

# PLAYS FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY-MINNEAPOLIS

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## *Coyote Discovers America*

By  
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*Coyote Discovers America* was first presented by the Children's Theatre Company for the 1989-90 season.

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Cast of Characters (Doubling possible, listed as/.)

- Mythic Coyote
- Bobby
- Urban Coyote
- Road Runner Ronnie/ Chris/ Chief Ranger
- Charlie/ Indian/ Ranger
- Father/ Indian/ Cab Driver/ Bart/ Buffalo Bill
- Mother/ Nina/ Oona
- Sally/ Pinta/ Dance Hall Girl
- Polly/ Santa Maria/ Mavis
- Band/ Indian/ Sitting Bull
- Freddy/ Crew/ Cowboy
- Band/ Crew/ Gold Miner

The time is 1992. The place is North America.

## Scene 1

Blackout. Natural sounds. "Indian" music up behind the scrim, then down. Sounds up on a TV. The sounds are of a typical Coyote/Roadrunner chase scene. A TV emerges from the blackness, until we can see the screen with a Roadrunner cartoon on it. There is an overstuffed chair in front of the TV. As the cartoon continues a head emerges from the chair. After the "that's all folks" music ends, the screen goes fuzzy. The head turns. The audience sees in that it is Coyote. Blackout.

SOUNDS and ELECTRICITY of creation. Backdrop "cracks" open. COYOTE wanders onto the earth, sack on back, playing a flute.

CREATOR                    (Thunderous; voice only) Vagabond! Trickster! Yeah, you. I have a job for you. (Coyote mimes incredulity.) Yes, a real job. Listen up. The People are coming. It's your job to teach them. Teach them how to laugh no matter what. (Coyote mimes laughter). Yes, that's it. Use any tricks you need. You can transform yourself into anything. And you can't die. That's the good news. You will also do foolish things. (Coyote mimes no, not me). Yes, that is your way. (Coyote pleads to Creator) And your name shall be that of the trickster animal, the wily one: Coyote. Go, Coyote. Go and do your job well. (Coyote gives the thumbs up. Begins to play flute again and wander off.)

A truck honks. Coyote is mowed down by 18-wheeler, which passes off stage. Coyote is left in silhouette, lying on back, arms and legs in air.

CREATOR:                    "Nobody said it would be easy." (Coyote rolls up, picks up flute, looks at audience.)

The truck zooms by again.

## Scene 2

Coyote emerges from manhole center stage in contemporary dress, with bag over his shoulder. He pulls out a chair and a sign. Dusts himself off. Looks around. He hears a rumbling, and thinks it's thunder. He slowly realizes it's his stomach. Sniffs. Runs over to garbage can and reaches in. Pulls out a fish skeleton and a boot. Drops them back in. Paces around, then spirals finger in air (a light comes on over his head) Sets up chair. Sits down. Takes out walkman from

bag. Puts on headphones. Takes out a comic book. Begins to read. Stops and sets up sign: STORIES TOLD \$25. then turns sign around: ROADRUNNERS CHEAPER. Smiles and reads. Lights down on him.

### Scene 3

Bobby's Room. His bedroom has a desk with a computer, a bed and portable boom box style radio.

MOTHER                Bobby. Bobby. Isn't your homework done yet?

BOBBY:                Aww, Mom ...

MOM:                 It's very late.

FATHER:              Yea. Don't forget vacation is coming up. For boys who get their homework done. Otherwise it's summer school. You're sure blowing this one, kiddo. *(exits)*

BOBBY:                Jeez, Dad ...

MOTHER:             Good night, Bobby. Yon: father and I are going to bed now. Please get some sleep. And don't you dare TV! *(exits)*

BOBBY                *(mimics)* And don't you dare watch TV. *(tearing his hair)* Arghhh! *(paces)*. I'll never get this paper done! Why did I procrastinate so long. I can't believe it. It's nearly midnight. I haven't written a thing and it's due tomorrow. *(Goes back to desk. Turns on computer. Types a line)* History 101. The Discovery of America, by Bobby... aarggh! What was that assignment again? How did he put it?

He puts a disc in the computer: A teacher video appears on screen.

TEACHER:            Good morning, class.

BOBBY:                Good morning, lard butt.

TEACHER: This is Mr. Rupert Roads at Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry Middle School, Seventh Grade History. Class, do you know what time it is?

BOBBY: Late.

TEACHER That's right. It's time for your formal writing assignment. And since this is the very first essay I've asked of you, I thought: it appropriate for you to write about the very beginning of our country. Doesn't that make sense?

BOBBY Total.

TEACHER I want you to write on the topic, Who Discovered America? And I don't mean that rock and roll ensemble. Heh Heh.

BOBBY: groan.

