will cover half an hour. If the group is allowed only fifteen minutes some of this will have to be eliminated.

The children will want to give a play. Anyone interested in drama loves to be in a play. If it is at all feasible, a play is an effective climax at the end of the season and gives the children a great sense of fulfillment.

Before deciding on a specific play or plays the director will have to know which children will be available during the final weeks. Then she must realize that many things will come up so that a number of these will need to be absent. Also a few more will drop out when they do not win leading roles. Yet, since everyone is expecting a role, she must choose a play that will include everyone. The best choice

will be a drama that can be both expanded and contracted. At first she will need to add a number of characters in order to give everyone some lines. Then she will probably need to eliminate these as students drop out, and later will find that she no longer has enough actors to fill the original roles.

A play which calls for an indefinite group such as villagers or members of a king's court answers this need. However there is a definite drawback to this answer: the children are unhappy when they are cast as one of a group. Yet the skillful teacher can keep the youngsters from knowing the original roles of the play by a few minor changes: She should make up a definite name for each child. The pupil feels more important if he can tell others he is someone different from the others and is better satisfied if he sees his name on the program as a specific person. Even though a child is merely one of a group, the teacher should see that he has a few lines of his own. She can write in extra words or divide up the lines that are given when the playwright merely says "All." The children will be happier if they see that the individual names and lines are typed in the copies they receive so that none of their fellow members know that their roles originally were somewhat unimportant.

There are many plays in which the lines can be divided among several people. For instance a king might have two page boys although the script calls for only one. If a girl has a group of friends, the number can easily be changed--to either more or less. Often the sex of a character can be changed without damaging the plot. In the appendix are several plays which can be changed to suit a group.

If singing or dancing are included in a play or can be added, the class will be delighted. Thus "The Boo-Hoo Princess"¹⁶ appeals to the younger members of the class; for the various talents of the group can be utilized in the efforts of the Princess's subjects to stop her crying by entertaining her.

One summer a class taught by the author chose "Panic in the Palace"¹⁷ as one of the plays for a final performance. Writing lyrics for four songs for the leading characters who happened to like to sing, the director was fortunate in finding a professional composer to write the music. In the same play were three male characters called Chancellor, Upper Secretary, and Lower Secretary. By naming the first one

¹⁶Ruth Jaeger Buntain, The Boo-Hoo Princess, Plays, the Drama Magazine for Young People, January, 1953, pp. 63-67.

¹⁷Martha Swintz, Panic in the Palace, Plays, the Drama Magazine for Young People, January, 1952, pp. 33-42.

the Chief Mistress and by carefully calling the other two "ladies" instead of "gentlemen," the roles were given to girls.

One summer the writer was overjoyed to find the play "The Dancing Princesses."¹⁸ Here was a play in which twelve girls would get to play the part of princesses! Not only would they wear elaborate costumes and ornate head-dresses --all twelve would dance!

After some of the younger children were cast in a shorter play which was to be given the same evening, one little ten-year-old girl tearfully told the director that she had been hoping all summer that she could be a princess. Couldn't the teacher please make some changes so that she could be a princess? Since it seemed to mean so much to the little girl, and since the director did not dare take a part away from anyone already a princess, she decided to add another royal maid. She made up a name for the extra princess on the program and wrote a few lines for her to say. Since the play was based on the famous Grimm fairy tale about twelve dancing princesses, the characters still spoke of the king's twelve daughters. As far as anyone knows, no one ever realized there was an extra girl on the stage and apparently

¹⁸Caroline H. Corey, The Dancing Princesses, Plays, the Drama Magazine for Young People, May, 1953, pp. 49-54.

no one counted the names on the program. It would not have mattered if anyone had, since a youngster was made happy.

In order to find parts for everyone and to please the varying tastes of the group, the teacher may have to choose several one-act plays. If more than three plays are needed to meet the requirements of the group, the leader may want to consider two evenings of entertainment. Different types of productions will add to the variety of the program. The older students will feel that they are past the age for fairy tales; the teen-agers will probably prefer a modern play about problems similar to their own. Suitable ones may be found in Plays, the Drama Magazine for Young People.

The younger members of a drama class will be hoping for a costume play. The girls have not yet begun to wear formal dresses and are still fascinated by fairy tales. Consequently a play which takes place in a king's court will satisfy the needs of the group.

The costumes will not need to be elaborate. A girl can feel like a princess if she has a long dress or skirt and fancy headdress. Under the footlights she will look like it too. (See Figures 9 to 14.) A boy will appear to be a prince if he has a crown, large buttons, cuffs, and epaulettes of gold paper. A paper doily can give him a lace ruff. Boys may not say openly, but they like costumes as well as girls. If the director has doubts about the

style of royalty, she can find excellent ideas in comic books. Many Walt Disney stories take place in mythical kingdoms and are drawn with simple lines.

Floral shops have unusual ribbons, glistening paper, and brilliant braids that enrich a costume. Many mothers are eager to see that their children are well-dressed; and some even go so far as to rent costumes. However, the director should make it clear that it is not necessary to spend much, if anything, for an effective costume. Fortunately few of the children will have yet reached a critical age and will be impressed with paint and glitter.

Stage scenery can just as well be simple. The important thing about a production is that the children learn to speak and act effectively. If the director conscientiously sees to this, she will have little time to worry about scenery. A king's court can be created if a chair is set on a raised platform for a throne. If a pulpit chair can be borrowed from a church, it will look like real royalty. If the stage has a cyclorama, a tree, shrub, or log will make an outdoor setting. A few pieces of furniture will constitute an inside scene.

On the other hand, if someone desires to work on scenery, there is no denying an appropriately detailed setting can enhance a production. It may be that other recreation groups will be glad for an opportunity to

cooperate. An art class may be glad for a chance to display its skill at painting. When one drama class gave "Peter Pumpkin Eater"¹⁹ a wood-working class built an impressive pumpkin house by nailing heavy paper on a wooden frame. The director should make sure that any who assist are given credit in the publicity and on the programs.

Make-up is new to the children. Only a few of the older girls will have had any experience with make-up, and their knowledge will probably be limited to lipstick. Consequently they will be excited by the prospect of changing their looks. The boys may protest, but they hope to be persuaded to wear it. If the stage has footlights, they should be used by all means. The blinding glare of the lights at their feet may be a new experience to the children, adding to the excitement. The bright lights fade any natural coloring thus making most facial expressions a blur and necessitating some make-up. The director can explain this if any actor rebels against using cosmetics.

As in the other areas, the make-up need not be elaborate. Nearly all of it is easily obtainable at a dime store. There is no need for grease-paint for the child's own skin is probably the desired color. Lipstick, rouge,

¹⁹Marion Holbrook, Silver Bells and Cockle Shells and Seven Other Plays (New York: National Recreation Association, 1936), pp. 31-37.

eyebrow pencil, and possibly eye-shadow will suffice. The girls can wear quite a bit of cosmetics but the boys should be painted with a light touch to keep them from looking feminine. Eye-brow pencil above the upper lashes, a darkening of the eyebrows, a slight suggestion of color on the lips will be enough for the male actors. The boys should not appear "made-up" to the audience.

There are a few items of theatrical make-up which can add to the keen enjoyment of the children, if the director knows how to use them and feels they are worth the time and expense. A child may feel that his role is much more important if he creates a bizarre effect. For instance, a witch can cause a sensation among the other actors if she has a green skin. Green greasepaint can easily be applied for an eerie appearance.

It is a delight to a boy who has sprouted nary a whisker to find himself with a full-grown beard. A king will appear older and more majestic if he has a small beard or goatee. (See Figure 14.) All of the children will gather round when the dramatic coach applies spirit gum, puts crepe hair in place, and trims it like any barber. Spirit gum, crepe hair, and greasepaint must be obtained from a theatrical supply house.

A planned rehearsal schedule is essential. A great many amateur plays are given as soon as the actors and

actresses have memorized their lines and exits and entrances. THE ESSENCE OF THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF DRAMA IS LOST IF THIS HAPPENS.

It is well nigh impossible for an amateur to get "the feel" of a part, to become the person he impersonates until memorization and stage business are fairly well in mind. Only after a student is able to lay down his script and rehearse with infrequent prompting can a director put the final polish on a production. At this point the performers can concentrate on shadings of meanings and fine points of good acting.

Students cannot give their best performance unless they are confident of their lines. If they have rehearsed a number of times with practically no prompting they can concentrate on their best acting. The director should let them know she expects no prompting, but at the same time she should assure them that the best actors do sometimes forget. She should instruct them that if this happens they should try to keep the audience from knowing it by staying "in character" while listening to the prompter.

The director should allow approximately three weeks' rehearsal for a one-act play. For children of this age an hour will be about enough at one time for practice. The first week they should walk through their lines, learning stage business and action. The first day the director will

say little about the interpretation unless someone has a completely wrong idea about the type of character he is portraying.

By the second rehearsal the children will be familiar with their parts. The teacher should begin to insist on good enunciation, effective interpretation, and audibility. A child cannot absorb many directions at a time; so the dramatic coach will start with the suggestions that are most glaringly needed. By the time the production is given the director should feel that each child is giving the best performance into which he can be coached.

The author feels that it is best to wait to ask the children to memorize their lines until they have gone over them a number of times onstage. Often after students have learned to say lines with certain emphasis--or lack of it--they find it difficult to change even though they understand the coach's explanation of a different interpretation. If they memorize later, they will put in the ideas the director has given them. Moreover memorization will be less of an effort and the actors can visualize any accompanying action as they learn the lines.

By the end of the second week there should be a minimum of prompting. During the third week the teacher may need to call extra rehearsals. As the time for performance nears, the youngsters will be eager to work hard.

The first dress rehearsal should not be held during the last practice. A dress rehearsal should be held several days before performance. Then if some of the costumes are not suitable there will still be time to find something else. Besides, if the girls are wearing long skirts, the boys carrying swords, or any unusual accoutrements, they will need several rehearsals to feel at home with them. Moreover, students at their giggly age will need time to laugh at each other's appearances so that they can ignore a playmate's unusual effect the night of the production.

A word about love scenes: The wise director will not choose a play with real love scenes even though members of the class may be in the early teens. However, a prince may be required to kiss the hand of a princess, and this will be enough to send the children into spasms of giggles. While the students are holding scripts, the coach may as well ignore the directions for hand-kissing, but as soon as scripts are discarded she should insist on carrying out the directions. Most boys will balk, but inwardly they are eager for the director to be adamant so that they may go ahead and kiss the girl's hand without the rest of the group's realizing they are actually quite willing. All these actions should not be left until the final rehearsals for the children need time to do it with grace and for easy acceptance by all performers.

Since a director who tries to use every child will find herself coaching scenes with a large number of actors onstage, this reminder may be needed:

Whenever a character says something, the audience wants to know who is speaking. If there are a number of actors onstage at once, it is often difficult to distinguish which one is talking. If a child has only a few lines, his parents and friends will want to be sure to catch them. Consequently the director must see to it that when one of a group speaks he must move in order to catch the attention of the audience.

This movement must seem natural and reasonable. The actor may take a few steps toward the one to whom he is speaking; he may rise (or sit down); a girl might fluff out her skirt, flutter a fan, open a handkerchief; there may be properties onstage that lend themselves to "business." The rest of the group should stay in the background when not speaking. The audience should never be aware of the contrivances. Unless they are part of a chorus, the actors should never, one after the other, step forward, deliver lines, and step back.

Other groups in the final performance. The director should inquire early in the summer about the possibility of other units of the recreation program taking part in the final performance. Music groups or classes of baton twirlers may be glad to add to the evening's entertainment. The more

youngsters there are on the program, the greater the audience will be.

At such a program there are bound to be a number of children attending and consequently the audience will be quite noisy. The director must warn her actors that they will have to "turn up the volume" when they speak. Many children will insist that it is impossible for them to speak loudly. If the director will go at least a hundred feet away and then ask questions, the students will demonstrate to themselves that they can add more force to their voices. She should insist that they speak quite loudly through all rehearsals or they never will do it at the performance. If a youngster should learn no more than how to regulate his tones for a large group, his summer will have been well-spent.

If the director finds that it will be impossible to give a public performance at the end of the summer, she may invite the mothers--and fathers who have time--to attend the final session. For their parents the children can play some of their favorite games, act out some of their better pantomimes, or even include the oldsters in stunts.

If such a program does not appeal to the leader, she may wind up the summer with a picnic or party for the class. The youngsters will appreciate a definite conclusion instead of a dwindling of meetings.

The B.

Blair.

Arnold.

Carlow.

Chapman.

Hughes.

Holmes.

Lee.

Miller.

Ward.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Contained herein are some examples of selections which have appealed to students in recreation drama groups.

The plays and radio scripts may be used only by special permission of the author.

THE POT THAT WOULD NOT STOP BOILING

Adapted for Radio from the Fairy Tale
by Una Ring Yoder

Characters

Little girl, Martha	Villagers
Mother	Announcer
Old Woman	

MUSIC: (Theme . . in full, then under.)

ANNOUNCER: Do you remember the nursery tales your mother used to read to you when you were little? Then you may like the play which the dramatics class, sponsored by the city recreation commission, will give for you. It is the old familiar story about "The Pot that Would Not Stop Boiling". Members of the class are fifth to ninth graders ranging in age from nine to fourteen years old. Those taking part in today's play are
(Give names of children in the cast clearly and distinctly.)

MUSIC: (Theme . . up, then fade under.)

ANNOUNCER: Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a little girl named Martha who lived with her mother in a tiny little house. They were very very poor and often did not have enough to eat.

MUSIC: (Out).

MARTHA: Mother I'm awfully hungry. Aren't we ever going to have dinner?

MOTHER: Oh dear, Martha, I was hoping you were still satisfied from your last meal.

MARTHA: But Mother, that was a terribly long time ago.

MOTHER: I suppose you are right. Well, look in the cupboard and see what we have to eat.

SOUND: (Cupboard door opening.)

MARTHA: I don't see anything. What do we have to eat?

MOTHER: Isn't there anything there?

MARTHA: Just some empty boxes and an empty sack.

MOTHER: Then I'm afraid we have nothing at all. And we have no money with which to buy food. Are you really hungry, Martha?

MARTHA: I certainly am. (Fearfully.) Are we--will we starve to death, Mother?

MOTHER: (Briskly.) Of course not. Here. Take this basket and go out into the woods. I'm sure you will find plenty of good juicy berries there.

MARTHA: I hope so. (Fading) I'll try to bring some home to you.

SOUND: (Musical bridge, fading into twittering birds.)

MARTHA: (Humming a little, then thoughtfully to herself.) Gee, I haven't even found enough berries to cover the bottom of the basket and I don't know where else to look. Oh, here's a place that might have some berries. I guess I'll pick-- --Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't know anyone else was here. Are you picking berries too?

OLD WOMAN: (Fading in.) Eh? What's that you say? Picking berries? Now why on earth would I want to do that?

MARTHA: Why, to eat, of course.

OLD WOMAN: Bah! I don't care for them. Do you mean to tell me that you intend to eat those few measly berries you have in your basket? You will never grow strong on a diet like that. Why don't you fix yourself some sweet porridge?

MARTHA: Alas how I wish I could. But there is nothing in the cupboard at home to eat. And we have no money to pay for food.

OLD WOMAN: What? Does no one look after you?

MARTHA: My mother does the best she can, but my father died many years ago and she has a hard time.

OLD WOMAN: (Thinking.) You seem to be a good child and your mother sounds like a deserving woman. Maybe I should give you my iron pot. Yet, I believe I will. See I have been carrying it under my cloak. Here. You may have it.

MARTHA: (Hesitating.) Why--thank you. But we really have plenty of pots and pans and don't need--

OLD WOMAN: (Sharply.) You don't understand . . . This is not an ordinary pot. This is a magic pot, my dear. Whenever you are hungry, just say to it, "Cook, little pot, cook!" and you will have sweet porridge. When you have enough, all you need to say is, "Stop, little pot, stop"! And it will stop.

MARTHA: (Unbelieving.) Do you really mean that with this pot I can always have all I want to eat and will never need to be hungry again? I can't believe it.

OLD WOMAN: Here, take the pot in your hands. Now say, "Cook, little pot, cook."

MARTHA: Like this? (Slowly.) Cook, little pot, cook.

SOUND: (Hiss, bubbling sound.)

MARTHA: Why, there is porridge in it. Where did it come from?

OLD WOMAN: I told you it is a magic pot.

MARTHA: It is nearly full.

OLD WOMAN: Then you must say, "Stop, little pot, stop."

MARTHA: Stop, little pot, stop.

SOUND: (Hissing, bubbling, out.)

MARTHA: I'm so hungry I could eat all of it now. But no. I should take some home to Mother first.

OLD WOMAN: The pot is yours to keep, and you should never be hungry again. Now I must be going. (Off mike.) Goodbye.

MARTHA: (Calling after her.) Thank you. I meant to say thank you. She's gone already. (Eagerly.) I can hardly wait to show Mother. (Fading.) Mother! Oh Mother, come quickly. You'll never believe what I have.

MUSIC: (Transition.)

ANNOUNCER: From that time on the little girl and her mother never went hungry, for whenever they needed food, Martha

would hold the little pot, say the magic words and the pot would fill up with sweet porridge. Then she would say "Stop, little pot, stop!" and the little pot would stop boiling. They were very happy for now that they could invite others in for a meal they made many new friends in the village.

SOUND: (Music up full then out.)

MOTHER: (Calling.) Martha. Oh, Martha! Where are you? (Pause.) Oh, I forgot. She said she was going to call on the Pickerings. She has made so many new friends that it seems she is never home anymore. Oh well, I guess I can set the table myself.

SOUND: (Clinking of dishes and silverware as Mother hums to herself.)

MOTHER: I wish Martha would hurry up and get home. I'm hungry and I want to eat. There isn't any use to shout for her though, for the Pickerings live clear at the other end of the village. Well--I have half a notion to go ahead and eat without her. I never have used the magic pot myself, but I don't see why I can't. It looks simple. I might as well try anyway. Let's see. Where does she keep it?

SOUND: (Cupboard door opening.)

MOTHER: Here it is. This shouldn't take long.

SOUND: (Cupboard door closing.)

MOTHER: Now, let's see, what does Martha say to make it fill up with sweet porridge? Oh, I remember. (Slowly and clearly.) Cook, little pot, cook!

SOUND: (Hissing and bubbling sound.)

MOTHER: My, it doesn't take it long to fill up. There, that's enough. I said that's enough. No more, little pot, no more. Gracious, I've got to stop it!

SOUND: (Hissing, bubbling grows louder and continues.)

MOTHER: Halt, little pot, halt. Oh it is running over. Quit, little pot, quit. Now it is spilling all over the floor! What are the magic words? Ouch, my feet! Oh, my, I'll drown if I don't get out of here. (Desperately.) No more, little pot, no more! Oh, what are the right words! Cease, little pot, cease. Oh that isn't right. Oh, there

it goes right out the door! What ever will the neighbors think? Oh please little pet, quit. Oh dear I'll have to find Martha. (Fading.) I'll never make it in time.

SOUND: (Hissing and bubbling up full, then under.)

FIRST VILLAGER. Hey May, look at the stream coming down the sidewalk. What is it anyway?

SECOND VILLAGER. Is it mud?

FIRST VILLAGER: No-o, but it's thick. And it is such a funny color!

SECOND VILLAGER: Look out! It's going to run over your feet.

FIRST VILLAGER: Say, it smells like something. What is it?

SECOND VILLAGER: Why, it's sweet porridge.

FIRST VILLAGER: What? Well, what are we waiting for? Get a bucket, get a shovel, get a tub!

SECOND VILLAGER: Let's get a barrel!

FIRST VILLAGER: There it goes! Into the street! Hurry! Hurry!

THIRD VILLAGER: (Off mike.) Hey, what's going on? Look, Tabitha! What are those people scooping up? What is that in the street? (Fading in.)

FOURTH VILLAGER: Mister, can you tell me what is going on?

FIRST VILLAGER: I don't know where it came from or why. But taste it. It is sweet porridge and we might as well take it.

THIRD VILLAGER: C'mon skinny! Let's eat all we can!

SOUND: (Dog barking and a barking sound.)

FOURTH VILLAGER: I'm going to call my dog too.

FIFTH VILLAGER: Run get Daddy and tell him to bring the wagon.

SOUND: (Cats mewling and cows mooing.)

THIRD VILLAGER: It's clear down to the end of the street by now.

FOURTH VILLAGER: Tell the town crier to call everybody out.

FIFTH VILLAGER: I think everybody is already out.

SOUND: (Goats baaing and hens cackling.)

FIRST VILLAGER: Where did it all come from?

SECOND VILLAGER: Someone said it is running out from Martha's house.

THIRD VILLAGER: Say don't be so piggish. You have more than your share!

FOURTH VILLAGER: My share! Every man, woman, child, and animal in the village is taking all he can, and we will never be able to get rid of it all.

FIFTH VILLAGER: What caused all this?

FOURTH VILLAGER: I'm sure I don't know. But we should all have plenty to eat for a while.

FIFTH VILLAGER: Who is that just now coming up the hill? And someone is following her.

FOURTH VILLAGER: It looks like Martha. It is! And that's her mother. Why do they keep running? Aren't they going to take any of this sweet porridge?