TEACHER We've been preparing for this all term. The paper is due one week before your vacation begins. It must be two pages long, double-spaced, one and one half inch margins top and bottom, one inch margins each side, on standard white computer paper, with the holes torn off. Neatly.

BOBBY *(in unison)* Neatly.

TEACHER Remember to plan your time carefully.

BOBBY: Arggh.

TEACHER Of course late papers will be marked with a "you know what."

BOBBY: An "F?"

TEACHER That's right. an "F." Now have fun. See you in class. *(Background music up - "school days.")*

BOBBY: Not if I can help it. *(Screen goes blank. Bobby turns it off.)* A two page paper? Two pages? I can barely write the title. I'm dead meat. Arggh! Who discovered America? Doesn't the teacher know that by

now? Doesn't everybody know it? Arrgh. I need to listen to the radio. (*Turns on radio. Dial lights up. Gazes out window. WUSA radio audio up.*)

#### Scene 4

Lights up on Radio studio.

ROADRUNNER RONNIE You got that right sir. Thanks for calling. You are listening to WUSA, 1492, talk radio. That's right, Ronnie's answer line, where we answer all your questions for half the night. (*Cues WUSA audio ID: WUSAaaaa, fourteen ninety twoooo!*) Charlie, do we have time for any more calls?

CHARLIE (*over tinny loudspeaker*) Seven more minutes, Ronnie. You can take at least two more.

RONNIE (*moans*) Seven? You sure your watch hasn't stopped?

CHARLIE: You can get in a few more.

RONNIE Okay, Chuckling Charlie, my engineer says we can take a couple more calls. Go ahead, place your calls. You should know that number by now, but as a reminder 1-800-RON-ROAD. That's right, 1-800-RON-ROAD. Ok, who's this Charlie?

CHARLIE Sally from Chicago.

RONNIE Go ahead, Sally from Chicago. This is Ronnie's answer line.

GIRL'S VOICE (*spot behind the scrim with a girl on the phone.*) Ronnie? Is this really you? Am I really on the radio?

Loud radio feedback. Ronnie, Charlie and Coyote all lift their headphones, and Bobby holds his ears.

RONNIE Aiee, kid! Kid! Turn your radio down, will you?! (*She does.*) That ought to do it.

GIRL                   Hi. *(pause)*

RONNIE                Uh, hi.

GIRL                   I shouldn't be up this late. But I just had to call you Ronnie.

RONNIE                You're right on that one kiddo. Nobody should be up this late. But what's on your mind? Quick now. Millions of Americans are waiting for their chance.

GIRL:                   Well, I just need to know ... I mean ... How did the world begin? And, why isn't my mother home yet? She said she'd be home hours ago, and she's not here yet. And I've always wondered about the beginning of everything. You know, how did we all get here? I mean, we can't have just appeared from the slime or something. I ask these questions at school and all I get are stupid answers.

RONNIE                *( reacts with exasperation to the question, draws finger across throat to CHARLIE visible through window engineering booth)* Sorry, young lady, gotta run. I'm sure the world will begin as soon as your mother gets home. In the meantime, keep those cards and letters coming. *(laughs)* Ah, beginnings, endings. We began at six o'clock and it's almost midnight. And that means it's time for me to track on out of here. Beep. Beep.*(laughs)* We've almost reached the end of our broadcast day. But *(glancing at Charlie)* we can take one more caller. *(puts hand over mike)* Got anyone sane for me, Charlie?

CHARLIE:             Freddy, from Philadelphia.

RONNIE:                Ok Philly Freddy. How about that cream cheese. Shoot. What's happening?

FKEDDY                Ok, here's the deal. Now promise you won't laugh at me?

RONNIE:                No way, Freddy. This is Roadrunner Ronnie, America's most famous talk show host. I love my audience and they love me.

FREDDY                    Yeah, OK. Well, it's this. We have this dance coming up Saturday night? And there's this girl ... ? I see her after school every day. Her locker is only eleven down from mine.

RONNIE;                    Eleven. You sure about that, Freddy?

FREDDY:                    Oh, you bet I'm sure. So I keep coming up to her at her locker, but I can't say anything. My mouth won't move.

RONNIE:                    A common problem, Freddy. *(covers mike with his hand)* for people like you. *(on mike)* Here's what I'd do. You see, I'd go up to her locker tomorrow. Right there. And when she arrives, I'd ask her: does she listen to WUSA? if she says yes, she's a hip chick, Freddy, take her to the dance. If she says no, do you know what to do?

FREDDY:                    No. What do I do?

RONNIE:                    Forget her. She's not worth it. Say, does that help you out, Freddy?

FREDDY                    *(in disbelief)* Ahhh, I guess so ...

RONNIE                    Great.