FIFTH VILLAGER: Hi there Martha! What 's the hurry?

MARTHA: I can't stop now. (Puff.) Hes, mother, I'm hurrying as fast as I can.

MOTHER: (Breathing heavily too.) Had you already started?

MARTHA: No, I was still at the Pickerings when I saw a trickle of porridge creep in under the door; and I guessed what had happened. I can't understand why you couldn't think of the right words.

MOTHER: Ah, here we are at last.

MARTHA: How can I ever get into the house? I guess I'll just have to wade right through it. (Grunting.) Here

goes. Unh, oh, just a few more steps. Ah at last. (Distinctly.) Stop, little pot, stop.

SOUND: (Hissing, and bubbling out. Other sounds fade. Music up full.)

ANNOUNCER: For a while Martha's mother was afraid to use the magic pot, for the village was so full of porridge that it took the people three weeks to eat their way out of it. Needless to say the right words were never forgotten again, and of course Martha and her mother lived happily ever after.

MUSIC: (Up full, then under.)

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard the _____ summer
dramatics class present "The Pot that Would Not Stop Boil-
ing." The part of Martha was played by _____
(Individual playing part of Martha steps to microphone and
says his own name.)

the mother by _____ (spoken by player.)

the old woman by _____

the villagers by _____

The play was directed by the dramatics class teacher,
_____. Next week at this same time the class will
present _____.
Your announcer is _____.

MUSIC: (Up full.)

THE WOLF AND THE KIDS

Adapted for Radio from the Fairy Tale
by Una Ring Yoder

Characters

Announcer
Mother Goat
Seven Kids

Wolf
Baker

MUSIC: (Theme . . in full, then under.)

ANNOUNCER: Do you remember the nursery tales your mother used to read to you when you were little? Then you may like the play which the summer dramatics class, sponsored by the _____ recreation commission has chosen for today. It is the story called "The Wolf and the Kids." Members of the class are fifth to ninth graders, ranging in age from nine to fourteen years old. Those taking part in today's play are _____
(Give names of the children in the cast clearly and distinctly.)

MUSIC: ("Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf" in full then fade under.)

ANNOUNCER: Once upon a time there was a mother goat who had seven kids. They lived together in a house near a great woods and were very happy there for they had a nice large home with old-fashioned comfortable furniture. There was only one thing that marred their happiness: in the nearby woods lived a wicked old wolf whom the goats greatly feared. Whenever the mother goat went out and left her children alone she warned them against the skulking beast.

MUSIC: (Out.)

MOTHER GOAT: Children, children, where are you? Bedilla, Drusilla, Marilla--children come here!

SOUND: (Many footsteps; doors opening and closing.)

KIDS: Yes, mother. Here we are. What do you want? Are you leaving?

MOTHER: Now be quiet a moment. Are you all here? (Counting.) One, two, three, four, five, six--now where is the

seventh kid? (As she names them the kids each answer "yes."
 Bedilla? (yes) Drusilla? (yes) Marilla? (yes) Arvilla?
 (yes) Frunilla? (yes) William? (yes) Billy? (Silence)
 Billy? Now where is little Billy? Billy! Billy!

BILLY: (Off mike) Yes, mother, I'm coming. Do you want me?

MOTHER: Yes, I want to talk to all of you children together. I am going to town to do some shopping and you will have to look after yourselves while I am gone. You should be all right if you are careful to keep the door closed. Whatever you do, do not open the door to anyone, for it may be the wicked old wolf.

KIDS: (All speak at once.) We won't. We'll be careful. Don't worry, Mama. We can take care of ourselves.

MOTHER: And Billy don't you wander away. You stay here where Bedilla can watch you.

BEDILLA: I'll keep an eye on him, Mama.

BILLY: (Indignantly.) I can look after myself.

MOTHER: I'll try to get back as soon as I can. (Fading.)

SOUND: (Musical bridge.)

WOLF: Oh-ho. There goes Mrs. Goat. Her seven tender juicy little kids are probably at home alone. They must have grown into delicious morsels by now. Un-yum! I believe I better make a call over by their home.

SOUND: (Transition fading into a rap-tap-tap.)

BEDILLA: Did I hear someone knocking at the door?

DRUSILLA: Oh there couldn't be. It is too early for Mama to be back already.

SOUND: (Louder tapping.)

MARILLA: Bedilla's right. There is someone at the door. Open it, William.

BEDILLA: No! No! Don't you remember Mama said not to open the door to anyone because it might be the bad old wolf!

ARVILLA AND PRUNILLA: That is right.

SOUND: (Tapping.)

WOLF: (Off mike.) Open the door, my dear children. Your mother is here and has brought something for each of you.

PRUNILLA: That's not mother.

WILLIAM: Anybody can tell that that is the wolf.

BEDILLA: (Calling.) You are not our mother. Your voice is not sweet like hers.

DRUSILLA: You are the wolf. Go away.

WOLF: Curses! I'll keep watch to see when Mrs. Goat leaves next time and then I shall eat a big mouthful of honey to make my voice sound sweet. Then they won't recognize my voice and I'll have tender juicy kids for dinner.

SOUND: (Musical transition.)

MOTHER GOAT: I am going to market again and you kids must be very careful while I am gone. You never can tell when the wicked old wolf will try to get in here again. Be sure you do not open the door to anyone.

BEDILLA: Don't worry, Mama. Remember we didn't let the wolf in last time.

MOTHER: Yes, but he is a sly old thing and may try to fool you again.

DRUSILLA: We will watch out for him.

MOTHER: (Fading.) Goodbye. I'll hurry back.

KIDS: Goodbye.

SOUND: (Door closing.)

DRUSILLA: I don't see why mother always fusses so. Of course we wouldn't let the big bad wolf in!

BEDILLA: Well, you know he is very cunning.

WILLIAM: Supposing the wolf did manage to get in here. What would you do Bedilla?

BEDILLA: Me? Why--a--I guess I would hide.

WILLIAM: Where?

BEDILLA: Why, in the bed, under the covers.

WILLIAM: What about you, Drusilla?

DRUSILLA: I'd hide in the oven. The wolf would never look there.

WILLIAM: Where would you hide Marilla?

MARILLA: Why--there--under the table.

WILLIAM: Would you hide too, Arvilla?

ARVILLA: Yes, I'd go out in the kitchen.

WILLIAM: Well, Prunilla?

PRUNILLA: I'd get in the big chest and pull the lid shut after me. What would you do yourself?

WILLIAM: Well, is there any place left? Oh yes I could hide in the washtub.

BILLY. (Wailing.) What about me? You have taken every place! There's no hiding place left for me! You will let the wolf eat me up!

BEDILLA: Let's all think. We can't leave little Billy out in the open. Now where could he go? Think hard, all of you.

DRUSILLA: How about the coffee pot?

BEDILLA: That's too small. His tail and ears would be sure to stick out.

MARILLA: Look there. At that little door at the bottom of the big grandfather clock. Couldn't he get in there?

BILLY: That's a swell place! I could squeeze in there and shut the door after me. How did you ever think-- --

SOUND: (Tapping.)

WOLF: (Off mike in a sweeter voice.) Open the door, my dear children. Your mother is here and has brought something for each of you.

BEDILLA: (Doubtfully.) It sounds like Mama.

BRUSILLA: The wolf doesn't have a sweet voice like that. Shall I open the door?

WILLIAM: (Excited.) Look! Look there!

KIDS: What? Where?

WILLIAM: There! On the window sill! See that paw? It's black! And Mama's paws are white. It has to be the wolf!

WOLF: (Off mike.) Open the door, my dear children.

BEDILLA: No, you are not our mother. Your paws are not white like hers. You are the wolf. Go away!

WOLF. (Normal wolf voice.) Curses! Double curses! I'll fix that and I'll get those kids yet. It is only a few steps to the bakers.

SOUND: (Musical transition fading into banging on door)

WOLF: Let me in! Baker! Baker! (More banging.) Let me in!

BAKER: (Off mike.) I'm coming. I'm coming.

SOUND: (Door opening.)

BAKER: (Frightened.) Oh Mr. Wolf. Please don't eat me! Wouldn't you like a nice pie or cake? I have some nice cherry tarts too.

WOLF: Stop wasting my time. You are too old and tough and I don't like pastries.

BAKER: Yes, yes, of course. Then what can I do for you?

WOLF: Cover my paws with dough and flour so they will be white. Hurry!

BAKER: I have it right here. (Eagerly.) See? I'll put it on every paw. Now, how is that?

WOLF: (Sneezing.) There, there. That's enough. I only wanted it on my paws (cough) not all over me. Now my feet are as white as Mrs. Goat's.

SOUND: (Musical bridge fading into tapping.)

BEDILLA: Now who is that? Surely the wolf isn't back trying to get in again.

SOUND: (More tapping.)

WOLF. (Sweet voice.) Open the door, my dear children. Your mother is here and has brought something for each of you.

DRUSILLA: (Slowly.) It sounds like mother.

MARILLA: Yes, it does.

WILLIAM: Look, there is a paw on the window sill.

MARILLA: And that is a white foot, like Mother's; so it cannot be the wolf.

BEDILLA: Open the door, William.

SOUND: (Door opening.)

WILLIAM: Come in Mam-- --

SOUND: (Kids all scream at once "The wolf! It's the wicked wolf. Horrors! The big bad wolf!" etc.)

BEDILLA: Quickly! We must hide. Remember your places.

SOUND: (Scrambling feet, banging, doors shutting.)

WOLF: (Normal voice.) Oh! Go ahead and hide. It won't do you any good. I'll still find you and eat you! Now off with the covers and I have the first one.

SOUND: (One big gulping swallowing sound.)

WOLF: That oven should have this one cooked nicely.

SOUND: (Gulping swallow.)

WOLF: This one's easy--under the table. (Gulping swallow.) I'm sure I saw one go into the kitchen. Yes, here it is. (Gulping swallow.) I know there is one in the chest.

SOUND: (Lid opening.)

WOLF: Yes, I was right. (Gulping swallow.) Now for the big one in the washtub. (Gulping swallow.) Oh I'm a smart fellow all right; no one can get away from me. Now let's see. Did I eat all of them? I thought there was another one--but I don't see any. I guess I must have gotten all of them. Anyway I'm so full now I couldn't eat another bite. (Yawning.) Ohum. I'm sleepy after that big meal. If I can waddle out of here I think I'll find a nice big shade tree and (fading) take a nap.

SCUND: (Door opening and closing. Musical bridge fading into tapping.)

MOTHER GOAT: (Off mike) Children, children! Let me in.

SOUND: (More tapping.)

MOTHER: Children your mother is here. Why don't they let me in?

SOUND: (Door opening and closing.)

MOTHER. (Up close.): Oh my! What has happened? Why is the tub in the ashes? The covers off the bed? Bedilla! Drusilla! Where are you? The furniture is all upset! Marilla! Arvilla! The wicked wolf must have gotten in. (Frantic.) Prunilla! William! Is no one left? Billy! Little Billy!

BILLY: (Off mike.) Yes, Mama.

MOTHER: Billy! Oh thank goodness! Where are you?

BILLY: Here I am, in the bottom of the grandfather clock.

MOTHER: Come on out.

SOUND: (Door opening, scraping of feet.)

MOTHER: Now quickly! Tell me what happened?

BILLY: The big bad wicked wolf tricked us with a voice like yours and feet like yours and we let him in. And he ate up Bedilla, Drusilla, Marilla, Arvilla, Prunilla, and William. But he didn't find me in the bottom of the grandfather clock.

MOTHER: Think fast Billy. Did it take the wolf long to eat them?

BILLY: Oh no. They were all gone in a few seconds. Then I heard him muttering about taking a nap. But I was afraid to come out.

MOTHER: He must have eaten them in one big bite. Hurry Billy, maybe we can find the wolf (fading) and save them yet.

BILLY: Wait for me Mama. (Fading.) I'm coming.

SOUND: (Musical bridge fading into twittering birds followed by faint snoring.)

MOTHER: (In hushed voice.) Sh! Sh! There's the wolf under that tree by the river. We are lucky he is fast asleep.

BILLY: (Also hushed voice.) Look! There is something moving inside him!

MOTHER: How wonderful! The kids are still alive! Hurry Billy! Run home and get my work basket with scissors, thread, and needle. I'll keep an eye on the wolf.

SOUND: (Musical bridge.)

BILLY: (Breathing hard.) I hurried as fast as I could. Here it is.

SOUND: (Snoring in full and continues.)

MOTHER: Sh! He is still sound asleep. Now hand me my scissors and I'll just make a slit in his stomach.

SOUND: (Ripping sound.)

MOTHER. There. (As she names the kids there is a sound of landing feet and each answers "Hi Mama" or "Hello.") Here is Bedilla.--Drusilla.--Marilla.--Arvilla.--Prunilla.--William. One, two, three, four, five, six. Thank goodness. All are as good as new. Sh! Don't make a sound. All of you hurry to the river and bring as big a stone as you can carry from the bank.

BILLY: Here's mine. I found one right here.

MOTHER: Put it in the wolf's stomach.

BEDILLA: (Grunting.) Here's a big one.

DRUSILLA: (Grunting.) Put mine in too.

MARILLA: Mine is heavy too.

ARVILLA: I'll put mine on top.

SOUND: (Jumbling stones.)

PRUNILLA: Leave room for mine.

WILLIAM: Mine is the biggest of all.

MOTHER: All of you be quiet. Bedilla, help me sew his stomach shut. Here, take this needle. The rest of you kids scamper home as fast as you can and lock the door tight. Bedilla and I will be there in a minute.

SOUND: (Musical transition fading into snoring. Snoring soon splutters and stops.)

WOLF: (Yawning.) Ohum! I must have slept a long time. My, but I am thirsty. I'm glad the river is right here for a drink. (Grunting.) Gracious sakes! I can scarcely walk! I didn't realize I ate so many goats nor that the kids were so heavy. (Grunting more.) Curses! I don't think I can make it to the river. Oh! Oh my! Now maybe I can reach it. Oh! O-o-o-o-o--

SOUND: (Loud splash followed by music "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf" in full then under.)

ANNOUNCER: Do you know what happened to the wicked old wolf? The stones inside him were so heavy that when he leaned over to drink he fell into the water, and that was the end of him. Of course Mrs. Goat and Bedilla, Drusilla, Marilla, Arvilla, Prunilla, William, and little Billy all lived happily ever after.

MUSIC: (Up full, then under.)

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard the city dramatics class present "The Wolf and the Kids." The part of the Mother Goat was played by _____ (Individual playing part of Mother Goat steps to microphone and says his own name. Others speak their own names in the same manner.)

The Wolf by _____; the Baker by _____
The seven kids were as follows: Bedilla _____; Drusilla _____; Marilla _____; Arvilla _____; Prunilla _____; William _____; little Billy _____.

The play was directed by the dramatics class teacher _____
Your announcer is _____.

MUSIC: (Up full.)

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA

Adapted for Radio from the Fairy Tale
by Una Ring Yoder

Characters

Announcer	Wise Witch
King	Countess Mehitable
Queen	Duchess Imogene
Prince Gregory	Princess Bettina
Page	Guard

MUSIC: (Theme . . in full, then under.)

ANNOUNCER: Do you remember the fairy tales your mother used to tell to you? Then you may like the play which the summer dramatics class, sponsored by the _____ city recreation commission, has chosen for today. It is the well-known story of "The Princess and the Pea." Members of the class are fifth to ninth graders, ranging in age from nine to fourteen years old. Those taking part in today's play are _____ (Give names of children in the cast clearly and distinctly.)

MUSIC: (In full then fade under.)

ANNOUNCER: Once upon a time in a faraway kingdom there lived a king and a queen and their son. As the king and queen grew old they began to tire of their many duties and obligations and found themselves longing for a quiet life. They often discussed how it would be if they could just do as they pleased.

MUSIC: (In full, then out.)

KING: My dear, wouldn't it be wonderful to wear ordinary clothes and live like other people? I never used to mind all the work I had to do. I enjoyed looking after my people when I was younger.

QUEEN: I know, dear king. As your wife, I too, can never relax, but must always be at the beck and call of every woman in the land.

KING: It does seem as if people as old as we should no longer have to work. Others retire when they are sixty-five; why can't we?

QUEEN: How could we?

KING: (Becoming excited.) Why didn't I think of it before? We are both sixty-five! The rest of the kingdom gets social security. Why don't we ask the Supreme Council to vote some for us? (Triumphantly.) And then we can retire!

QUEEN: (Admiringly.) Wouldn't that be wonderful? How clever of you. You truly are a wonderful ruler.

KING: Just think! I wouldn't have to wear this crown any longer. I am so used to its weight that I'll probably be positively light-headed without it!

QUEEN: (Aside.) Sometimes I think you are already.

KING: What's that, my dear? I must be getting hard of hearing in my old age. Yes, I really must ask the Supreme Council to let us retire. The next session starts tomorrow and I can hardly wait.

QUEEN: But king! You have forgotten something! Who will take over when we stop ruling? Someone must look after the country and tell the Supreme Council how to vote.

KING: (Depressed.) Oh, that's right! How could I forget! But wait! Our son, the prince Gregory. Why can't he begin his reign?

QUEEN: Oh but he begins to rule when you die. You aren't thinking of committing suicide, are you?

KING: Of course not. I want to enjoy my old age, not cut it off altogether.

QUEEN: I'm glad to hear that. I really don't think I should enjoy being a widow, and it would be mighty hard for me to find another husband. Practically all the kings I know are already married.

KING. (Snapping.) Well, you still have me; so quit worrying. (Suddenly remembering.) But great crowns and little sceptors! You can't retire!

QUEEN: I'd like to know why not! I have as much right as you do. (Proudly.) And I can persuade the Supreme Council as easily as you can. I don't begin to look sixty-five and I still have a lot of influence with those old boys.

KING: Yes, yes, I know. But who will take your place? The prince can fill my job, but what about yours?

QUEEN: (Stunned.) Good gracious! How could I forget! Prince Gregory is still unmarried.

KING: Why doesn't that young scamp find himself a wife? And he is not so young either. Why he is a good ten years older than I was when I found you.

QUEEN: (Preening.) Well-- a man can't find someone like me just any old day.

KING: Well, I certainly had no trouble. You made yourself so available.

QUEEN: I certainly did not run after you! I could have had any man in the kingdom!

KING: Yes, but I was the only man who was king.

QUEEN: And I was the only princess.

KING: Oh no, you weren't.

QUEEN: Well, you certainly never considered that old crone, Princess Hannah, I hope; and that bowlegged Princess Daisy Bell was so unattractive that she isn't married yet!

KING: Now, now, my dear, I know I was very lucky to get you. Every man of royal lineage was after you. I only wish our son could be as fortunate as I.

QUEEN: There! You have hit upon the whole trouble. Naturally a man like Gregory can marry no one but a real princess,-- someone with blood as royal as his. And his blood is so blue the Red Cross won't even accept it for the blood bank.

KING: Well, there has been a whole parade of beautiful damsels around here for the last year or so. Why doesn't he pick one and marry her?

QUEEN. Why don't we ask Gregory himself? Let's call him in.

KING. Now where is the Royal Page? I must be getting near-sighted too. He is supposed to be right here. (Calling.) Page! Oh page!

PAGE. (Off mike.) Yes, your majesty. I am right here.

KING. Oh yes. Page go tell Prince Gregory that his royal father and mother wish to see him immediately.

PAGE: I go at once Sire.

SOUND: (Footsteps fading and door closing.)

KING: Now maybe we can settle this matter. If we get Gregory safely married then we can both retire.

QUEEN: Yes, but I'm afraid it is not going to be as simple as you think.

SOUND: (Door opening.)

QUEEN: Here he comes.

PAGE: The royal Prince Gregory, your majesties.

PRINCE: (Off mike.) Hello, father. Hello, mother. Did you want to see me?

KING: Yes, Gregory, about a very important matter. Your mother and I are getting old and would like to be able to enjoy our final years. You are much older than I was when I took over the kingdom.

PRINCE. It is not fair for you to imply that I am unwilling. You began your reign at an early age, if you will recall, because my royal grandsire died. I will be glad to help all I can, but I do not wish to lose my father.

KING. I'm sure the Supreme Council will be willing for you to take over except for one little matter.

PRINCE. And what is that?

KING. You must have a queen to rule with you.

QUEEN. Gregory, you simply must have a wife. Don't you want to get married?

PRINCE. Of course I do. And I have been searching for years for a suitable spouse.

KING. What's the matter with all the girls that have been following you around? They look plenty good enough to me.

QUEEN. Is that so! I wondered why you spent so much time at the royal spyglass. So you weren't examining the countryside!

KING. Ahem! The view was much better at Gregory's side.

QUEEN: (Scornfully.) No doubt!

PRINCE: Oh there are many attractive girls, but you know I must marry only royalty.

KING: What was wrong with the Princess Sarah? She is really a handsome gal!

PRINCE: (Regretfully.) I know. But the royal chambermaid found out from the chief mistress of the ladies-in-waiting that she was really only a countess. This is a matter that has troubled me for some time--this getting married, I mean. Every girl I meet claims to be a princess. It is almost impossible to tell who is a real princess, but so far my royal spies have managed to learn the background of each prospect. But it takes so long to find out about each one, and so far no one has turned out to be a real genuine princess.

KING: Somehow we must speed up the process. I'll send a proclamation throughout all the land and the neighboring countries besides to send all princesses to our royal palace in order that we may pick a bride for you.

PRINCE: Thank you. But I should like to pick my own bride if you please.

KING: Yes, yes, of course.

PRINCE: However, I don't think I would be hard to please if I could only be sure I had found a real princess.

KING: But how can we tell? All of these girls have looked like a princess to me.

QUEEN: Another sign old age is creeping upon you!

PAGE: If you please, sire--

KING: Yes, page.

PAGE: If I may say so, I know a wonderful witch that I am sure could tell you how to tell the real princess from the fake.

QUEEN: A witch? I thought all witches were wicked.

PAGE: Oh no, your majesty, this one is kind and good, and called the Witch of Wisdom.

PRINCE: But how do we get hold of her?

PAGE: I once helped her break a cruel spell of a horrid goblin; so she gave me the magic words by which I could summon her whenever I needed her.

KING: Well, what are we waiting for? This is an emergency! Call her at once!

PAGE: Yes, sire. (In a singsong but clear voice.)

Samba, canasta,
Kansas, Nebraska,
Not poor, not rich,
Come here, dear witch.

SOUND: (Zooming sound and landing of feet.)

WITCH: (Off mike.) Hi there, page old boy. (Up close.) What's going on? Do you want these folks exterminated or only bewitched?

KING: My word!

PAGE. (Embarrassed.) Oh no, Mistress Witch, you don't understand. These folks need help.

WITCH: Oh excuse me. I didn't notice your crowns. Of course anyone running the government needs help. Too bad the American Congress has no magic formula.

PRINCE: You see, Mistress Witch, I should have been married long ago; but it is a royal requisite that I marry only a true princess. But alas, every girl I meet claims to be a princess and I don't know how to tell the real from the make-believe.

PAGE: Do you have any magic potions, Mistress Witch?

WITCH: Oh this is merely a simple problem--really hardly worthy of my powers.

QUEEN: Oh won't you please consider helping my son?

WITCH: For the page's sake--yes. Nothing to it really. Don't you know that a real honest-to-goodness princess has a tender skin?

PRINCE. (Hesitating.) Well, yes, --of course. I thought that Annabel of Monovia must be a real princess because she got a horrible sunburn, but she turned out to be only a Duchess.

WITCH: Oh that's no way to tell. A true princess has such a tender skin that she can feel a tiny lump through anything. I tell you what. Why don't you invite everyone who claims to be a princess to stay overnight? In her bed place a small lump of something or other and on top of that pile twenty mattresses. If she is a real princess she will feel the lump through all the thicknesses.

KING: Wonderful! Now we shall find a real princess. Guard! Guard!

GUARD: (Off mike.) Yes, your majesty?

KING: Guard, find a rock we may place in the royal guestroom.

GUARD: A what, your majesty?

WITCH: Oh don't use a rock. That's too easy. Go down to the royal garden or kitchen or wherever they have the vegetables and find one green pea. A real princess will feel that through anything.

KING: All right. Guard, bring a green pea at once. The smallest you can find.

GUARD: (Fading.) At once, sire.

SOUND: (Door closing.)

WITCH: Anything else? Any election I can fix? Any ballot boxes you need stuffed?

PRINCE: No thank you. This should solve everything.

WITCH: So long then. Pagey boy, I'll be seeing you.
Samba, Canasta,
Kansas, Nebraska,
Broom, jump the ditch
With this old witch.

SOUND: (Zooming and door closing.)

PRINCE: I can hardly wait to try it out!

KING: Guard! Page! Bring twenty mattresses!

QUEEN. (Excited.) Call the chambermaids! We must prepare the royal guestroom.

PRINCE: Father send out the proclamation!

KING: (Fading.) Yes, yes. We must call in every princess immediately. Page! Guard!

PAGE: (Off mike.) Yes, your majesty.

GUARD: (Off mike.) At once, sire.

SOUND: (Musical bridge.)

PRINCE: (Fading in.) Quick, guard. Is that a princess I see approaching the gate? Hurry, hand me the spyglass.

GUARD: Here it is, sir.

PRINCE: Hm. She may do. Not beautiful, to be sure, but passing fair.

KING: (Puffing as he fades in.) What's this? What's this? Did someone say the first princess has arrived? Let me have a look at her.

PRINCE: Here, father. Try the spyglass.

KING: (Gives wolf whistle.) Say, not bad. Not bad at all.

PRINCE: I could wish for one more comely, but if she is a real princess she will be all right.

KING: (Enthusiastic.) I should think so!

SOUND: (Knock on the door.)

PRINCE: (Aside.) Here she is now. (Speaking out.) Come in.

PAGE: (Announcing.) Your majesties, the Princess Mehitable.

MEHITABLE: (Excited and gushing.) Oh, your majesty, I was simply devastated when I read your proclamation. I told all my ladies-in-waiting that if that handsome prince was looking for a real princess I was just the one he wanted. Aren't you pleased that I came right away?

PRINCE. (Confused.) Why yes, of course--we--

MEHITABLE. Oh, I just know we will be terribly happy. I've been dying, simply dying to get married for years. (In confusion.) Well, not really years--just ever since I was eighteen-- --and that was last year.

PAGE. (Aside.) At least ten years ago, that was.

KING: (Aside.) She's really not so good-looking up close.

MEHITABLE: Well, what do we do for entertainment? (Coyly.) Do we go for a walk in the moonlight? Or should we clear all these people out and have a nice cozy little chat right here?

PRINCE: Uh--I--You see--

MEHITABLE: I'd much rather be alone, wouldn't you?

PRINCE: Well--you--see--It's the custom to retire early here so that we can be up bright and early for the entertainment in the morning.

MEHITABLE: Oh, but it is so light in the morning.

PRINCE: But you see we are eager to see how you sleep. We want to know if you are really fit for life in the palace.

MEHITABLE. Oh I'm sure I'll sleep like a top.

PRINCE: (Emphatically.) I certainly hope so. Page, show her to the royal guestroom. At once, please.

PAGE: Of course, your majesty.

MEHITABLE: (Spluttering as she fades out.) Oh, but I'm really not ready for bed yet. I have just loads to tell you, and wait until you see what I brought--you don't need to push --I just want to say that-- --

SOUND: (Door closing.)

PRINCE: Whew! Do you suppose she can possibly be a real princess?

KING: Well we should know by morning. (Fading.) Let's hurry to bed so that we can be up early to find out.

SOUND: (Musical bridge, fading to twittering birds.)

PRINCE: Well, Mehitable, good morning. And how did you sleep last night?

MEHITABLE: (Gushing.) Oh simply wonderful! It was so thoughtful of you to put all those mattresses on the bed! Only I had an awful time climbing to the top. Really that stepladder was a little short. Of course there are several changes I'll want to make around the palace after we are married, but then--

PRINCE: (He has stood all he can.) You aren't a real princess! You don't have a tender skin! Guard! Page! Take her away! Get her out of my sight!

PAGE: Coming, sire.

GUARD: (Speaking at same time.) Yes, your majesty.

MEHITABLE: (Spluttering as she fades out.) Why you old meanie! I don't see how you found out. I really am a countess and that is almost as good as a princess any day! Besides I would be a queen after I married you; so I don't see what difference it makes anyway--and--

SOUND: (Door closing.)

PRINCE: I must say that that is one time I didn't care that she wasn't a real princess. I hope the next one is better.

SOUND: (Musical bridge.)

PRINCE: So you are the Princess Imogene?

IMOGENE: (Hesitating.) Yes--I guess so--that is--well yes.

PRINCE: Aren't you sure?

IMOGENE: Oh dear, I really shouldn't have come. But Mother insisted. Please, I believe I really ought to go back home.

PRINCE: Oh you must at least stay overnight. The page will show you to the royal guestroom.

IMOGENE: Oh really I'm afraid I can't --

PRINCE: Come on. (Fading.) I'll show you myself.

SOUND: (Musical bridge, fading into birds.)

PRINCE: Well, Imogene, how did you sleep last night?

IMOGENE. The bed was so comfortable I almost didn't wake up.

PRINCE. (Sadly.) You don't have a tender skin, and you aren't a real princess.

IMOGENE: Oh, I told Mother that I shouldn't come, but she insisted that a Duchess was as good as a princess.

PRINCE: I'm sorry, but only a real princess will do. Page! Show her out.

MUSIC: (Up full and continuing during the next lines.)

ALL: (Everyone in cast says following lines quickly, running them together.) Oh I slept beautifully. You're not a real princess. How do you know I don't have a tender skin? The bed was so comfortable. No tender skin. I hated to get up. She's not a real princess. How did you sleep last night? Those mattresses are wonderful. She's not a real princess. She's only a marchioness. Does she have a tender skin? It's a perfectly marvelous bed. Yes, I'm a real princess. How did you sleep? A genuine princess, a real princess, no tender skin, a true princess with a tender skin. Not a real princess.

MUSIC: (Up full and out.)

KING: (In a tired voice.) It's too bad my dear, but it looks as if we will never be able to retire.

QUEEN: You would think, wouldn't you, that after sending out the proclamation all over the continent there should be a real princess!

KING: I guess all the real princesses are already married. It's been months since the first one slept on the twenty mattresses.

QUEEN: I feel so sorry for Gregory. Maybe he will always be a bachelor.

KING: I feel so sorry for me. Maybe I will always be a king.

SOUND: (Banging and running of feet.)

PRINCE: (Off mike.) Father! Mother! Come inside! Are the windows closed? (Up close.) A terrible storm is coming up.

SOUND: (Thunder continues.)

KING: Page! Guard! Close the gates! Pull up the drawbridge!

QUEEN: Oh dear! The royal washing is still on the line. Chambermaid! Laundress!

SOUND: (Swishing rain.)

PRINCE: The rain is coming down in sheets.

QUEEN: Oh I hope the sheets have been brought in.

SOUND: (Rain and thunder, then add a loud knocking.)

PRINCE: Someone is knocking at the gate. Who on earth would be out in this storm?

SOUND: (Rain up close and then fading.)

PAGE: I found this--a--lady at the gate. Is it all right to let her in? She is simply soaked.

KING: Well, miss, who are you?

BETTINA: (Proudly.) I am the Princess Bettina.

PRINCE: (Eagerly.) What?

KING: Bettina?

BETTINA: Princess Bettina.

PRINCE: (Groaning.) Not another one!

QUEEN: Did you come because of the proclamation?

BETTINA: What proclamation? I don't know what you are talking about. I was passing through the countryside and when the storm came up I got lost from my guards and ladies-in-waiting. Won't you give me shelter?

PRINCE: Of course. Come warm yourself by the fire (fading) and then you shall have dry clothes and sleep in the royal guestroom on top of twenty mattresses.

BETTINA: (Off mike.) Oh thank you. You are most kind.

QUEEN: Well! Do you suppose she really is a princess?

KING: She certainly doesn't look it. Her hair is a stringy mess, and water was pouring out of her sleeves and even from her shoes.

QUEEN: You know if she weren't so dripping wet she might really be pretty. Gregory seemed most taken with her. (Fading.) Oh I do hope she is a real princess.

SOUND: (Musical bridge.)

PRINCE: Why good morning, Bettina. I thought I was the only one in the palace who had awakened so early. (Hopefully.) Could it be--oh, surely could it be that you did not sleep well?

BETTINA: Oh I'm terribly sorry to sound so ungrateful after all your kindness, but I did not sleep at all well.

PRINCE: (Excited.) What? Tell me!

BETTINA: There was a terrible lump in the middle of my bed. I tried to sleep, but it felt awful and this morning I am all black and blue from it.

PRINCE: (Almost beside himself with excitement.) Aha! Such a tender skin! You are a real princess! Through twenty mattresses you felt the little green pea! Please marry me and be my wife!

BETTINA: What? Why after such a night I look terrible.

PRINCE: You look beautiful to me!

MUSIC: (Up full, then under.)

ANNOUNCER: And so, in the tradition of all fairy tales, they were married and lived happily ever after.

MUSIC: (In full, then under.)

ANNOUNCER: You have just heard the city dramatics class present "The Princess and the Pea." The part of the king was played by _____ (Individual playing part of King steps to microphone and says his own name.)

the Queen by _____ (spoken by player)

Prince Gregory _____

The Page _____

The Guard _____

The Witch of Wisdom _____

Countess Mchitable _____

Duchess Imogene _____

Sound effects by _____

The play was directed by the dramatics class instructor _____ . Next week at this same time the class will present another story. Your announcer is _____ .

MUSIC: (Up full.)

The preceding play was written for radio. The following stage play was adapted from the same story. A group might give the one for radio as an advertisement for the stage play. Of course the plays may be used separately as desired.

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA

Adapted from the fairy tale by Una Ring Yoder

Cast of Characters

Albert	Princess Dorinda
Algernon	Princess Eveline
Head Mistress	Princess Hortense
King Gregorius	Princess Veronica
Queen	Princess Eileen
Page	Princess Augusta
Witch of Wisdom	Princess Theodora
Prince Gregory	Princess Daisy Belle
Guard	Princess Zenobia
Princess Mehitable	Maid
Princess Imogene	Princess Bettina

Other Princesses

The Scenes

Scene 1. The reception hall of the royal palace in a faraway kingdom.

Scene 2. The previous night: The Head Mistress's story.

Scene 3. A few minutes after scene 1.

Scene 1

The reception room of the royal palace in a faraway kingdom. There may be a center window, but if a window is not available, the characters may look off right to see oncoming actors. A large spyglass is located prominently up center. There are a few chairs and any other furnishings considered appropriate for a royal palace.

AT RISE: Albert and Algernon, palace servants, are stumbling in left, lugging an unwieldy mattress.

ALBERT. Hey! Quit pushing! I can't hold this. Hey! Quit it! Didn't you hear me? (Algernon shoves the mattress at Albert, who is walking backwards, until he is knocked over about the time he is center.) For the King's sake! (Speaking from the floor.) You don't have to be in such a hurry, do you? You wouldn't be so energetic if you had been on duty before dawn the way I have!

ALGERNON. Before dawn? Your hours aren't supposed to start that early.

ALBERT. That's what I thought! But no. The royal bugler got all of the senior chambermen out of bed long before sunrise.

ALGERNON. Was it an emergency?

ALBERT. (Getting up wearily.) You would have thought so from the way he acted. But what do you think we have been doing all these long hours?

ALGERNON. I can't guess. What?

ALBERT. This same old thing! Hauling mattresses!

ALGERNON. Mattresses? Like this?

ALBERT. Yes, mattresses. Like this!

ALGERNON. But why?

ALBERT. How should I know? (Droops onto a chair.) All I know is that I'm pooped. Every bedroom in the east wing had to have twenty mattresses. Twenty mattresses on each bed! Why?

ALGERNON. You tell me.

ALBERT. I don't know. Who can know the reason for a royal whim? Maybe his majesty thought it would develop our muscle. Why would any bed need twenty mattresses? Let alone all the beds.

ALGERNON. All the beds?

ALBERT. Well, nearly. You are lucky you did not have to lug mattresses to the east wing. There aren't nearly so many bedrooms in this west wing. (Pointing off Right.) How many mattresses have we put on this bed already?

ALGERNON. I think it is five.

ALBERT. (Getting up with a start.) Say! Did you put a pea under the first one?

ALGERNON. A what?

ALBERT. A pea. A plain little old green pea. We had to go to the royal garden to pick peas this morning. Thank goodness the scullery maids shelled them. We were ordered to place one pea (holding thumb and forefinger about one fourth inch apart) on each bed before putting on any mattresses. (Worried.) You didn't forget, did you?

ALGERNON. (Bewildered.) This is the first I heard of it.

ALBERT. (With a tired sigh.) Oh dear! I hope we can get a pea underneath without having to take those mattresses off. Looks in his pocket.) Luckily I still have some peas in my pocket. (Moving toward the mattress.) Come on. We are supposed to be finished within the hour.

ALGERNON. (Without moving.) But why put a pea under twenty mattresses? It doesn't make sense!

ALBERT. (Sitting on mattress.) Of course it doesn't make sense. But then, if you are a king, you don't have to make sense.

HEAD MISTRESS. (Offstage.) Albert! Algernon! (Entering Left.) Where are Archibald and Andrew? (Seeing that they are loafing.) Well, great royal rubies! Get that mattress into the west wing. Every bed must have twenty mattresses before the royal ladies arrive. Now move! (Motions them to hurry. Albert and Algernon slowly reach for the mattress.)

ALGERNON. Maybe if we had some idea why we were doing this, we would feel more like hurrying.

HEAD MISTRESS. You mean you haven't heard?

ALBERT. Heard?

ALGERNON. (Speaking at same time.) Heard what?

HEAD MISTRESS. (Enjoying herself.) Oh, I supposed everyone knew by now.

ALGERNON. (Impatiently.) Knew what?

HEAD MISTRESS. (No longer in a hurry now that she has an audience.) Well, of course, I am the only one who heard everything that happened last night. You know that since the Queen is getting older she sometimes falls asleep in her chair and forgets to come to bed. I came in here last night

to see if she wanted me to help her to bed. At first I didn't realize the king was with her, but when I heard him, I stepped outside to wait. (Virtuously.) And I could not help hearing what was said.

ALGERNON. I bet you couldn't! I can just see you standing at the door listening as hard as you could. (Pause.) Well, aren't you going to tell us what happened?

HEAD MISTRESS. Oh dear! You really should hurry with those mattresses. (Hesitating, evidently eager to tell her story.) But then I'm sure you will work much faster if you know why you are doing it. Really there is an excellent reason for putting twenty mattresses on every bed. And you are remembering to put a pea underneath the twenty mattresses, aren't you?

ALGERNON. Well, for crying royal tears! Tell us why!

HEAD MISTRESS. Well, all right. I'm sure you really ought to know. (Sitting down.) You see, the King and Queen were up quite late last night. I knew the Queen was in here; so I came to see if she might need me.

ALBERT. To see if she needed you, or to see what she was doing?

HEAD MISTRESS. (As curtains close.) Now stop interrupting if you want me to tell you what I heard. (Albert and Algernon lean forward attentively as)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 2

AT RISE: The King is at the spyglass, turning it so that he can look over the countryside. His crown is on the floor beside him. The Queen is nodding in her chair, her crown having slipped over one eye. In a few moments the Head Mistress enters Left, going toward the Queen without seeing the King. When he speaks she stops.

KING. (Without turning from spyglass.) Has that young son of ours come in yet? (Head Mistress hesitates, looking from King to Queen. King continues to speak with his back to Head Mistress.) I don't see Gregory anywhere. (Louder.) I say, has Prince Gregory come in yet? (As Queen begins to sputter in awakening, Head Mistress backs out quietly Left.)

QUEEN. (Half asleep.) Huh? What's that? Did you say something?

KING. (Turning.) I asked if Prince Gregory had come in yet. It seems to me that that boy of ours is mighty careless about the hours he keeps.

QUEEN. Now, King, he is not a boy anymore. Why, when you were his age you stayed out half the night if you felt like it.

KING. (Grumpily.) I certainly don't feel like it now. My dear, your crown is slipping. You shouldn't get careless in your old-- (Corrects himself.) Now that you are getting older. (Sits down.)

QUEEN. (Straightening crown.) Who is getting older? You don't even have your crown on at all. (Spies his crown on the floor.) Gregorius! Talk about being careless! You have left your crown on the floor! (She darts over to his crown, picks it up, and thrusts it onto his head.) Whatever would the servants think if they saw you without your crown? You ought to be ashamed!

KING. Well, I'm tired! I'm tired of wearing a crown. I'm tired of being dressed like this all the time. I'm tired of worrying about what the servants think--what people think. Tired of duties--obligations. In fact I'm just plain tired of being King.

QUEEN. (Coming to him so that she can pat him on the arm.) Yes, dear, I know. I know exactly how you feel. (Sighing as she sits down.) How well I know!

KING. (Dreamily.) Wouldn't be wonderful to wear ordinary clothes and live like other people? I never used to mind all the work I had to do. In fact I enjoyed looking after my people when I was younger.

QUEEN. I know, dear King. As your wife, I too, can never relax, but must always be at the beck and call of every woman in the land.

KING. (Complaining.) It does seem as if people as old as we should no longer have to work. Others retire when they are sixty-five; why can't we?

QUEEN. How could we?

KING. (Snapping his finger.) Why didn't I think of it before! (Becoming excited, gets up to pace floor.) We are both sixty-five! The rest of the kingdom gets social security. Why don't we ask the Supreme Council to vote some for us? (Triumphantly.) And then we can retire!

QUEEN. (Admiringly.) Wouldn't that be wonderful? How clever of you! You truly are a wonderful ruler.

KING. Just think! I wouldn't have to wear this crown any longer. I am so used to its weight that I'll probably be positively light-headed without it!

QUEEN. (Aside.) Sometimes I think you are already.

KING. What's that, my dear? I must be getting hard of hearing in my old age. Yes, I really must ask the Supreme Council to let us retire. The next session starts Tuesday and I can hardly wait.

QUEEN. But King! You have forgotten something! Who will take over when we stop ruling? Someone must look after the country and tell the Supreme Council how to vote.

KING. (Sinking into chair, depressed.) Oh, that's right! How could I forget! (Suddenly sits up straight.) But wait! Our son, the Prince, Gregory. Why can't he begin his reign?

QUEEN. Oh, but he begins to rule when you die. You aren't thinking of committing suicide, are you?

KING. Of course not. I want to enjoy my old age, not cut it off altogether.

QUEEN. I'm glad to hear that. I really don't think I should enjoy being a widow, and it would be mighty hard for me to find another husband. Practically all the kings I know are already married.

KING. (Snapping.) Well, you still have me; so quit worrying. (Suddenly remembering.) But great crowns and little sceptors! You can't retire!

QUEEN. I'd like to know why not! I have as much right as you do. (Proudly.) And I can persuade the Supreme Council as easily as you can. (Swings her hips as she walks across the stage.) I don't begin to look sixty-five, and I still have a lot of influence with those old boys.

KING. Yes, yes, I know. But who will take your place? The Prince can fill my job, but what about yours?

QUEEN. (Stunned.) Good gracious! How could I forget! Prince Gregory is still unmarried.

KING. Why doesn't that young scamp find himself a wife? And he is not so young either. Why he is a good ten years older than I was when I found you.

QUEEN. (Preening.) Well--f--a man can't find someone like me just any old day.

KING. Well, I certainly had no trouble. You made yourself so available.

QUEEN. I certainly did not run after you! I could have had any man in the kingdom!

KING. Yes, but I was the only man who was king.

QUEEN. And I was the only princess.

KING. Oh no, you weren't.

QUEEN. Well you certainly never considered that old crone, Princess Hannah, I hope. And that bowlegged Princess Daisy Belle was so unattractive that she isn't married yet!

KING. (Patting her shoulder.) Now, now, my dear. I know I was very lucky to get you. Every man of royal lineage was after you. I only wish our son could be as fortunate as I.

QUEEN. There! You have hit upon the whole trouble. Naturally a man like Gregory can marry no one but a real princess--Someone with blood as royal as his. And his blood is so blue the Red Cross won't even accept it for the blood bank.

KING. There has been a whole parade of beautiful damsels around here for the last year or so. Why doesn't he pick one and marry her?

QUEEN. Why don't we ask Gregory himself? He is surely in by now.

KING. We shall soon find out. (Calling off Left.) Page! Oh page! (Turning back to Queen.) The Head Mistress is always hanging around, but the royal page can never be found. It would be just like Gregory to take him out with him.

PAGE. (Running in Left.) Your Majesty! (Bowling to King.) Did you call me, Sire?

KING. Is Prince Gregory in the palace?

PAGE. Yes, Sire. He entered his royal chambers a few minutes ago.

KING. Then please inform him that his royal father and mother wish to see him immediately.

PAGE. I go at once, your highness. (Bows and exits Left.)

KING. I will wager anything you like that wherever Gregory was this evening, the Royal Page went with him. How else would he have known that the prince entered his chambers a few moments ago.

QUEEN. It really doesn't matter, does it? Gregory must have some companions, and you know full well how hard it is for a royal prince to find friends.

KING. I hope we can settle this matter. If we get Gregory safely married then we can both retire.

QUEEN. Yes, but I'm afraid it is not going to be as simple as you think.

PAGE. (Steps inside entrance Left and bows.) The royal Prince Gregory, your majesties.

PRINCE GREGORY. (Entering Left and coming down Center to King and Queen.) Hello, father. Greetings, Mother. (Bows to father, kisses mother's hand.) Did you want to see me? It must be important, for you are usually in bed by this time.

KING. It is important. Indeed so, Gregory. Your mother and I are getting old and would like to be able to enjoy our final years. You are much older than I was when I took over the kingdom.

PRINCE. It is not fair for you to imply that I am unwilling. You began your reign at an early age, if you will recall, because my royal grandsire died. I will be glad to help all I can, but I do not wish to lose my father.

KING. I'm sure the Supreme Council would be willing for you to take over--except for one little matter.

PRINCE. And what is that?

KING. You must have a queen to rule with you.

QUEEN. Gregory, you simply must have a wife. Don't you want to get married?

PRINCE. Of course I do. And I have been searching for years for a suitable spouse.

KING. What's the matter with all the girls that have been following you around? They look plenty good enough to me.

QUEEN. Is that so! I wondered why you spent so much time at the royal spyglass. So you were not examining the countryside!

KING. Ahem! The view was much better at Gregory's side.

QUEEN. (Scornfully.) No doubt!

PRINCE. Oh there are many attractive girls, but you know very well that I must marry only royalty.

KING. What was wrong with the Princess Sarah? (Enthusiastic.) She is really a handsome gal!

PRINCE. (Regretfully.) I know. But the royal chambermaid found out from the chief mistress of the ladies-in-waiting that she was really only a countess. (In his anxiety he begins to pace the floor.) This is a matter that has troubled me for some time-- --this getting married, I mean. Every girl I meet claims to be a princess. It is almost impossible to tell who is a real princess, but so far my royal spies have managed to learn the background of each prospect. But it takes so long to find out about each one, and so far no one has turned out to be a real genuine princess.

KING. Somehow we must speed up the process. I'll send a proclamation throughout all the land and the neighboring countries besides to send all princesses to our royal palace in order that we may pick a bride for you.

PRINCE. Thank you. (Firmly.) But I should like to pick my own bride if you please.

KING. Yes, yes of course.

PRINCE. However, I don't think I would be hard to please if I could only be sure I had found a real genuine princess.

KING. But how can we tell? All of these girls have looked like a princess to me.

QUEEN. Another sign old age is creeping upon you!

PAGE. (Coming forward.) If you please, sire--

KING. Yes, Page?

PAGE. If I may say so, I know a wonderful witch that I am sure could disclose to you how to tell a real princess from a fake.

QUEEN. A witch? I thought all witches were wicked.

PAGE. Oh no, your majesty, this one is kind and good--with just a touch of orneryness that makes her seem human. She is called the Witch of Wisdom.

PRINCE. But how do we get hold of her?

PAGE. I once helped her break a cruel spell of a horrid goblin; so she gave me the magic words by which I could summon her whenever I needed her.

KING. Well, what are we waiting for? This is an emergency! Call her at once!

PAGE. Yes, sire. (In a singsong but clear voice.)
Samba, canasta,
Kansas, Nebraska,
Not poor, not rich,
Come here, dear Witch.

(There is a zooming sound and the Witch of Wisdom rides in Right on her broomstick.)

WITCH. (Coming down Center.) Hi there, Page old boy. What's going on? (Steps off broom and waves it at the King and Queen.) Do you want these folks exterminated? Or only bewitched?

KING. My word!

PAGE. (Embarrassed.) Oh no, Mistress Witch. You don't understand. These folks need help.

WITCH. Oh excuse me. I didn't notice your crowns. Of course anyone running the government needs help. Too bad the American Congress has no magic formula.

PRINCE. (Stepping forward.) You see, Mistress Witch, I should have been married long ago. But it is a royal requisite that I marry only a true princess. But alas, every girl I meet claims to be a princess, and I don't know how to tell the real from the make-believe.

PAGE. Do you have any magic potions, Mistress Witch?

WITCH. (Airily.) Oh this is merely a simple problem--really hardly worthy of my powers.

QUEEN. Oh won't you please consider helping my son?

WITCH. For the Page's sake--yes. Nothing to it really. (To Prince.) Don't you know that a real honest-to-goodness princess has a tender skin?

PRINCE. Well, yes,-- -- of course. I thought that Annabel of Monovia must be a real princess because she got a horrible sunburn, but she turned out to be only a Duchess.

WITCH. Oh that's no way to tell. (Explaining carefully.) A true princess has such a tender skin that she can feel a tiny lump through anything. I tell you what. Why don't you invite everyone who claims to be a princess to stay overnight? Or at least to lie down to rest? In every bed place a small lump of something or other and on top of that pile twenty mattresses. If she is a real princess she will feel the lump through all the thicknesses.

KING. Wonderful! Now we shall find a real princess. Page, order the guards to find some rocks that we may place in the royal guestrooms.

WITCH. Oh don't use rocks. That's too easy. Go down to the royal garden or kitchen or wherever they have vegetables and find some green peas. Put one pea in each bed. A real princess will feel that through anything.

KING. All right. A green pea it shall be. Page, see that it is done at once.

PAGE. (Bowing and starting to exit.) Yes, your majesty.

WITCH. Anything else? Any election I can fix? Any ballot boxes you need stuffed?

PRINCE. No thank you. This should solve everything.

WITCH. Well, so long then. (Patting Page.) Pagey boy,
I'll be seeing you. Samba, canasta,
Kansas, Nebraska,
Broom, jump the ditch,
With this old witch.

(There is a zooming sound as the witch exits Right on her broom.)

PRINCE. I can hardly wait to try it out.

PAGE. Don't worry, Prince. I'll see that the beds are ready as soon as possible. (Exits Left.)

KING. Yes, yes. (Calling.) Guard! Bugler! Call the chambermen.

QUEEN. (Excited.) Call the chambermaids! We must prepare the royal guestrooms.

PRINCE. Father, send out the proclamation!

KING. Oh yes, of course. We must call in every princess immediately. Guard! Page!

QUEEN. Oh I do hope we can find a real princess and have the wedding before the Supreme Council meets next week.

PRINCE. Page! Bugler!

QUEEN. Head Mistress! Come at once!

KING. Those slow servants! Andrew! Albert!

HEAD MISTRESS. (Entering Left.) Yes, your majesties. (Curtsies.) I'm at your service.

PRINCE. Hurry! There is much to do!

QUEEN. Head Mistress, you must order all the chambermaids to work at once. The guestrooms must be cleaned immediately.

(There is a great hubbub with the last five or six speeches spoken nearly simultaneously as)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

Scene 3

AT RISE: The scene resembles the close of Scene 1. Albert and Algernon are listening to the Head Mistress.

HEAD MISTRESS. I have never seen their majesties so excited before. Prince Gregory too. I doubt if any of them slept a wink all night. I haven't even had a chance to go to bed myself.

ALBERT. When do they expect the princesses to arrive?

HEAD MISTRESS. (As she speaks, King enters Right.) The proclamation went out immediately last night, and the sun has been up many hours now. Every girl on the continent who has any royal blood at all will hurry to prove she is a fit bride for the Prince. Oh, isn't it exciting?

KING. (He has been backing in, carefully peering off Right.) He finally backs into the mattress and falls flat on his back.) Great jumping thrones! (Sees servants.) Albert! Algernon! Of all things! Loafing! And Head Mistress! I am astonished at you! With more to be done than any other day in the history of the kingdom, you three are calmly passing the time of day. And I have just heard that the first princess is drawing nigh. (With "Oh dear!", the Head Mistress hurriedly exits Left.) Great crowns and little sceptors! Now hurry with the mattresses!

ALBERT AND ALGERNON. (Standing stiffly at attention.) Yes, sire.

KING. (Sitting on mattress. Impatiently.) Quit wasting more time. Begone!

ALBERT. (Timidly.) If you please, sire, you are sitting on the mattress that we are about to-- --

KING. (Getting up.) Oh get out of here. All the beds should be ready by now.

ALGERNON. Yes, your majesty. We are working on the last bed. (Albert and Algernon hurriedly take the mattress out Right. The King looks off Left and then peers off Right. He hurries to the spyglass and scans the countryside. Albert and Algernon cross stage from Right to Left.)

KING. Ha. The couriers reported that a princess was approaching, but I don't see anyone. (Moves spyglass for a better look.) That's funny. (Albert and Algernon have

entered Left with another mattress which is now in front of spyglass. Actually it is the same mattress which has been carried around backstage. They slow down, cutting off the King's view.) Now I can't see anything. (Albert and Algernon go on out Right.) There! That's clearer. (Moves spyglass.) I still don't see anyone. That first princess must not have reached the Royal Hedge yet. (Suddenly looks off Left as if he hears someone; guiltily he leaves spyglass, moves downstage, looking very innocent when Prince Gregory and Page run in.)

PRINCE. (Excitedly to King.) They told me a princess is approaching the gate.

KING. (Unconcerned.) So I heard.

PRINCE. (Running to look off Right.) I think I see someone. (Motioning to Page.) Hurry, hand me the spyglass.

PAGE. Here it is sir. (Gives spyglass to Prince. Albert and Algernon again cross from Left to Right with mattress; thus the Prince sees nothing but mattress.)

PRINCE. Father, have you been fiddling with the adjustments of the spyglass? (Looks up, sees the servants, and kicks the seat of the rear man.) Get on with you! (Page helps push Albert and Algernon on out.) Hurry, you knaves! (Looking carefully through spyglass.) Hm. She may do. Not beautiful to be sure, but passing fair.

KING. (Forgetting to act uninterested.) What? A girl? Is it the first princess? Let me see.

PRINCE. Here father. Try the spyglass.

KING. (Looking through glass, gives wolf whistle.) Say, not bad. Not bad at all.

PRINCE. I could wish for one more comely, but if she is a real princess she will be all right.

KING. (Enthusiastic.) I should think so!

PAGE. I'll let her in. (Exits Right.)

PRINCE. (Hopefully.) Surely the very first one won't turn out to be a princess.

KING. (He has put down the spyglass and moved down Left.) We should find out pretty soon. (Albert and Algernon cross again from Left to Right carrying mattress and bump into King.) Great crowns and little sceptors! Don't come through here again! If you have any more mattresses to deliver, use the rear passage!

ALBERT. I'm so tired of looking at mattresses that I'm going to sleep on the floor tonight. (They exit.)

PRINCE. Here she comes. (He turns and pretends to be looking away from Right entrance.)

PAGE. (Entering and announcing.) Your majesties, the Princess Mchitable.

MEHITABLE. (Entering Right, hurries over to King, gushing.) Oh, your majesty, I was simply devastated when I heard the proclamation. I dropped everything immediately. (Coyly to King.) You know, just now I thought you were the Prince. Oh my, I forgot to curtsy. (Curtsies in confusion.)

KING. (Pleased, he bows and takes her hand as she rises and pats it.) That's all right, my dear.

MEHITABLE. I told all my ladies-in-waiting that if that handsome prince was looking for a real princess, I was just the one he wanted. (Moving to Prince's side.) Aren't you pleased that I came right away?

PRINCE. (Confused.) Why yes, of course--we--

MEHITABLE. (She takes his arm and attempts to cuddle up to him. Embarrassed, he tries to move away but does not have much success.) Oh, I just know we will be terribly happy. I've been dying, simply dying, to get married for years. (In confusion.) Well, not really years--just ever since I was eighteen--and that--was just last year.

PAGE. (Aside.) At least ten years ago, that was.

KING. (Aside.) She's really not so good-looking up close. And she is certainly close enough to Gregory.

MEHITABLE. Well, what do we do for entertainment? Do we go for a walk in the romantic forest? Or should we clear these people out and have a nice cozy little chat right here?

PRINCE. Uh--I --you--see--

MEHITABLE. (Again trying to snuggle close to Prince.) I'd much rather be alone, wouldn't you?

PRINCE. Well--you--you see--It's the custom to retire early here so that we can be up bright and early for the entertainment in the morning.

MEHITABLE. (Disappointed.) Oh, but it is so light in the morning.

PRINCE. Well, I only meant that you should rest right now. Just take a little nap. You see we are eager to see how you sleep. We want to know if you are really fit for life in the palace.

MEHITABLE. Oh I'm sure I'll sleep like a top.

PRINCE: (Emphatically.) I certainly hope so. Page, show her to the royal guestroom. At once, please.

PAGE. Of course, your grace.

MEHITABLE: (Spluttering as the Page takes her arm and pulls her toward Left.) Oh, but I'm not ready for a nap yet. I have just loads to tell you, and wait until you see what I brought. (To Page.) You don't need to shove. I just want to say that I-- -- (Her words trail off as the Page pulls her off Left.)

PRINCE: Whew! Do you suppose she can possibly be a real princess?

KING. Well, we should know shortly after she lies down on her twenty mattresses with a pea at the bottom.

PALACE GUARD. (Entering Right, bows and stands stiffly while announcing.) The Princess Imogene. (The Princess Imogene steps inside and curtsies uncertainly. Palace Guard exits Right.)

KING. Come right in. (Imogene moves further down Center.)

PRINCE. So you are the Princess Imogene?

IMOGENE. (Hesitating.) Yes--I guess so--that is--well, yes.

PRINCE. Aren't you sure?

IMOGENE. Oh dear, I really shouldn't have come. But Mother insisted. Please, I believe I really ought to go back home.

PRINCE. Oh you must at least stay for a while to rest.
(Calling.) Page! The page will show you to the royal guest-room.

PAGE. (Entering Left.) You called, sir?

PRINCE. Here is another princess. See that she is comfortable.

IMOGENE. Oh really, I'm afraid I can't stay.

PRINCE. (Pushing her toward Page.) Oh surely you can lie down to rest for a few minutes.

PAGE. (As he propels Imogene to exit Left.) Come on, Princess. All our guests must try the royal beds. (They exit, Imogene looking timid and bewildered.)

PALACE GUARD. (Entering Right and announcing.) The Princess Dorinda. The Princess Eveline. The Princess Hortense. (As he announces them, the princesses come in and curtsy to the King and Prince. As the Guard starts to leave, a fourth princess enters. The Guard hurriedly turns back and announces.) The Princess Veronica. (He exits Right.)

KING. (Heartily.) Well! Well! (Rubbing his hands.) Now this is something like it. Gregory, you surely ought to find a wife among these girls.

DORINDA. I thought he was looking for a real princess.

PRINCE. Oh, I am. I am bound to marry a real princess with true royal blood.

EVELINE. (Stepping forward.) Well, here I am. I have as royal blood as you will find. My grandfather was ruler of all the Koletes and my grandmother-- --

HORTENSE. (Elbowing in front.) I have those same grandparents on my mother's side plus (raising her chin disdainfully) the royal lineage of the Baloftians on my father's side. Prince Gregory, you surely know that I --

VERONICA. My background is as good as theirs any day. Besides I own the whole kingdom of--

DORINDA. Don't listen to them. They may have royal blood, but they aren't real princesses. Now let me tell you about my--

EVELINE. Why, you scheming little climber. You can't possibly compare the Koletes with a mere--

HORTENSE. King, I appeal to you. You know my father and mother. Tell Prince Gregory that--

VERONICA. (The girls are pushing each other aside in their eagerness to speak.) Your majesty. (Pulls at Prince's arm.) Surely you will find the coffers of my kingdom worthwhile.

DORINDA. (Pulling at his other arm and raising her voice.) I tell you that they are not real princesses.

EVELINE. (Pulling at King and yelling.) Royal Sire, you knew the Koletes when you were at war with the Baloftians.

HORTENSE. (Scratching at Eveline and trying to pull her from King.) You leave the Baloftians out of this. You're just jealous because you can claim royal blood only from the Koletes! (Eveline and Hortense are now on either side of the King, pulling at him, while Dorinda and Veronica are giving the Prince the same treatment. All are talking and screaming at once.)

DORINDA. What is impressive about the lowly Koletes?

VERONICA. Prince Gregory, don't listen to her.

DORINDA. Your highness, you must let me tell you about my credentials.

EVELINE. King Gregorius, you surely remember the favors my family gave to you.

HORTENSE. Your majesty, you must influence your won.

KING. (Managing to escape and rushing to Right entrance, calling.) Guard! Guard! Come here at once.

PRINCE. (Likewise getting away and going to Left entrance.) Page! Page! For heaven's sake, come help me! (Turns back to girls and holds up his hand to quiet them as all four are

about to close in on him.) Now girls, let me say something, or I'll send you all packing right back where you came from. (This stops the girls who step back.) I am insisting that every girl who comes must rest, for a while at least, on a royal bed. I merely want to find out if you can fit in with life in our palace. (Page and Guard enter.)

PRINCESSES. (Speaking at once.) Just show me my room. If that is all, I can fit right in. I'll be rested in just a few minutes. I can sleep on anything. If it means getting the Prince, I don't need to sleep. I'm too excited to sleep, but with the Prince as the prize, I'll take chloroform if necessary.

PAGE. I can take care of them. Guard you go back to your duties. (Guard exits Right while Princesses and Page go out Left.)

PRINCE. (Wiping his brow.) My word! If one of those turns out to be a real princess I will probably never get a chance to say another word in all my life.

KING. They are all very pretty but scarcely shy or reserved. They certainly don't act like real royalty. (There is a babble of voices. The guard backs in Right trying to hold back the princesses who are pushing in. There may be only two or three girls or there can be as many as desired. The following names can be given the princesses on the program: Eileen, Augusta, Theodora, Yolanda, Celeste, Gabrielle, Justine, Louise, Jennifer.)

PRINCE. Oh no! Not again!

EILEEN. Let me see the prince. I am a real princess.

AUGUSTA. You can't keep us out. There was a regal proclamation asking for all princesses interested in a royal marriage.

THEODORA. If I can talk to the prince, I am sure he will be interested in me.

PRINCESS. I came from the farthest corner of the kingdom; so I should be the last girl to arrive. You might as well close the gates. (To guard.)

ANOTHER PRINCESS. (Spying Prince.) Oh dear Prince Gregory! How wonderful to meet you. (All the princesses curtsy and crowd around the Prince.)

A PRINCESS. How soon do you plan to be married?

PRINCE. When I am sure I have found a real genuine princess, the wedding will take place as soon as possible.

EILEEN. Oh that can be right away, because I am a real princess.

AUGUSTA. You are not! A real princess has royal jewels. (Displays her many jewels.)

THEODORA. I have chests full of jewels in my castle. But no real princess would make a vulgar display.

AUGUSTA. Why you spiteful little-- (Starts after Theodora, but King catches and holds her.) Let me go.

EILEEN. Come with me dear Prince. (Takes his arm.) I can prove I am a real princess.

A PRINCESS. No, your majesty. Don't listen to her. (Pulls at his other arm. Other princesses crowd about and tug at him, shouting that they are true princesses. The King is trying to keep Augusta and Theodora from fighting. The Prince is trying to pull free. The guard is trying to help both the King and Prince. The lines must be snapped off one right after the other.)

EILEEN. Prince Gregory, let us get out of here.

AUGUSTA. I must tell you about my family.

THEODORA. (Still trying to get away from King to get at Augusta.) Oh no you don't. I know your pack of lies!

EILEEN. You can't hear a word I say in here.

KING. Guard! Page!

AUGUSTA. Let me go.

PRINCE. (Finally fighting free.) Ladies! Your royal highnesses! At least act like princesses whether you are or not! (Smooths his hair and straightens jacket.) You must all take a nap to see if you can sleep on a royal bed, to find out if you are fit to become a queen. (Page enters Left.) Show them their rooms and then come back here. (Page and Guard exit Left with girls.)

EILEEN. (Tossing her head as she goes out.) The rest of you girls might as well go home now, for I am going to stay here and marry the prince.

PRINCE. (Sits down wearily.) I don't think I can take much more of this.

QUEEN. (Brightly, as she enters Left.) Isn't it wonderful, Gregory? You will surely find a real princess among all these marvelous damsels.

KING. We have seen some mighty pretty wenches.

QUEEN. Have any certain ones caught your fancy, Gregory?

PRINCE. I have been so overwhelmed I don't know.

KING. I rather liked the one that kept asking me to influence you.

QUEEN. Remember, dear, Gregory is to make his own choice.

PRINCE. I wasn't much impressed at the time, but I now believe I would prefer the timid one. The second one who came, and then didn't even want to stay.

KING. That one! Bah! You would soon be so bored you would wish for a strong-minded one. (A commotion is heard outside.)

GUARD. (Offstage.) You can't go in. Their majesties are very busy today. They are interviewing only princesses. Princesses who are eligible for marriage.

DAISY BELLE. (Offstage.) Out of my way, knave. I am a princess. (Entering Right but continuing to speak toward Guard offstage.) And I bet I have been eligible for marriage more years than anyone else you will see. (Daisy Belle is old and bent, but spry nevertheless. She has quite a bow-legged walk. She may carry an ear trumpet and use it at times.)

KING. (Aside to Queen.) Great crowns and little sceptors! Who--or what--on earth is that?

QUEEN. (Laughing.) Don't you know? I would recognize those legs anywhere.

DAISY BELLE. (Trying to hear.) Huh? What are you saying? (Coming farther downstage she sees King.) Gregorius!

Darling! It's years since I last saw you, but you haven't changed a bit. (Circles around, examining him critically.) Em! You are a little thicker at the waistline. (King pulls in his stomach.) And your hair is a little thinner on top. (King pats his head self-consciously.) But then not all of us can hide the years successfully. (Though bent, she swaggers as if she figures she has succeeded.) Greggie boy, don't you know me?

QUEEN. (Aside to King.) Surely you recognize that walk!

KING. (Suddenly remembering.) Daisy Belle! Well! Well! (Taking her hand gallantly he bows over it.) How could I forget!

DAISY BELLE. (Simpling.) Oh Greggie, you always were so romantic.

QUEEN. (Suspiciously.) How does she know?

DAISY BELLE. Isn't it strange how the fates use us?

KING. What do you mean?

DAISY BELLE. Well, you weren't able to catch me for a bride--

KING. (Frowning.) Arumph!

QUEEN. (Exploding.) What!

DAISY BELLE. --and now your son is looking for a wife. How lucky that I am available.

PRINCE. (With a start.) Does she mean that she thinks she could--

QUEEN. How could it be possible?

DAISY BELLE. Why not? Just because Gregorius here missed me does not mean I am too late for his son.

KING. Daisy Belle, you wouldn't want to marry my son!

DAISY BELLE. Now, King, you mustn't be jealous at this late date.

QUEEN. Jealous!

DAISY BELLE. Oh, he was always so romantic. (Coming close to King.) Do you remember the night we both attended the royal ball at Prince Jonathon's coronation?

KING. (Puzzled.) I remember the ball --

DAISY BELLE. (Shaking her finger under his nose.) Oh you naughty, naughty boy! (Queen is fuming. Daisy Belle turns to Prince.) Are you the gallant figure your father was? (Puts on glasses to examine him.) Hm! You seem a little skinny.

PRINCE. Did you come in answer to the proclamation?

DAISY BELLE. Why not? I'm a princess, and I'm not married. The decree made no other stipulations. Is anything wrong?

PRINCE. Uh-- no. No, I guess not. (Squaring his shoulder.) We are giving everybody a little test. You must rest a while in one of our royal beds to see if you can fit into the life in our palace.

DAISY BELLE. Well, I could do with a little rest. I'm not used to all this hurried traveling. King, old boy (pokes King in the ribs, making him jump) we aren't as young as we once were, are we? (Taking Prince's arm.) But there's life in the old bones yet. Now, young man, show me the guest-room before I faint from weariness. (Prince wipes his brow as he exits with her Right.)

QUEEN. Well, I never!

KING. Where did she ever get the idea that I was interested in her?

QUEEN. Undoubtedly you gave her the idea. (Mimicking Daisy Belle.) Greggie boy, do you remember the royal ball the night of Prince Jonathon's coronation? (Sinking finger under his nose in manner of Daisy Belle.) Oh you naughty, naughty boy! (Back to her own angry self.) Now suppose you just tell me what she was talking about!

KING. (Pained.) Sweetheart! She couldn't possibly have been talking about anything but her imagination.

QUEEN. (Musing.) Prince Jonathon's ball. I remember that. It was before you proposed to me. (Again suspicious.) Are you sure it was all her imagination?

KING. How can you ask! She wasn't any better looking then than she is now! Prince Jonathon's crowning-- Hm! I remember the ball, but I don't remember Daisy Belle. Oh I suppose I danced with her at least once. My father would have insisted that I pay my respects to the leading princess of the kingdom. (Patting Queen's hand.) What I do remember is that I met you and I spent every spare moment following you about.

QUEEN. (She is mollified.) Yes, that was the night I was certain you would propose sooner or later.

PRINCE. (Entering Right.) Father! Mother! Is she a real princess?

KING. I have always thought so.

PRINCE. (Aghast.) What if she turns out to be the only true princess? Would I have to marry her?

KING. (In solemn voice.) Son, I myself refused to wed her when she really was at a marriagable age. (With resignation, but with firmness.) If it is necessary--in order to save you from such a fate--I shall remain King for as long as I live.

PRINCE. (Sits down with relief.) Oh how grateful I am, father. You don't know how worried I have been.

QUEEN. There, there dear. You know, we said you could do your own choosing.

PAGE. (Entering Left with Guard.) There are only two rooms left. Do you think any more will come?

PRINCE. I think you might as well close the gates. One of the last ladies said she had come from the far corner of the kingdom. There shouldn't be any more. (There is a knocking off Right.) Guard, see who that is. (Guard starts to exit, but the Princess Zenobia sweeps in. She is followed by her maid who is loaded with boxes and baggage.)

ZENOBIA. I must say this is a fine welcome! No one to open the gates. No one to announce me!

PRINCE. (Bowing.) Are you a princess?

ZENOBIA. Of course. (To guard.) Go show my servants where to put my trunks. (Guard starts to take Maid's arm.) Not

her, stupid! My servants are waiting at the gates with my trunks and chests.

QUEEN. Oh, are you planning to stay for a while?

ZENOBIAS. Stay? I came to be married. I'm moving in.

PRINCE. (Aside to Guard.) Take her things to the lower stables. We will put her to the test before we let her move in. (Guard exits. Prince turns to Zenobia.) I am sure you will want to rest after your long journey. Page, show her to her room.

ZENOBIAS. (As she goes out.) Of course you must find rooms for my servants too. (Page, Zenobia, and Maid exit Right.)

PRINCE. That is surely the last one.

QUEEN. (Thoughtfully.) She seemed awfully certain she would be staying.

KING. If she does stay we will probably have to move out for there won't be room after all her entourage moves in!

QUEEN. Sire! Why don't we take a stroll down the East Wing? Some may be through with their naps by this time.

KING. Or we may find a real princess.

PRINCE. If anyone is stirring, send her to me. (King and Queen exit Left.) What an ordeal! I have searched for years for a real princess, but with no success. (Sighing.) Somehow I can't believe that a true princess is going to turn up among these maidens--fair though they be. (Mehitable enters Left yawning and stretching.) Salutations, Miss--let me see. I believe you are Miss Mehitable.

MEHITABLE. Princess Mehitable.

PRINCE. Are you sure? How did you sleep?

MEHITABLE. (Gushing.) Oh simply wonderful! It was so thoughtful of you to put all those mattresses on the bed! Only I had an awful time climbing to the top. Really that stepladder was a little short. Of course there are several changes I'll want to make around the palace after we are married, but then--

PRINCE. (He has stood all he can.) You aren't a real princess! Guard! Page! Take her away!

PAGE. (Entering.) Coming, Sire.

GUARD. (Entering and speaking at same time.) Yes, your majesty. (They take hold of Mehitable on either side.)

MEHITABLE. (Resisting as she goes out.) Why you old meanie! I don't see how you found out. I really am a countess and that is almost as good as a princess any day! Besides I would be a queen after I married you so I don't see what difference it makes anyway--and I--(exits struggling.)

PRINCE. (Looking after her.) I do hope to find a wife, but I'm really not sorry she wasn't a princess.

IMOGENE. (Entering timidly.) I think I have rested long enough. I hope you won't mind if I go home now.

PRINCE. (Eagerly.) I bet you couldn't sleep! You were uncomfortable, weren't you?

IMOGENE. Oh no. You are a very kind host. I really did not intend to go to sleep, but the bed was so soft and comfortable that I almost didn't wake up.

PRINCE. (Sadly) You don't have a tender skin, and you aren't a real princess.

IMOGENE. (Distressed.) Oh, I told Mother that I shouldn't come, but she insisted that a Duchess was as good as a princess.

PRINCE. I'm sorry, but only a real princess will do.

IMOGENE. May I go now?

PRINCE. (Dejected.) Yes, please do.

IMOGENE. I'm sure you will find an honest-to-goodness princess, and then you will really fall in love.

PRINCE. I hope so.

IMOGENE. (As she exits Right.) Goodbye. (Dorinda and Eveline enter.)

EVELINE. I hope you will come visit me here at the palace sometime dear Dorinda. (Dorinda tosses her head.)

PRINCE. And how did you fair ladies sleep? You found the beds lumpy I trust?

DORINDA. How you jest! Twenty mattresses lumpy?

EVELINE. I could fit right in here any time. I slept so soundly I did not dream at all.

DORINDA. I slept so comfortably that I had beautiful dreams. Let me tell you. I dreamt that I was crowned--

PRINCE. Neither one of you is a princess. You don't have the tender skin of real royalty. Guard! Show them out. (Guard enters and takes them out Right. At the same time Hortense and Veronica enter Left.)

DORINDA. (Calling to them as she leaves.) It won't do you any good. You can't fool the Prince. (Exits.)

PRINCE. How was your siesta?

HORTENSE. Wonderful! You are so clever! Twenty mattresses!

VERONICA. I would have stayed in bed all day, except that I would rather be with you. (Tries to take the Prince's arm.)

PRINCE. Be off with you! Both of you! Guard! Guard! You are just pretenders. Neither one of you has the tender skin of a royal princess. (To Guard who has entered.) Show them out.

HORTENSE. (As guard takes them out.) How can he tell?

VERONICA. I am a marchioness. I don't see why that -- -- (They exit. Another group of princesses enters Left, chattering about their wonderful beds and how comfortably they slept.)

PRINCESS. Could you touch the ceiling from your bed?

ANOTHER PRINCESS. I didn't try. After climbing to the top of all those mattresses I was exhausted and fell asleep.

PRINCESS. The bed was uncommonly high but sleeping on it was like floating on a cloud.

PRINCE. You say you rested without discomfort? (They nod or answer in the affirmative.)

PRINCESS. We passed that test without any trouble.

PRINCE. (Wearily.) I'm afraid you don't understand. But I understand. (Angrily.) Every last one of you is trying to trick me. There is not a true princess among the lot of you. No one has a tender skin! Guard! Page! Get these females out of here! (Guard and Page run in.)

PRINCESS. What a gyp!

ANOTHER. How does he know?

PRINCESS. There is nothing wrong with my skin!

ANOTHER. My epidermis is known throughout the land for its beauty!

ANOTHER. (As they are ushered out.) The Supreme Council will hear about this!

PRINCE. This is exhausting. (King and Queen rush in Left.)

QUEEN. Gregory! Are you here? A terrible storm is coming. Close all the windows.

KING. Page! Guard! Close the gates! Pull up the draw-bridge!

PRINCE. (Calling off Right.) If any of those phony princesses are still around, see that they have shelter.

QUEEN. Oh dear! The royal washing is still on the line. (Thunder heard.)

PRINCE. (Looking off.) The rain is coming down in sheets.

QUEEN. Oh, I hope the sheets have been brought in. Head Mistress! (Queen is running about wringing her hands.) Laundress! Oh where is everybody?

KING. They are probably going about their duties without waiting for orders. (More thunder and then a loud knocking or pounding is heard.) What is that?

PRINCE. Someone is knocking at the outer gate.

QUEEN. No sensible person would be out in this storm.

HEAD MISTRESS. (Entering with Bettina whose clothing is wet, torn, and bedraggled.) I was looking after the laundry and found this--a--this maiden at the gate. Is it all right to let her in? She is simply soaked.

KING. Well, miss, who are you?

BETTINA. (Proudly.) I am the Princess Bettina.

PRINCE. (Eagerly.) What?

KING. Bettina?

BETTINA. Princess Bettina.

PRINCE. (Groaning.) Not another one.

QUEEN. Did you come because of the proclamation?

BETTINA. (Her posture indicates she might be wearing royal robes instead of soiled clothing.) What proclamation? I don't know what you are talking about. I don't even know who you are.

PRINCE. Don't you know us?

BETTINA. (Looking about her.) I thought this looked like a good-sized estate. (Puzzled.) Have I met you?

KING. Probably not. Are you traveling alone?

BETTINA. Of course not. I mean that I wasn't originally. I was passing through the countryside, and when the storm came up I got lost from my guards and ladies-in-waiting. I fell over a log in the forest. Won't you please give me shelter?

PRINCE. Of course.

HEAD MISTRESS. (She plainly does not believe Bettina's story.) Excuse me, your majesty. All of the servant's quarters have been taken by Zenobia's maidens. The rooms over the royal stables are taken too.

BETTINA. (Haughtily.) I've never been treated so shabbily in all my life. (Turns as if to leave.) I shall try to find my company of servants by myself even though I shall probably drown in the process.

PRINCE. Wait! (To Head Mistress.) Isn't there still one unused guestroom prepared for a princess?

HEAD MISTRESS. Well, yes -- but that should --

PRINCE. Good. (To Bettina.) Come warm yourself by the fire, and then you shall have dry clothes and sleep in a royal guestroom on top of twenty mattresses. (He takes her hand to lead her off Right.)

BETTINA. Oh thank you. You are most kind. (They exit Right, followed by Head Mistress.)

KING. Do you suppose she really is a princess?

QUEEN. That certainly sounded like a made-up story to me!

KING. She certainly didn't look like a princess.

QUEEN. (Thoughtfully.) You know if her clothes weren't such a mess and she wasn't so wind-blown, she might be pretty. Gregory seemed most taken with her. It would be most wonderful if she actually were a princess. (Sighing.) But I don't really think she is.

KING. What about the other maidens? Are any of them still here?

QUEEN. I'll see. (Calling off Right.) Head Mistress! Head Mistress! I wish to ask you a question.

HEAD MISTRESS. (Entering Right and curtsying to Queen.) Yes, your majesty?

QUEEN. Have all the ladies been dismissed? Are any of the royal guestrooms still occupied?

HEAD MISTRESS. The Princess Zenobia and the Princess Daisy Belle are still in their rooms.

KING. Are they resting comfortably?

HEAD MISTRESS. I think so. Well, I haven't heard a sound from the Princess Zenobia's room, but the Princess Daisy Belle is snoring so loudly she puts the storm to shame.

KING. What? Daisy Belle snoring? (He throws back his head and laughs.)

QUEEN. King! King! Stop laughing! Do you realize what that means? (Head Mistress exits.)

KING. Of course I do! That's why I'm laughing. Daisy Belle --the old fake! If she is sleeping so soundly she can't have

a tender skin, she doesn't know the pea is under the mattresses, and she is no princess at all! To think how scared I have been of her all these years.

QUEEN. I was never really jealous of her, but I did stand in awe of her royal blood.

KING. Well, she can never worry us again. And Gregory is safe from her, that's certain.

QUEEN. But what will he do? If Zenobia has not complained, that lets her out too.

KING. (In a tired voice.) It is too bad my dear, but it looks as if we will never be able to retire.

QUEEN. You would think, wouldn't you, that after sending out the proclamation all over the country there would be a real princess!

KING. I guess all the real princesses are already married.

QUEEN. I feel so sorry for Gregory. Maybe he will always be a bachelor.

KING. I feel so sorry for me. Maybe I will always be a king!

QUEEN. We are tired. Why don't we go to bed?

KING. An excellent idea! Gregory wanted to do his own choosing; so he ought to do his own worrying. (King and Queen exit Left.)

PRINCE. (Entering Right.) What a wonderful maiden! Yet why wouldn't she answer my questions? Just acted as if I should know she is a princess. Is she pretending--like all the others? Still, she didn't seem to know who I was. (Forlornly.) And didn't even seem interested in finding out. (Bettina appears Right. There are bruises, black and blue spots, on her arms and one on her cheek.) Why Bettina! I thought you were tired. (Disappointed.) I thought you were going to bed.

BETTINA. (Embarrassed.) I did go to bed. (Pauses.) Oh, I'm terribly sorry to sound so ungrateful after all your kindness, but-- --

PRINCE. (Hopefully.) Could it be-- --oh, surely could it be that the twenty mattresses did not make you comfortable?

BETTINA. I hate to tell you-- but I could not rest at all.

PRINCE. (Excited.) What? Tell me!

BETTINA. There was a terrible lump in the middle of my bed. I tried to sleep, but it felt awful and already I am black and blue from it.

PRINCE. (Almost beside himself with excitement.) Aha! Such a tender skin! (Walks around her, admiring her.) You are a real princess! Through twenty mattresses you felt the little green pea! Father! Mother! I've found a real princess with a tender, tender skin! (Kneels at her feet.) Please marry me and be my wife!

BETTINA. What? Why after all I have been through today, I look terrible.

PRINCE. You look beautiful to me.

BETTINA. (Smiling, she gives him her hand.) Ah, at last I have found a real prince! The Witch of Wisdom told me that my own true prince would be one who thought I was beautiful no matter how I was adorned. (The King and Queen rush in.)

KING. (In awe he touches Bettina's cheek.) Such tender skin! A real princess. (Bettina nods.)

QUEEN. (Clasping her hands.) I'm sure they will live happily ever after.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

PRODUCTION NOTE: The cast of this play can be adjusted to fit the number available. Algernon can also play the part of the guard; the Witch of Wisdom can also be Zenobia's maid; the roles of Veronica and the extra princesses can be omitted altogether with others speaking their lines. On the other hand there can be as many princesses as there are girls desiring to play royalty.

THE INVISIBLE COAT

By Una Ring Yoder

Cast of Characters

Louise, club president
Julie, who has a temper
Ruth Ann, who is kind
Jenny, who likes big words
Avis, who understands big words
Rosamond, who likes to eat
Glenna, club member
Nancy, another member
Mary, who has a traveling aunt
Ellen, another member
David, Jenny's brother
Lorene, timid but imaginative

The scene is a vacant lot, a grove, a backyard, or a park; any place a group of girls might meet on a summer morning--not too secluded. There is a garden or park bench on the stage. There is a clump of bushes Left behind some boxes or orange crates.

AT RISE: Ruth Ann is seated on a box or log Right, Jenny and Rosamond are on boxes Left, and Avis is on the bench Left Center. Louise, the president, is bustling about, first whispering to one girl and then to another--just as many an older club president hurries from one to another consulting about the business at hand or lining up votes. Girls who are sitting close to each other whisper back and forth. Julie enters, greeting girls with "Hi" and sitting beside Ruth Ann. Finally Louise stops Center.

LOUISE. Where on earth are the rest of the members? Didn't they know what time we were to meet?

JULIE. Oh yes, they knew. I heard Glenna telling Nancy she would meet her on the corner at ten. They should be here by now.

RUTH ANN. Well, can't we just go ahead with our meeting anyway?

JENNY. How can we? There aren't enough here to concentrate a quotient.

ROSAMOND. Concentrate! School is out now, and I don't intend to concentrate until next September.

JENNY. I don't mean to concentrate with your brain. You know. We learned at school that any organization must have a certain number present in order to concentrate a quotient.

AVIS. That doesn't make sense.

JENNY. It does too. You just didn't pay any attention in class.

AVIS. I always do. And I bet I got a better grade than you did.

LOUISE. Oh you know Jenny. She just mixes her words up. (To Jenny.) You must mean we haven't enough members to constitute a quorum.

JENNY. That's what I said. (Girls all laugh, "Oh Jenny.")

JULIE. No you didn't.

RUTH ANN. We might have known.

ROSAMOND. (Looking off Left.) Here come Glenna and Nancy now.

LOUISE. It's about time. (Glenna and Nancy enter.) Where have you been? I suppose you stopped to talk to some boys.

GLENNNA. We did not!

NANCY. What's bothering you? We aren't late.

LOUISE. Where are Ellen and Mary?

GLENNNA. How should we know?

LOUISE. I thought maybe you met them. We want to start our meeting.

JENNY. Don't we have enough here now for our quotient?

GLENNNA. Our what? (She and Nancy sit on bench and floor.)

JENNY. Our quo-- (Girls laugh.) I mean a quorum-- that thing you have to have to vote.

LOUISE. Ellen and Mary are the only ones not here, but I did hope everyone would be here.

ROSAMOND. Here they are.

AVIS. And will you get a load of that jacket Mary is wearing! (Ellen and Mary enter Left saying "Hi". Mary is wearing an unusual jacket, one apparently from a foreign country.)

JULIE. Wow! Where did you get the jacket?

LOUISE. (Scowling.) You two sure took your time.

MARY. Well, I had an argument with my mother. She said I had to wear this jacket because Aunt Maymie sent it to me and will be there when I come home. I said I wouldn't go if I had to wear it; so I sat right down until my mother would give in.

JENNY. (Significantly.) I notice who must have given in.

MARY. It finally became quite obvious that I was either going to miss the meeting or wear this coat. (Holds out coat.) So you see?

RUTH ANN. (Going to Mary and turning her around.) I don't think it is so bad. It's rather pretty.

MARY. Do you think so? I'd give it to you in a minute if I dared. (In resigned tone.) But Aunt Mayme sent it to me while she was traveling and I must be wearing it today when she appears.

LOUISE. Let's get on with the meeting. (Ellen and Mary sit on box or bench.) The meeting will please come to order. (Pauses.) There are several items of business. Since school is just now out we better decide first think how often we meet and where. (Several shift about but no one says anything.) Well, doesn't anyone have an idea?

JULIE. I thought we had already decided to meet once every week.

LOUISE. Does that suit everybody? (Several nod.) All those in favor of meeting once a week say aye. (All say "Aye".)

JENNY. That seemed inanimate.

AVIS. Inanimate? That means not alive; and we all are-- alive, I mean.

JENNY. Huh? (Puzzled.) I just meant that we all voted the same way.

AVIS. Oh, you mean the vote was unanimous. Well, why don't

JENNY. Yeah. That's it.

LOUISE. Now where do you think we ought to meet?

RUTH ANN. Why can't we meet here?

LOUISE. Every time?

JULIE. This is too public. Anybody can walk by here any time.

GLENNA. Why don't we meet in our homes?

JULIE. That's a good idea. We can take turns and then we can serve refreshments.

ROSAMOND. I am in favor of the refreshment part all right.

LOUISE. What do the rest of you think?

MARY. I think it's okay. Why don't we vote?

LOUISE. All right. All those in favor of meeting in our homes--

ROSAMOND. (Holding up her hand.) And serving refreshments.

LOUISE. (Nodding.) --and serving refreshments say aye. (All murmur "Aye".) Now is there any other business?

NANCY. What will we do for entertainment?

LOUISE. That is something we will have to figure out.

JULIE. You know we ought to have one more member to come out even. Otherwise we will have one week left at the end of the summer with no place to meet.

GLENNA. That's right. How about Ann Brewster?

LOUISE. She lives clear over on the other side of town. She would never come.

RUTH ANN. (Slowly.) There really is just one girl left who lives anywhere near.

LOUISE. Who is it? (Ruth Ann is silent.) Well, why don't you say? I thought everyone around here belonged.

ELLEN. I know who she means.

NANCY. Yeah. I do too.

LOUISE. (Impatiently.) Well, for crying out loud, speak up. What's the matter? Is it a secret?

RUTH ANN. Oh, I just meant Lorene Smith. You know her, don't you?

LOUISE. (Frowning.) Do I?

RUTH ANN. She is that quiet girl who never says anything. Maybe you haven't noticed her.

JULIE. She is always imagining things.

ROSAMOND. Yes, she never plays with anybody. She just imagines someone is with her.

NANCY. She really believes in fairies too.

LOUISE. Oh surely not.

JULIE. Yes, she does. She even thinks there is real magic.

LOUISE. (Unbelieving.) Oh, not really.

RUTH ANN. (Slowly.) Yes, I think she does. She talks like it.

LOUISE. But how can she be so dumb?

AVIS. She's not really dumb. She makes good grades.

LOUISE. But how can she possibly believe in magic?

ROSAMOND. Has she ever seen the fairies?

RUTH ANN. She says they are there, but you just can't see them.

JENNY. I guess she thinks they are indivisible.

LOUISE. What?

JENNY. Indivisible.

AVIS. (Stands and declaims.) With liberty and justice for all.

JENNY. Not that. Something you can't see: indivisible.

AVIS. Oh, you mean invisible.

MARY. I wish this coat were invisible. (Takes it off.)

JULIE. Say! That gives me an idea. That is quite a coat. (Goes over to Mary to look at it.)

MARY. Are you telling me!

JULIE. Why don't we play a trick on Lorene? We don't have any entertainment for today; so let's tell her that anyone who wears Mary's coat is invisible. We can all act as if we can't see the person who has the coat on. And maybe she will believe we really can't.

ROSAMOND. Say, that sounds like fun.

LOUISE. That won't work because she will be able to see the coat herself.

ROSAMOND. Maybe we can get her to wear the coat, and we can act as if we don't see her.

GLENNA. Why don't Nancy and I go get her? We saw her when we came by just now.

JULIE. Yes, do. (Glenna and Nancy exit Left.)

LOUISE. I still don't think it will work.

JULIE. Sure it will. (Takes dark glasses from pocket.) I'll give her these glasses to wear and say they are special glasses that make it possible to see the invisible coat.

ROSAMOND. She is the oddest thing, and she is simply scared to death of boys. Why I saw her cross the street once so she wouldn't have to speak to a boy.

JULIE. It is too bad all the boys have gone to camp. I wish we could get a boy here.

JENNY. (Eagerly.) I can get my brother. (Standing up.) David had to miss camp in order to have his tonsils out, but he is all right now. He is bored to death and will be glad for some fun. (Leaving.) I'll get him. (Exits Right.)

RUTH ANN. (Troubled.) Do you think we ought to do this? Just think how she will feel!

MARY. Sh! Here they come now. (Glenna and Nancy enter with Lorene who is very timid and shy.)

GLENNNA. Here she is. (Pushes Lorene to Center.)

LORENE. (Embarrassed.) I don't think I should have come.

NANCY. But you want to see the magic coat, don't you?

LORENE. Yes--but I didn't know so many girls were here.

JULIE. That's all right. We knew you always said there was magic; so we thought that you of all people would want to see the marvelous jacket Mary's aunt sent her from a mysterious country. It makes you invisible.

LORENE. Does it really? (She is eager to be convinced.)

JULIE. (Airily.) Sure it does. Here put it on yourself. (Julie takes the coat and puts it on Lorene. Then she moves back several feet to look at her and deliberately looks in a slightly different direction.) Why, where did you go?

ROSAMOND. Did Lorene leave? (Julie motions to others to look in wrong direction.)

LOUISE. I'll see if she left. (Starts toward exit and bumps into Lorene on purpose.) Oh, excuse me. I guess she is still here but is just invisible. (She gropes a few inches from Lorene.) Now I can't find her again.

LORENE. (Eagerly.) Can't you see me? Am I really invisible?

MARY. Sure. I can hear you, but I can't see you. (Gropes as if trying to find her. Now the other girls get up and move about, sometimes reaching in the air and sometimes bumping into her.)

LORENE. Oh this is fun. (Julie gives her a big bump and Lorene sticks her tongue out at her. Julie clenches her fists but Louise restrains her motioning that she should not see Lorene.)

LORENE. (Taking off coat.) Here. One of you put it on. I want to see how it is. (There is a silence.)

ROSAMOND. (Dismayed.) Oh no, we can't do that.

LORENE. Why not? I want to look for someone invisible.

LOUISE. Well--we have some magic glasses you can wear.

JULIE. Yes. (Holding out glasses.) Put these on and you can see the person who is invisible. (Lorene shakes her head.) Here put them on.

LORENE. Oh no. I want to see how it is to have someone invisible around.

LOUISE. (Suddenly inspired.) Okay! I don't blame you. Put on the glasses first and then take them off.

LORENE. Well--all right. (Other girls act puzzled and whisper among themselves. Lorene puts on glasses.)

LOUISE. Here someone. (She takes coat.) Come on Glenna. Put this on. (Holds coat for Glenna.)

GLENNNA. (Spluttering.) But--I don't see--Well, how can I--

LOUISE. Come on! (Forces her into coat.) Now I can't see you.

NANCY. Neither can I.

MARY. I can't either. (Louise is whispering to Rosamond; Ellen bumps into Glenna and others act as they did when Lorene had the coat.)

LORENE. Now I want to take the glasses off. (Reaches for glasses.)

LOUISE. (Springs toward her, turning her away from Glenna. Rosamond gives Glenna a shove, pushing her out of sight behind a bush.) Here let me help you. (Removes glasses for Lorene.) We must be careful with these.

LORENE. (Looking around.) Why where is she?

NANCY. We don't know.

JULIE. (Snatching glasses from Louise and putting them on.) Here she is right here. (Points to a blank space not too far from where Glenna was.) Now she is jumping back and forth.

ELLEN. (Jumping back.) Hey, Glenna, leave me alone. (Others act as if they are touching someone or bumping into her. Once Julie kicks Lorene from behind but is looking innocently in another direction when Lorene whirls around. Lorene jabs the air trying to find Glenna.)

LORENE. (Shyly.) Would you mind letting me put the coat on again?

MARY. Go ahead. (As Lorene is looking in opposite direction Glenna steps out from behind bush, having taken off coat.)

GLENNNA. Here. Do you want it?

LORENE. Isn't it wonderful? (Takes coat.) I want to run up the street for a bit. There are some things I would love to do while I am invisible.

RUTH ANN. (Worried.) Oh, I don't believe you better.

LORENE. Why not? No one will see me.

MARY. I must take awfully good care of the coat.

LORENE. Oh, I'll be very careful and I'll be right back. (Puts on coat.)

LOUISE. Oh, but you--

JULIE. I don't think-- (Lorene turns to leave as Jenny returns Right with David.)

JENNY. Hi girls. Here he is.

DAVID. Hi pests. (Girls greet him with "hi" or "hello".)

JENNY. Did you find Lorene? (Sees Lorene.) Oh sure. Now I--

JULIE. (In warning tone.) Lorene was here. Maybe she left. She put on the invisible coat; so of course none of us can see her.

JENNY. Oh I see. (Lorene has stopped at sight of David, unsure, until Julie mentions she is invisible. Then she relaxes and sits down on bench as if to see what will be said.)

DAVID. What are you girls up to?

JENNY. Now David you know you said that if I let you come with us you would correlate.

DAVID. I'd what?

JENNY. You'd help us--correlate.

AVIS. She means cooperate.

JENNY. Sure that's what I mean.

DAVID. Oh sure. Well here goes. (He goes over and sits beside Lorene who starts to leave, then remembering she is invisible she sits back down. During the next conversation she stares up at David, certain he can't see her. David removes his cap and puts it on bench.)

JULIE. Lorene was here a bit ago. You should have seen her.

DAVID. Why?

JULIE. Well--us--I guess--(With sudden mischievous inspiration.) I think she especially likes you. (Lorene starts belligerently toward Julie then sinks down to bench again. David gives her a fleeting glance.)

RUTH ANN. Oh Julie--That's not--

JENNY. Sure. I think she has a crush on you.

MARY. Yeah. She's crazy about you. (Lorene starts to tiptoe out looking as if she can take no more.)

DAVID. (Airily.) Probably there are a lot of girls crazy about me, but usually you don't tell me.

LOUISE. Not conceited, are you?

DAVID. Besides I think Lorene is pretty. (Lorene stops and turns toward him with a wide smile, then she nods at Julie as if saying, "See?" Then she goes on out Left.)

JENNY. Now why did you say that? Is bound to find out.

DAVID. Well, you girls are being pretty ornery, you know. Besides she is.

LOUISE. Is what?

DAVID. Pretty.

JULIE. Oh no.

RUTH ANN. (Thoughtfully.) Yes, I believe she is.

MARY. Julie doesn't like to have David think so. (Julie whirls toward her.)

LOUISE. Say someone better follow Lorene. You know she still thinks she is invisible. No telling what she might do.

JULIE. She might even steal something if she thinks no one can see her.

DAVID. She would not.

RUTH ANN. Of course she wouldn't.

LOUISE. No, I don't think she would do anything really bad, but you know she did make a face at Julie when she thought Julie couldn't see her.

DAVID. She did! (Bursts into laughter.) That's really good!

JULIE. (Pouting.) I don't think so!

LOUISE. Well, someone better look after her.

MARY. I better look after my coat. Come on Nancy. It might be fun to see what she does. (Mary and Nancy exit Left.)

DAVID. Have you girls thought about what she will do when she finds out there is nothing to all this magic stuff? (Girls look at each other.)

JULIE. Oh she will never find out.

DAVID. (Disgusted.) Oh gosh!

LOUISE. (Slowly.) Eventually she is bound to find out.

RUTH ANN. She will feel like a fool then.

AVIS. I know she isn't really dumb. Maybe any of us would believe it, if everyone else acted as if we were invisible.

RUTH ANN. We have been awfully thoughtless.

ELLEN. What can we do?

JULIE. (Not disturbed like the others.) Oh we won't have to do anything. And I do think she is dumb. (Lorene steps inside entrance.) David you should have seen her. We all acted as if we couldn't see her.

LOUISE. We would bump into her. (Lorene hides behind bushes, left, where audience, but not other girls, can see her.)

ROSAMOND. We acted as if we were trying to find her.

GLENNA. It was funny.

ROSAMOND. Then Glenna put on the coat.

AVIS. And then she hid.

GLENNA. (Laughing.) And she thought I was invisible.

LOUISE. And Julie kicked her from behind, and she thought it was the invisible Glenna. (All laugh.)

JULIE. You should have seen her. (Mary and Nancy run in breathlessly.)

MARY. Have you seen Lorene?

NANCY. Didn't she come here?

LOUISE. No. Didn't you find her?

MARY. Yes, we did.

LOUISE. Didn't you follow her?

MARY. Yes, but we lost her, and we thought she came back this way.

NANCY. We better find her.

MARY. You should have seen her! (In awed tone.) You know old Mr. Jackson?

LOUISE. The one who is so mean?

ROSAMOND. And won't even let anyone walk on his sidewalk?

NANCY. That's right.

MARY. She went right up to him--right on his sidewalk--and stuck her tongue out at him!

ALL. What! No! She didn't! etc.

JENNY. What did he do?

MARY. We were dumbfounded.

JULIE. What happened?

MARY. Well nothing really. I guess he was so surprised he just stood and looked at her with his mouth open. No one has dared to go near him before.

RUTH ANN. Especially Lorene.

DAVID. Good for her.

NANCY. But that's not all.

MARY. No. Then we saw her stop right by a bunch of boys playing baseball.

ELLEN. She never would go near boys.

MARY. And they started to yell at her.

ALL. What happened? What did she do?

MARY. She turned and ran.

NANCY. We thought she came here.

MARY. But she went so fast we lost track of her.

AVIS. She must realize now that the coat doesn't make her invisible.

RUGH ANN. This is bad. What will she do?

LOUISE. We better find her.

RUTH ANN. And--I think--tell her we are sorry.

LOUISE. (Directing.) Let's all spread out and look for her. The first one to find her bring her back here.

JULIE. Well, I'll look, but I'll not say I'm sorry. (All exit. Lorene comes out with hands over her eyes as if she has been crying.)

LORENE. (Taking hands away.) I guess I was awfully silly. But it was fun while it lasted. But oh how I hate to have them all know how dumb I was. I wish they knew how it feels to be fooled. (Looks at cap David left on bench.) I wonder. I wonder if I could! Maybe this would fool them. (Takes spool of black thread from pocket and seems to tie it to cap, but it should actually be already fixed. Carefully places cap on bench and runs thread to bush which she hides behind. She comes out long enough to call.) Louise! Julie! Rosamond! Mary! Come here! All of you come back! (She quickly hides behind bush before rest of girls enter.)

LOUISE. What? Who called?

JULIE. Did you find her?

RUTH ANN. I was sure that was Lorene.

ROSAMOND. That sounded like her.

MARY. Where is she?

LORENE. I'm right here.

ALL. Where? Where are you?

LORENE. Why right here, of course. But naturally I'm invisible.

JULIE. (Scornfully.) Don't be silly. Where are you?

LORENE. I'm sitting on the bench. See? Right beside David's cap. (They start toward the bench, but she stops them.) No don't come near me. I'll scratch if you do! Just watch and I'll push the cap across the bench. (She pulls cap slowly across bench by means of black thread. Group stares in awe.)

ROSAMOND. What is moving it?

ELLEN. Can it really be magic?

LORENE. Of course it is.

RUTH ANN. (To Mary.) Can you see her?

MARY. No. Can you? (Ruth Ann shakes her head.)

ROSAMOND. Where are the glasses? (Louise takes them out.)
Put them on, Louise. Then maybe you can see her.

LOUISE. Oh, you don't really believe this stuff, do you?
(But she puts them on anyway.) Well, I still don't see her.

LORENE. I said I am right here on the bench. Shall I push
the cap off? (She pulls on string until cap falls to floor.)

GLENNA. How does she do that?

AVIS. It looks like real magic.

JENNY. It must really be real.

LORENE. Of course it is. I'm just invisible. You know that.

ELLEN. It scares me.

NANCY. Me too.

JULIE. Well not me. I'll get that cap. (Lorene quickly
steps out from behind bush, holding "invisible" coat.)

LORENE. There. I took the coat off; so now you can see me.

JULIE. So that's where you were hiding.

LOUISE. Were you behind that bush all the time?

JENNY. You mean it wasn't real magic?

LORENE. Of course not. But I had you all guessing for a
while.

JULIE. Not me. I knew there couldn't be magic.

RUTH ANN. Yes, but you were wondering.

JULIE. Nah!

LOUISE. Well, I still can't figure out what made the cap move. Do you know Julie?

JULIE. Well--uh--I guess--

LORENE. Go on. Tell us.

JULIE. Well--I don't know how it moved, but I know it wasn't magic.

LORENE. Of course it wasn't real magic; but I think some of you found out how it feels to be fooled. (There is a silence while girls look at each other.)

RUTH ANN. We were pretty mean, I guess. We shouldn't have ganged up like that to fool you.

MARY. No, we shouldn't.

LOUISE. I think we are all sorry. (Girls murmur "Yes, we are" except Julie who turns her head.)

LORENE. Oh I should have known better. In fact I really did to start with. Then it was so much fun being invisible that I let my imagination carry me away. If I had stopped to think at all I would have realized it couldn't really be happening.

RUTH ANN. Are you awfully mad at all of us?

LORENE. "Slowly.) No, I don't think I am. In fact I think I am glad. Of course you know I'm always awfully timid, but I have found out that if I just imagine I am invisible I'm not scared at all. It's surprising the things you can do if you feel people can't see you.

GIRLS. I'll say. We saw. We know it. etc.

LORENE. So I think I know how to keep from being afraid of people now. I have a very good imagination, you know. (Girls nod.) So I guess I'm not really mad. (Looks around.) I guess I better go now.

LOUISE. Oh don't go. We are just organizing our club. And I think all of the girls will want you for a member. Don't we? (As she looks around most of the girls nod or say "sure.") All those in favor of making Lorene a member say aye. (Girls all say "aye" except Julie who adds her "aye" after Louise looks at her.)

DAVID. (Entering.) Now what are you girls up to? I came back for my cap.

MARY. Say, how did you make that cap move, Lorene?

GIRLS. Yes, do tell us. We want to know.

DAVID. What are you talking about?

RUTH ANN. Lorene turned the tables on us and tried some magic of her own.

LOUISE. Yes. She made your cap move across the bench while she wasn't near it.

LORENE. (Grinning.) I was invisible.

DAVID. What?

MARY. How did you do it, Lorene?

DAVID. Don't tell them. At least not for a good long while. Girls are so curious it will drive them crazy.

JENNY. I guess we are all gustible.

RUTH ANN. If you mean disgustable, you are right. We have been pretty mean.

AVIS. There is no such word as disgustable. It is disgusting.

JENNY. No, that isn't what I meant. I meant we were all easily tricked--gustible.

AVIS. Oh Jenny! You mean gullible.

DAVID. I don't know what you mean. But I do know you have to come home for lunch now, Jenny.

LOUISE. I guess I better adjourn the meeting.

MARY. Give me my coat. Aunt Mayme is probably here by now. Come on, Ellen. (Girls all start to leave.)

LOUISE. I'll walk with you, Julie.

DAVID. Come walk our way, Lorene. Then you can tell me how you made the cap move. (As they walk out)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

COWBOYS AND CAVALIERS

By Una Ring Yoder

Cast of Characters

Marilyn Ashton
Jo Ann, her friend
Mrs. Ashton, her mother
Buster
George
Boys

The scene is Marilyn's back yard. There is a large garden bench on the stage.

AT RISE: Marilyn and Jo Ann are playing dress-up. There is a large box of old clothes and the girls are pulling out various articles, holding them against themselves and parading for effect. The girls themselves are dressed in play-clothes and put the fancy dresses on over their own clothes.

MARILYN. Now aren't you glad I called you to come over?

JO ANN. But where on earth did you get so many wonderful dresses?

MARILYN. I told you that the Parkers next door were moving, and Mrs. Parker gave me this big box of stuff just before they left.

JO ANN. But where did she get so many marvelous clothes?

MARILYN. Oh Mrs. Parker always dresses wonderfully well. Anyway Mother called it junk--and groaned when she saw it and said now we would just have more stuff strung around the house. We have to pick everything up when we are through, and you will have to help me too.

JO ANN. Okay. I will. (She finds a long evening gown, slips into it and adds a large hat. She parades about the stage in various poses with an extremely affected air. During this time Marilyn is finding a fancy dress which she puts on.)

JO ANN. Look at me. Don't you think I am beautiful? Now I am a movie star. (With a sophisticated bored manner.) Ah, my dear public. I am sorry, but I just don't have time for

autographs now. Call at the studio tomorrow deah. Has my chauffeur arrived yet? Oh are both my cars awaiting at the gates? Sorry, child, but I have a date with Gregory Peck and he doesn't like to be kept waiting. (She trips on her long dress.) Here, hold my hat while I fix this long skirt.

MARILYN. Hold it yourself. I am a movie acresss too. Here Sarah--that's my maid--she will hold it for you.

JO ANN. You can't be a movie star. I already told you that that's what I am. I said it first.

MARILYN. Well there are lots of movie stars, and you didn't say who you are. I'm Marilyn Monroe.

JO ANN. Oh no, you aren't.

MARILYN. I am too. I said it first.

JO ANN. Well, you sure don't look like her. She never covers up so much.

MARILYN. (Crestfallen.) Well she might--sometimes.

JO ANN. (Returning to her unnatural haughty posing.) Did you see my last picture? Really I just don't dare to step outside. The public simply mobs me. I am so beautiful that all the boys in the school follow me about and beg for one glance from my fantastic eyes.

MARILYN. (Witheringly.) How too entirely neat!

JO ANN. (Dropping pose.) Say! I thought you said you weren't going to play with Buster Andrews any more.

MARILYN. (Astonished.) How do you know I did?

JO ANN. He and George stopped by my house yesterday and no matter what anyone said or did Buster always said "How too entirely neat". And now you are saying it!

MARILYN. Oh well, you had it coming. Besides I just happened to go skating over on the wide sidewalk this morning and Buster and George were skating there too.

JO ANN. Just happened, my eye! You knew Buster goes over there every day. And here you've just been telling me how you hate boys. (Gives a loud groan.)

MARILYN. Well, I do--most of the time. They are so loud and rough and won't let you play what you want to.

JO ANN. It's sure funny then, that you have to pick a place to play just where they are bound to be.

MARILYN. (Eager to change the subject, she has picked up a lace curtain and holds it in back for a train.) Look, I am a princess, and all the rest of you must do my bidding. Now bow down before me.

JO ANN. Who? Me? (Scornfully.) How too entirely neat! Anyway you can't be a princess. You already said you were a movie star, and you can't be both.

MARILYN. I don't see why not.

JO ANN. Well look. If you are a movie star you're a movie star, and if you are a princess you're a princess, but you can't be both a movie star and a princess at the same time. Dummy!

MARILYN. Who's a dummy? Remember Grace Kelly? She is a movie star and a princess, both at the same time. How about that?

JO ANN. Oh well--Anyway you didn't say you were Grace Kelly. You are Marilyn Monroe.

MARILYN. I can change if I want to.

JO ANN. Say, I have an idea. Give me that curtain for a minute.

MARILYN. Will you give it back to me?

JO ANN. Sure. Just let me show you. (She holds the curtain on top of her head.) See? I am a bride. Tum tum te tum. (She takes stately steps as she sings the tune of the wedding march. When Marilyn says scornfully, "I suppose the groom's name is George," Jo Ann merely tosses her head and continues singing and marching. Marilyn starts to straighten her "veil" when Buster and George, dressed as cowboys, come galloping in on imaginary horses. They move constantly and pay no attention to the cries of the girls.)

BUSTER. Hi there, podner! Giddyap Trigger! Rope that steer over there. Don't let him jump the fences. Here! Over here! Yippe!

GEORGE. Put down your guns! stick 'em up! Reach for the ceiling. Yippee! Come on there!

BUSTER. Don't let them get away. I got this one. (He lassos Marilyn and drags her about the stage as she protests. George ropes Jo Ann and pulls her behind him.) You are my captive now. I've got you.

MARILYN. You have not. Let me go. (Tries to pull away.)

BUSTER. Aw come on.

GEORGE. What shall I do with this here critter?

JO ANN. You better let me go, George Bates. (Tries to jerk away.) Quit it.

BUSTER. Shall we tie them up or take them to jail?

MARILYN. You let us alone or I'll call my mother.

BUSTER. Aw you wouldn't.

MARILYN. I would too.

BUSTER. How too entirely neat!

JO ANN. Come on, Marilyn. Let's fight them off.

MARILYN. No! I'm a princess and I'll be hanged if I'm going to act like a steer just to suit them.

GEORGE. That's it! Hanging is the thing. (Bows low to Marilyn.) Thank you, your royal highness, for suggesting it. Come on, pardner, tying or jail is too good for them. We will hang them.

MARILYN. Oh no you won't. You're just spoiling all our fun. Mother! oh Mother! (Mrs. Ashton enters. The boys drop their ropes, embarrassed, and stand silently.) Oh--uh mother I didn't know you were so close. I didn't really mean--I--Well I was--

MOTHER. Oh I didn't come because you called. I was coming to tell Jo Ann that her mother phoned for her to come home. They have company and Jo Ann's aunt wants to see her. (The boys help Jo Ann and Marilyn to loosen the ropes.)

JO ANN. I guess I better go.

BUSTER. We'll be going too.

GEORGE. So long. (Boys exit.)

JO ANN. Goodbye. (Exits.)

MARILYN. Goodbye.

MOTHER. If you are through playing dress-up you better pick up all the clothes and put them back in the box.

MARILYN. That isn't fair. Jo Ann promised to help me and now she has gone off and left everything. She's an old do-do!

MOTHER. Do you know what I think? I think you stayed up too late last night. You seem awfully cross today. I really think you better lie down and take a nap. That might help your disposition.

MARILYN. Oh mother! No!

MOTHER. It seemed to me that you and Jo Ann were disagreeing most of the time. And why were you yelling for me when the boys were here?

MARILYN. I think boys are horrid. (Sullenly.)

MOTHER. Oh you don't mean that.

MARILYN. I do too. Why do they have to play cowboy all the time? All they can do is yell yippee and knock everybody around.

MOTHER. You wouldn't want them to put on dresses and play as you do, would you?

MARILYN. Can't they be a little more--well, more refined?

MOTHER. Oh they will be in a few years.

MARILYN. Were boys like that when you were a little girl?

MOTHER. I suppose so.

MARILYN. Always playing cowboy?

MOTHER. Well, no--not cowboys. They were cops and robbers--and I remember one whole summer my brother played three musketeers.

MARILYN. (Eagerly.) Three musketeers! I think that would be marvelous. Why they were gallant cavaliers. Why can't boys nowadays play they are knights in shining armor too? They would treat a lady with respect, bow to a princess and kiss her hand--

MOTHER. (Smiling.) I scarcely remember any of that. It seems to me that my brother's friends were usually fighting with swords. But come on now, Marilyn. I will help you pick up these things and then you must take a nap.

MARILYN. (Putting dresses in box.) Oh all right. But may I please take my nap out here?

MOTHER. Yes, if you will try to go to sleep.

MARILYN. (Starts to lie down on bench and then sits up. She speaks dreamily.) Cavaliers and musketeers. Mother, when you were a little girl did you play dress-up too?

MOTHER. Of course. I think all little girls do.

MARILYN. Were you a movie star too?

MOTHER. Oh sure. I was usually Clara Bow.

MARILYN. Was Clara Bow like Marilyn Monroe?

MOTHER. Umm-yes. I guess she was. In those days they said she had it.

MARILYN. (Puzzled.) It?

MOTHER. They just meant she had a good personality. Now you try to go to sleep. Jo Ann will probably be back after a while.

MARILYN. (Yawning.) I am sleepy.

(Marilyn lies down and Mother covers her with a filmy skirt from the dress-up clothes. Mother finishes putting clothes in box and tiptoes out. For a few moments the stage is empty except for the sleeping Marilyn. The lights dim and then are bright again to disclose Jo Ann in fancy dress creeping across the stage. She is holding her hand with closed fist outstretched in front of her. Slowly Marilyn sits up and watches her. While lying there Marilyn has fastened the skirt which was her cover and which is now a part of her dress in the dream.)

MARILYN. What on earth are you doing, Jo Ann?

JO ANN. Sh! Sh! I'm not Jo Ann. I'm Grace Monroe.

MARILYN. If you aren't Jo Ann, am I Marilyn Ashton?

JO ANN. (In harsh whisper.) Oh no. You are Marilyn Kelly.

MARILYN. What's the matter? What do you have in your hand?

JO ANN. Sh! (Looks around furtively while guarding her closed hand.) Sh! I have It in my hand.

MARILYN. It? Where did you get it?

JO ANN. It belongs to Clara. I took it when she wasn't looking.

MARILYN. Clara?

JO ANN. You know. Clara Bow.

MARILYN. Oh, of course. Could I borrow it for a while?

JO ANN. (Doubtfully.) I don't think I should. Clara will probably be awfully mad when she finds out I have her It.

MARILYN. Oh please. (Mother, as Clara Bow, dressed in the flapper era, enters.)

CLARA. Have either of you seen my It? I can't find it anywhere. I must have it, for that is what I am famous for. (She locks under bench and peers around, while Jo Ann hides her hand behind her back.) Oh dear! I must find my It.

(Enter several boys dressed in a combination of cowboy clothes and cavaliers such as jeans with plumed hats. All have play swords.)

FIRST BOY. Aha Milady! Methinks you have the valuable It. Hand it over.

CLARA. Oh no! I lost it! (Jo Ann tries to sneak away.)

SECOND BOY. (Brandishing sword.) Oh no you don't. This one has the It.

THIRD BOY. Let's tie them all up.

FIRST BOY. How too entirely neat! Come on. (Waving their swords the boys push the girls into a huddle. Then Buster and George, dressed similarly, come galloping in waving their swords.)

BUSTER. Knaves! Scoundrels! Unhand those beauteous maidens!

GEORGE. Sounds! En garde! Put up your dukes!

BUSTER. At them, men! (A sword fight follows in which the boys jump up on the bench and over the box. Most boys love to do this and the fight can be as long as desirable with Buster and George finally landing all the "enemy" on the floor. The girls have drawn to the side of the stage, but now come forward.)

CLARA. How too entirely neat!

JO ANN. (To George.) My hero!

MARILYN. What do you mean? Buster's a hero too. My knight in shining armor.

JO ANN. Where is Clara's hero?

CLARA. I don't want any. I just want my It.

JO ANN. Here. (Puts imaginary It in Clara's hand.) I don't need it after all. And you can have all these cavaliers on the ground.

BUSTER. Get up slaves. Follow your mistress. (Conquered boys follow Clara out. Marilyn sits on bench and Buster kneels before her.)

GEORGE. (Watching them.) How too entirely neat!

BUSTER. And now, my princess, what is my reward?

JO ANN. Princess? She is no princess. Come on George. (Jo Ann and George exit.)

BUSTER. If you are not a princess, who are you?

MARILYN. Me? Why I'm Marilyn. Marilyn Kelly. No--Marilyn Monroe. No, that isn't it. I'm Marilyn--Marilyn--Maril---- (As her voice becomes fainter the lights grow dim. She lies down in her sleeping position and unfastens the skirt. While

the stage is dark Buster removes his plumed hat and sword, putting them under or behind the bench. As the lights go up, Buster is shaking Marilyn.)

BUSTER. Marilyn! Marilyn! Marilyn Ashton! Wake up!
Marilyn! Marilyn Ashton!

MARILYN. (Sitting up sleepily.) No. I'm Marilyn Kelly -- or Grace Monroe.

BUSTER. What on earth are you saying?

MARILYN. Oh Buster. What are you doing here? Is the fight over?

BUSTER. Say, you are still half asleep. I just stopped to see if you wanted to go skating. Jo Ann and George are already over on the wide sidewalk.

MARILYN. They are!

BUSTER. Yeah! And do you know what? I can skate backwards now. You ought to see me.

MARILYN. You can? Well, if you can do it, I can too.

BUSTER. Sure. I'll show you how. Come on and get your skates.

MARILYN. (Rising.) Maybe we can have something to eat too.

BUSTER. (With enthusiasm.) How too entirely neat! (As they exit toward the house)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The preceding play was written in response to the desires of a summer drama group: the girls clamored for a play in which they could dress up while the boys insisted on a production with sword fighting.

FOUR AND TWENTY BLACKBIRDS

By Una Ring Yoder

Cast of Characters

Ladies in Waiting:

Lady Irene

Lady Agatha

Lady Marianne

Lady Rosalie

Lady Marguerite, Maid of Honor

Princess Tanya

Cook

Maid

Queen

Prince Valane of Grauvania

King

Court Jester

The action takes place in the king's garden. There are a few garden benches or other garden furniture on the stage.

AT RISE: The ladies-in-waiting are dancing and singing "tra-la-la" to the tune of "Sing a Song of Sixpence". Lady Marguerite, the princess's maid of honor, enters Down Left.

MARGUERITE. (Clapping her hands to stop them.) Ladies! Ladies! Stop your dancing! Stop your playing! (They stop and turn to her.) Stop at once. How can you be so thoughtless? I don't understand how you can be so gay when you know our dear Princess Tanya is so sad. You should be spending every minute trying to think of some way to help her.

LADY IRENE. But that is just what we are doing.

LADY MARGUERITE. But I don't see how--

LADY AGATHA. Well, we tried and tried to think of some way we could get the king to listen, but we couldn't.

LADY MARIANNE. So we thought that as long as we didn't know how to make the king see Prince Valane we might at least cheer our Princess Tanya with a new dance.

MARGUERITE. (Thoughtfully.) It is true that Tanya always loves a dance.

LADY ROSALIE. Of course we wish we could help the princess to marry Prince Valane.

LADY IRENE. (Snapping.) Well she can't marry him if the prince doesn't ever ask for her hand.

MARGUERITE. Why Irene! You make it sound as if he doesn't want to marry her.

LADY AGATHA. Oh we all know he would marry her today if he could.

LADY IRENE. He certainly can't marry her without the king's permission. And he will never get his permission as long as the king won't see him.

LADY MARIANNE. It isn't as if the king disliked Prince Valane.

IRENE. How can he know whether he dislikes the prince or not? He has never seen him.

MARGUERITE. And it looks as if he never will see him. Oh how I wish someone could cheer him up, get him out of his gloominess.

ROSALIE. Is it true that he hasn't laughed for six months?

MARGUERITE. Yes it is. Nothing has interested the king for weeks and weeks. It is so long since he laughed at anything the court jester has said that even that funny fellow is becoming dismal.

LADY AGATHA. Won't the king see anyone?

MARGUERITE. (Shaking her head.) Scarcely anyone. Not even Tanya anymore. So she has no chance to persuade him to see Prince Valane. The queen and a few of the servants are the only ones who see him.

IRENE. But what does the king do all day?

MARGUERITE. He just sits in the counting house counting out his money.

AGATHA. I wish we could think of some way to help. (Sighs.)

MARIANNE. Oh dear. (Sighs.)

ROSALIE. (On the verge of tears.) Our dear Tanya will probably end up an old maid.

LADIES. Oh no! Not our Tanya! How awful!

IRENE. (Leans forward eagerly.) Is it true that Prince Valane may marry someone else?

MARGUERITE. (Aghast.) Irene!

IRENE. Well Tanya herself said that he will lose his kingdom if he doesn't marry before his birthday next week.

MARGUERITE. (Slowly.) Yes, I know--

AGATHA. I hope it isn't true, but Marguerite I did hear that the good prince wants with all his heart to marry our Tanya, but that if she could not become his bride by next week he would be compelled to wed someone else.

MARGUERITE. I don't see how Tanya can bear it if he marries someone else.

IRENE. (Eagerly.) Does he have anyone else in mind?

LADIES. (All horrified.) Of course not! Oh no. How could he!

IRENE. (Tosses her head.) Well, I must say that if he plans to find a wife within a week, it is high time he began to look around.

AGATHA. Oh, Irene, don't be so cruel.

MARGUERITE. (Rising.) Our gossiping isn't going to help Tanya and the Prince of Grauvania. Maybe you were right to try to dance. Show me how it goes.

(Ladies start to form a circle but stop when they hear Tanya's voice offstage calling, "Marguerite. Agatha. Ladies. Where are you?")

TANYA. (Entering down Left.) Oh there you are. I have the most wonderful news. I couldn't wait to tell you.

(All speak at once.)

ROSALIE. The king has laughed!

MARGUERITE. The king is happy!

AGATHA. The king has stopped counting his money!

IRENE. You can marry Prince Valane after all.

MARIANNE. Your father wants to see you.

TANYA. Oh how I wish that you guessed right. But (Now she speaks happily.) dear Prince Valane is arriving today!

LADIES. How wonderful!

IRENE. Is he going to ask your father for your hand?

TANYA. (Bursting into tears.) Oh if he only could. But father won't see anyone. He won't even let me tell him about the Prince. He doesn't even know Valane exists!

MARGUERITE. (Putting her arm around Tanya.) Don't cry dear princess. Something may happen to make things right yet.

TANYA. I don't see how it can happen soon enough. Valane must be married by next week or lose his kingdom, and (wailing) if he can't have me he will be forced to wed someone else. I don't know what I will do.

IRENE. But who else would he marry?

TANYA. He doesn't know. All the other princesses in nearby kingdoms are either just babies or old crones. I'm awfully afraid he is coming today for several reasons.

AGATHA. What do you mean?

TANYA. Well I know he wants to see me, and I know he plans to try to call on father, but if he doesn't see him--and I am sure he won't be able to--why then--Oh dear I can't bear to say it.

IRENE. To say what?

TANYA. Oh dear. I am dreadfully afraid he is going to look around here for his future wife. (All but Irene seem horrified.)

TANYA. (Crying again.) I should be so happy, but I am just miserable.

MARGUERITE. Don't feel bad Tanya. We all respect the prince, but none of us would dream of marrying him.

IRENE. Of course we shall have to do our duty as we see it.

MARGUERITE. Why don't you sing that new little tune for Tanya and she can dance for us.

TANYA. Oh no. I don't feel at all like dancing. I can't.

MARGUERITE. Of course you can. You know that is one of the things about you the prince likes best--your lovely dancing.

TANYA. All right. I'll try. (Cook enters upper Left with big pot. She removes the lid and stirs as she watches. The ladies sing and Tanya dances but her feet begin to drag and finally she stops.) I'm sorry, but I just can't get the right mood.

MARGUERITE. Let us all go in and help you dress for the prince. I shall fix your hair.

AGATHA. That is a good idea.

ROSALIE. I will manicure your nails. (All except Cook exit upper Left.)

COOK. I better hurry with this pie before the king starts calling.

MAID. (Entering down Left with large basket of clothes.) Oh there you are, Cook. Please come down to the lower garden and help me hang out these clothes.

COOK. Oh I can't. The king will soon want his dessert and I must have this pie ready.

MAID. (Complaining.) Well I'm sure you don't have as much to do as I. It has taken me until now to finish the washing and I don't see how I will ever get it all hung out.

COOK. That is too bad, but after all I am the cook in this court.

MAID. It wouldn't hurt you to help.

(Queen is heard calling "Cook, Cook. Oh Cook where are you?")

COOK. Oh dear, the pie isn't ready yet and there the queen is calling.

MAID. I better go. (Picks up basket and hurries out Right.)

QUEEN. (Entering down Left.) Oh there you are, Cook. I have been sitting in the parlor all morning and you haven't brought my bread and honey yet. Where is it?

COOK. (Curtseying.) I'm sorry, your majesty. I must have forgot. I'll get it at once. (Hurries out, leaving pie on bench.)

QUEEN. Everything seems to go wrong around here. Cook knows I must have my bread and honey every day. I suppose that next the king will refuse to see even me. (She exits upper Left, and the four ladies-in-waiting enter down Left.)

AGATHA. Is Marguerite with Princess Tanya?

MARIANNE. Yes, she didn't seem to want anyone else with her.

ROSALIE. I feel so sorry for our dear princess.

IRENE. She ought to be happy since Prince Valane is arriving any minute now. I'm really excited myself.

AGATHA. Why should you be excited?

IRENE. (Surprised.) Why you know it is hardly possible the prince can obtain permission for Tanya's hand as long as the king will see no one. (Tossing her head.) So who can tell whom he may choose in her place?

MARIANNE. Oh I'm sure I couldn't bear to hurt Tanya.

IRENE. Well, I wouldn't want to be the one to keep the prince from receiving his kingdom.

MARIANNE. That is true, but--

MAID. (Rushing in Right in great agitation holding the end of her nose.) Help! Help! The garden is full of blackbirds. They are here and there and everywhere, jumping on the clothes, knocking off the clothespins,--and one pecked off my nose!

LADIES. What? Your nose? Let me see it. How could it?

MAID. Oh my poor nose. And I can't hang out the clothes. It is getting so late. Please come help me chase away the blackbirds. Won't you please help me?

ROSALIE. Of course we will help.

AGATHA. Come on. Let's go.

IRENE. I'd like to see the bird that pecked off her nose.

MARIANNE. Oh Irene. (All exit Right. Princess Tanya and Prince Valane enter down Left. She sits on bench. Tanya may have changed her clothes.)

TANYA. Oh Valane I am so glad you could come.

VALANE. I am happy to be with you. But, indeed, it is imperative that I see the king this time to ask for your hand in marriage.

TANYA. Oh dear. I know. (Then hopefully.) But maybe my ladies-in-waiting will think of something yet. They are devoted to me and have been trying every way they could think of to persuade the king to see you.

VALANE. I can't understand it. I am offering you a kingdom above reproach. He doesn't object to me, does he?

TANYA. Oh no! But then, of course, he doesn't approve either.

VALANE. Dear Tanya, you know I want only you for my queen, but for the sake of my people I must be married by next week.

TANYA. I know. I know. If only someone could think of a way to cheer father up I'm sure he would see people. But now he won't even let anyone come into his room or the counting house; so I don't know how anyone can get him out of this depression.

VALANE. It is a dreadful thing to ask of you Tanya, but I hoped you could help me. You are the only princess I know of marriageable age. (She tosses her head disdainfully and he hurries on.) Of course you know that if there were hundreds of available princesses I would still want only you. Yet the fact remains that I must find a wife--but I don't know anyone. I thought maybe--well--you have told me about your lovely ladies-in-waiting--and I hoped that you would--well you see--

TANYA. Oh Valane. (Tearfully.) You mean you want me to pick someone to take my place?

VALANE. I only hoped that if I could not see your father you might help me find a suitable bride.

TANYA. (Rises hopelessly.) I will take you to the ladies. (Sadly.) Marguerite is very lovely. And Agatha is very kind. Marianne and Rosalie are sweet and pretty. And you will find Irene is--(Finishes saucily.) Goodness, gracious, I do hope you don't choose Irene! (They exit down Left. Ladies enter Right chattering excitedly, carrying clothes-basket.)

AGATHA. Do you think we caught them all?

MARIANNE. We must have at least two dozen in here.

IRENE. (Giggling.) Maid was the funniest sight. She is such a fraidy-cat she would never have shooed them away. (Peeks in basket then jumps back as if a bird had flown at her.) Gracious! That must have been the bird that pecked off Maid's nose.

MAID. (Hurrying in Right.) Ladies! Ladies! I'm sure I'm grateful for your help in getting rid of the birds, but I must have my basket of clothes, or I'll never get the washing out.

AGATHA. But we have the birds in here.

MAID. You will just have to find another place to put them. But please, please don't let them get away again.

MARIANNE. (Spies Cook's pie.) Here, what is this? (Looks inside.) There is something in here, but I think there is room for the birds too. And here is a lid to hold them in. (Ladies crowd around and seem to empty basket into pot. Once a bird almost escapes and Rosalie grabs the air as it catching a bird.)

ROSALIE. That one almost got away.

IRENE. That's the naughty one that pecks off noses.

AGATHA. How do you know?

MARGUERITE. (Entering down Left.) Ladies! Ladies! The prince is here and wants to see you.

MARIANNE. Why on earth should he care to see us?

MARGUERITE. I'm very much afraid that he--well--that is--

IRENE. (Eagerly.) Oh is he going to choose one of us for his wife?

MARGUERITE. (Sadly.) Yes I'm afraid that is so.

IRENE. Well, come on. What are we waiting for? (All exit down Left, leaving pie. Maid picks up basket and exits Right. Queen enters.)

QUEEN. Cook! Oh cook! Where are you? I can't imagine what will become of this court. Since the king won't see anyone the place is going to rack and ruin. I can't even find the servants. (Calling loudly.) Cook. Cook! Please answer me at once!

COOK. (Running in upper Left and trying to curtsey as she hurries.) Yes, your majesty. Did you want something?

QUEEN. It isn't I. It is the king.

COOK. (In awe.) The king!

QUEEN. Yes indeed. He is ready for his dessert and wants his pie immediately.

COOK. Oh my! I almost forgot. But here it is, and I'll hurry it right to him. (She picks up pie and with a hurried curtsey for the queen she exits upper Left.)

QUEEN. (As she follows the cook.) This court will fall to pieces if something doesn't happen to interest the king soon. (Exits. Princess and Marguerite enter down Left.)

TANYA. Marguerite, I really think that Prince Valane is going to choose you if he doesn't gain an audience with the king.

MARGUERITE. I am certain it would be a great honor, but Tanya you know I would never do anything without your approval.

TANYA. Marguerite, you are so good to me. I don't see how I can bear it, but if he must marry someone else, I think I would rather it would be you.

MARGUERITE. That you, my dear Princess. Now don't you think we should find out if the prince has had any success in gaining entrance to the king?

TANYA. Oh yes. I know there is little chance, but I can't give up hope. (They exit upper Left and the ladies-in-waiting enter down Left.)

AGATHA. Well it looks as if Marguerite will become the bride of the prince if he can't wed Tanya.

IRENE. I don't see what makes you think so.

MARIANNE. Why he scarcely said a word to any of the rest of us.

IRENE. (Proudly.) I thought he talked to me quite a bit.

ROSALIE. (Disgusted.) You mean you talked to him, and of course he had to be polite.

AGATHA. It doesn't seem that we are worthy of our positions as ladies-in-waiting if we can't think of a scheme to help our princess.

IRENE. (She has been looking about the garden.) Now what has happened to our blackbirds! They are gone.

ROSALIE. Why so they are.

AGATHA. Who could have wanted them?

MARIANNE. I wonder if they are bothering the maid again.

IRENE. (Calling off to Right.) Maid! Oh maid! Are you still hanging out the clothes? Maid! Answer me!

MAID. (Appearing at Right.) Did you want me ma'am?

IRENE. (Crossly.) You heard me, didn't you? Do you know what happened to the blackbirds?

MAID. (Protecting her red nose again.) Oh no ma'am. Are they loose again? Oh please save me!

AGATHA. We don't know where they are. We put them in that pot and then while we were gone they disappeared--pot and all.

MAID. Pot? You mean the one here on the bench? (Ladies nod.) Oh no! That was Cook's pie. (Then she realizes the enormity of the situation.) She was making it for the king! You don't suppose she--she couldn't have!

AGATHA. (Calling.) Cook! Cook! Come here quickly.

IRENE. Cook, where are you? (Maid exits Left and returns immediately with Cook.)

MAID. Did you get the pie you were making for the king?

COOK. Yes, he was in a great hurry.

IRENE. Have you already served him?

COOK. Oh yes. I wasted no time.

AGATHA. Did you open the pie before you took it in?

COOK. Of course not. I said he was in a hurry.

IRENE. (Almost wailing.) But there were four and twenty blackbirds baked in that pie!

COOK. What? There couldn't be!

MARIANNE. Oh yes there could.

ROSALIE. We put them in.

COOK. But why on earth--(Claps hand over her mouth in consternation.) I'll be ruined! Four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie!

IRENE. What a dainty dish to set before the king.

COOK. The king will have me beheaded! Oh what shall I do!

ROSALIE. Probably we shall all be executed.

IRENE. Hurry! It might not be too late. Maybe the pie has not been opened.

AGATHA. (Starts off Left and stops.) It is too late. Here comes the king now. (All step back with deep curtesy, but look up in amazement as king enters laughing heartily. He is followed by the queen and the court jester.)

ROSALIE. The king is laughing!

AGATHA. What can have happened?

KING. (Still holding his sides and laughing.) Ho ho ho ha ha ha! That is the funniest thing I have ever seen. Four and twenty blackbirds baked in a pie. Ha! Ha! (Turns to jester.) Are you sure it was four and twenty?

JESTER. I'm positive, your majesty.

KING. Not twenty-four?

JESTER. Oh no indeed.

KING. Not even twenty and four?

JESTER. No, not even two dozen. There were four and twenty blackbirds baked in the pie.

KING. (Laughing again.) And when the pie was opened the birds began to sing. Ho! ho! That was sure some dainty dish to set before a king.

MARGUERITE. (Entering Left and curtseying.) Your majesty, I'm sure we are all very happy to see you in such good spirits. Would it be asking too much to request that you grant an interview with Prince Valane of Grauvania.

KING. What? Don't bother me. I'm tired of being king. At last something funny happened today, and now you want me to see some tiresome representative from another country. Why can't that useless daughter of mine marry someone who can take over this job I have?

MARGUERITE. But that is just what Prince Valane wants. He has come to ask for your daughter's hand in marriage.

KING. What? Well why didn't someone say so before? Where is he? Bring him in. Why hasn't he been here before? Why does he hold back? (Marguerite has gone Left and beckoned as he spoke. Tanya and Valane enter. Both kneel before the king.)

KING. Prince Valane of Grauvania I gladly give you my daughter in marriage. Not only that. I give you half my kingdom. (To himself.) I'll be glad to get rid of the responsibility. (Motions to them to rise.) That's enough of that. I want to know who was responsible for that wonderful pie. Never before have I seen such a sight. Well, who made it?

(Cook says "I did" and ladies-in-waiting all say "We did.")

KING. Well, no doubt, it took all of you to make such a dainty dish. I hereby declare a national holiday and grant everyone a sixpence and a pocketful of rye. Now let's see you celebrate.

(King and queen sit down to watch. The rest join in singing "Sing a Song of Sixpence" ending with everyone dancing. An effective jester may sing the song as a solo with exaggerated gestures before the dancing begins.)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

PRODUCTION NOTE: A simple dance for the group consists of three steps forward and a bow on the fourth count, ladies curtseying and gentlemen bowing from the waist. Variations on the same steps may be done by stepping back and then to the side. All should be done to the accompanying tune "Sing a Song of Sixpence."

This play has a flexible cast: it can be enlarged or made smaller. It can be enlarged by adding to the king's court. The additional members follow the king when he enters and proceed to take part in the ending. There can also easily be two court jesters instead of one. A line or two of the original single role should be given to the second jester. Both should sing the final song as a duet.

The cast can be made smaller by omitting the part of Rosalie. Her lines should be given to the other ladies-in-waiting and the wording adjusted accordingly.

MODERN RHYMES FOR CHORAL SPEAKING

ALPHABET SOUP²⁰

Poop a doop doop! Poop a doop doop!
Did you ever eat any alphabet soup?
The letters all dance from your dish to the spoon.
Then into your mouth they all skip to the tune
Of Poop a doop doop, Poop a doop doop.
Did you ever eat any alphabet soup?

Poop a doop doop! Poop a doop doop!
Did you ever eat any alphabet soup?
The carrots are sweet, and the peas are petite--
They slide and they glide down Appetite Street
With a Poop a doop doop, Poop a doop doop.
Did you ever eat any alphabet soup?

(Many variations can be worked out by giving a number of the lines as solos or duets.)

THE MODERN WITCH²¹

The wicked witch once rode a broom,
But have you lately seen her?
She keeps right up with modern times
And rides a vacuum cleaner.

SWEET LITTLE ALICE²²

Sweet little Alice
Lived in a palace
Made of fine silver and gold.
No furnace or plumbing,
And winter kept coming,
So sweet little Alice caught cold.

(The third and fourth lines should be given as solos.
At the end everyone sneezes "Kerchoo".)

²⁰Aronin, op. cit., pp. 118-119.

²¹Ibid., p. 97.

²²Ibid., p. 13.

ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND²³

Characters

Witch
Princess

Prince
Storyteller

SCENE. A castle tower. A chair represents the tower. In order to climb to the top of the tower, the actors go round and round many times. In order to come down from the tower, they go round the chair the other way. There is a stool nearby. The characters pantomime the action while the Storyteller reads the verses.

Up to the tower the old Witch went, (Witch climbs slowly)

Round and round and round,
Round and round and round,
Round and round and round,
Round and round some more.

Over the ramparts the old Witch looked, (puts hand to eyes)

Looked from mountains to the shore. (keeps looking)
To the foot of the tower the Princess came,
(comes to chair)

Found herself a seat. (sits on stool)

The young Prince saw her sitting there (Prince puts hands to eyes, sees Princess)

And knelt down at her feet. (kneels at her feet)

The old Witch spied the pair, (Witch looks horrified)

Then gave a shriek (shriek)

And started down. (starts down)

Down the steps she came, down and down and down,

Down and down and down,

Down and down and down.

The Prince saw her sneaking up, (Witch sneaks up behind pair; Prince jumps up)

Saw her just in time.

He grabbed the Princess by the hand (grabs her hand)

And started in to climb. (Prince and Princess climb)

Round and round and round they went,

Round and round and round,

²³Carlson, op. cit., pp. 44-46.

Followed by the awful Witch, (Witch follows, but
can't quite catch them)

Round and round and round,
Round and round and round.

When they reached the very top, (pant all out of breath)

The old Witch slipped and fell. (Witch starts to fall)

Down and down and down she went, (Witch goes down)

Down and down pell-mell.

The young Prince sighed (gives long sigh), "Marry me,
my dear." (Prince and Princess hold hands)

"I'd like to, but I can't, up here." (Princess holds
out hands)

So down from the tower the young pair came,

Down and down and down,

Down and down and down,

Down and down and down,

Down and down and down.

Their voices rang with joyous laughter. (Prince and
Princess say, "Hal Hal")

They lived happily forever after. (Prince and Prin-
cess say, "Hal Hal")

RICE PUDDING²⁴

What is the matter with Mary Jane?
She's crying with all her might and main,
And she won't eat her dinner--rice pudding again--
What is the matter with Mary Jane?

What is the matter with Mary Jane?
I've promised her dolls and a daisy-chain,
And a book about animals--all in vain--
What is the matter with Mary Jane?

What is the matter with Mary Jane?
She's perfectly well, and she hasn't a pain;
But, look at her, now she's beginning again!--
What is the matter with Mary Jane?

What is the matter with Mary Jane?
I've promised her sweets and a ride in the train,
And I've begged her to stop for a bit and explain--
What is the matter with Mary Jane?

What is the matter with Mary Jane?
She's perfectly well and she hasn't a pain,
And it's lovely rice pudding for dinner again!--
What is the matter with Mary Jane?

(The first and fourth lines of each stanza are given by the chorus. The other two lines are given as solos by various students.)

²⁴Milne, op. cit., pp. 48-51. (From the book WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG by A. A. Milne, copyright, 1924, by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc; renewal, 1952, by A. A. Milne. All rights of public performances are reserved.)

SHOES AND STOCKINGS²⁵

There's a cavern in the mountain where the old men meet

(Hammer, hammer, hammer . . .

Hammer, hammer, hammer . . .)

They make gold slippers for my lady's feet

(Hammer, hammer, hammer . . .

Hammer, hammer, hammer . . .)

My lady is marrying her own true knight,

White her gown, and her veil is white,

But she must have slippers on her dainty feet.

Hammer, hammer hammer . . .

Hammer.

There's a cottage by the river where the old wives meet

(Chatter, chatter, chatter . . .

Chatter, chatter, chatter . . .)

They weave gold stockings for my lady's feet

(Chatter, chatter, chatter . . .

Chatter, chatter, chatter . . .)

My lady is going to her own true man,

Youth to youth, since the world began,

But she must have stocking on her dainty feet.

Chatter, chatter, chatter. . .

Chatter.

(The boys or one boy may say the first stanza. All say "hammer" while pounding one hand on the other in rhythm. A girl or girls may say the second stanza. All say "chatter" while bobbing their heads in a gossip manner.)

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 71-72. (From the book WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG by A. A. Milne, copyright, 1924, by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc; renewal, 1952, by A. A. Milne. All rights of public performances are reserved.)

THE KING'S BREAKFAST²⁶

The King asked
The Queen, and
The Queen asked
The Dairymaid:
"Could we have some butter for
The Royal slice of bread?"
The Queen asked
The Dairymaid,
The Dairymaid
Said, "Certainly,
I'll go and tell
The cow
Now
Before she goes to bed."

The Dairymaid
She curtsied,
And went and told
The Alderney:
"Don't forget the butter for
The Royal slice of bread."
The Alderney
Said sleepily:
"You'd better tell
His Majesty
That many people nowadays
Like marmalade
Instead."

The Dairymaid
Said, "Fancy!"
And went to
Her Majesty
She curtsied to the Queen, and
She turned a little red:
"Excuse me,
Your Majesty,
For taking of
The liberty,
But marmalade is tasty, if
It's very
Thickly
Spread."

²⁶Ibid., pp. 55-59. (From the book WHEN WE WERE VERY YOUNG by A. A. Milne, copyright, 1924, by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc; renewal, 1952, by A. A. Milne. All rights of public performances are reserved.)

The Queen said
 "Oh!"
 And went to
 His Majesty:
 "Talking of the butter for
 The Royal slice of bread,
 Many people
 Think that
 Marmalade
 Is nicer.
 Would you like to try a little
 Marmalade
 Instead?"

The King said,
 "Bother!"
 And then he said,
 "Oh, deary me!"
 The King sobbed, "Oh, deary me!"
 And went back to bed.
 "Nobody,"
 He whimpered,
 "Could call me
 A fussy man;
 I only want
 A little bit
 Of butter for
 My bread!"

The Queen said,
 "There, there!"
 And went to
 The Dairymaid.
 The Dairymaid
 Said, "There, there!"
 And went to the shed.
 The cow said,
 "There, there!
 I didn't really
 Mean it;
 Here's milk for his porringer
 And butter for his bread."

The Queen took
 The butter
 And brought it to
 His Majesty;

The King said,
"Butter, eh?"
And bounced out of bed.
"Nobody," he said,
As he slid down
The banisters,
"Nobody,
My darling,
Could call me
A fussy man--

BUT

"I do like a little bit of butter to my bread!"

(The group should give this delightful poem an even, definite, continuous rhythm, while interpreting the meaning effectively. The four characters, Queen, Dairymaid, Cow, and King have solos, saying the lines in quotation marks.



Figure 1. Summer drama group playing "Dramatic Adverbs" or "How Do You Feel?" Above they are expressing "pleased surprise."



Figure 2. Here the drama group is feeling "embarrassed."



Figure 3. This group is rehearsing for a radio play. The boys are making sound effects for wind and a door closing.



Figure 4. These students are acting out "Round and Round and Round."



Figure 5. Students' interpretation of "Round and Round and Round."



Figure 6. Above and following are illustrations of the soloists from "The King's Breakfast." As they step from the chorus, the soloists put on their headpieces to identify themselves as King, Queen, Dairymaid, and Cow. The cow's head was made of papier mache, but a simpler one could be fashioned from construction paper.



Figure 7. Soloists from "The King's Breakfast." The chorus may be arranged in back of them or on either or both sides.



Figure 8. A happy ending to "The King's Breakfast."



Figure 9. To pupils of the intermediate grades fairy costumes are fascinating and need not be costly to be effective. Above is a cast from "The Princess and the Pea." The costumes were concocted from drapes, curtains, and old materials from the students' homes.



Figure 10. These girls were illustrating their ideas of how princesses might dress. Their royal fashions might not be authentic, but they felt and acted like princesses.



Figure 11. A scene from "The Princess and the Pea."
Boys' costumes are more difficult to fashion than girls'.
Yet they need not be expensive to be effective and to satisfy
the youthful actors.



Figure 12. Another scene from "The Princess and the Pea." The red velvet "thrones" were resurrected from a discarded church pulpit.



Figure 13. Most of the accoutrements for these boys were concocted from brilliant florist's foil. The prince's is purple and the king's gold. For a base the prince used ordinary white shirt and trousers; the king borrowed his brother's suit. The latter's boots were made of leatherized paper. His costume cost little over a dollar but glittered royally under stage lights.



Figure 14. Applied to a thirteen year old's hairless face in a few minutes, this beard made the boy feel like mature royalty.