CHARLIE.                    *(holds up COMMERCIAL sign)*

RONNIE:                    And thinking of the dance, I can't help but think of one of our most valued sponsors: ZIP ZAP ZIT CREAM. *(holds up a tube)* Kids, zap your zits with ZIP ZAP and that school dance will go a lot better for you. Not to mention your whole life. Stick it in your pocket, or purse for constant touch up. Remember, don't leave the house without it. *(threatening)* Or you'll regret it. ZIP ZAP ZIT CREAM America's favorite cover-up. *(Cues up ZIP ZAP song.)*

RONNIE                    *(off mike, to Charlie)* No more calls Charlie, I'm signing off after this spot.

CHARLIE                    It's Polly from Portland.

RONNIE                    *(off mike)* Ok, Polly's my last call. *(On mike.)* Ok, we have time for another call. Go ahead Portland Polly.

Lights up on scrim scene, bathtub with bubble bath, woman at phone.

POLLY                   Ronnie!

RONNIE                   Hi Polly! Thanks for those chocolate chip cookies.

POLLY                   It was my pleasure. Hi Charlie!

CHARLIE                 Hi Polly.

POLLY:                   Say Ron, I just had to discuss something with you. You being such a famous talk show host and all.

RONNIE:                 You got that right, Polly. You're beautiful to say that. I'm sure you are beautiful.

POLLY                   Oh, thank you. But I have a worry about that. You know the way it is, Ronnie. Day in and day out we get up in the morning, we go to work - are you with me, Ron? And then suddenly it occurs to us in this flash, we're getting old. And I don't want to get old, Ronnie. I want to stay beautiful. I mean, isn't being beautiful what life is all about, Ronnie? Or is it? That's my question, Ronnie ... what's life all about. Well, thanks for listening. And now I'll just hang up and listen. And Ronnie, I listen to your show every night.

RONNIE                   Thanks Polly.

POLLY                   Say, Ron?

RONNIE:                 Yes ...

POLLY                   I love you.

RONNIE:                 I love you too, Polly.

POLLY                   Say, Ron? I'm gonna hang up now.

RONNIE:                 *(After a wistful pause.)* It's always great to hear from Portland Polly. The meaning of life? Well, Polly ... life is a can of tuna fish. You

don't know what you're going to get until you open it up. Ha Ha. Actually, no thoughts on that, but staying beautiful is a piece of cake for Ronnie fans. Just use all the products that Ronnie has recommended for years. I mean, if you eat those Twinkles, "the little cakes with the big sugar flavor," you'll always be in with the in the crowd. If you drink FIZZY COLA, you'll always have boyfriends on the beach. As final advice, Polly, and you know what it is, keep listening to WUSA , the station to the nation, the secret of the fountain of youth .... And I guess that does it for the radio night. We're finally out of broadcast time.

CHARLIE                    One more caller; Ronnie. It's Bob right here in Bismarck.

RONNIE:                    Sorry, Bismarck Bob, but we don't have any more time ...

*Charlie holds up sign: HE'S GOT A PROBLEM.*

RONNIE:                    OK, OK, my stopwatch is ticking, but the engineer says one more call. It's Bob from Bismarck. G o ahead, Bismarck Bob.

*Lights up on Bobby's room again.*

BOBBY                    Hello, am I on tile air?

RONNIE:                    Yea, you bet you are. All over the nation. Lucky you.

BOBBY:                    Wow. Well. urnmm ...

RONNIE:                    Gotta move it, Bob, this is America. Time is money. Money is tine. How is it in Bismarck?

BOBBY                    Like a jelly donut. Get it? Bismarck? Jelly donut?

RONNIE                    Tell you what Bob, let's save the humor for my side of the line. What's your problem? We're almost out of time.

BOBBY                    Yeah, ok. I have this homework assignment. And the teacher'll kill me if I don't get it in.

RONNIE *(with exasperated gestures to Charlie)* So out with it, Bobby, my boy. Out with it. What's the question?

BOB: Well, I'm supposed to write a paper on the discovery of America. But all I see is this blank screen in front of me. Somehow nothing I try seems right.

RONNIE Ah, Bobby baby. This is an easy one. You've come to exactly the right place. Just tell your teacher this: the true discoverer of America is ... me! Roadrunner Ronnie! The greatest DJ in the history of North America. It's true, Bob. I bring America everything it needs: hairspray and zit cream and rock and roll and Twinkles. I'm the guy that makes America great – Roadrunner Ronnie discovered America. Yea. I like the sound *of* that. OK, gotta run, Bobby. Put that in your computer and print it out. Go for the gusto!

CHARLIE: SLOOPY commercial, Ronnie.

RONNIE And now it's time for a last word from our biggest sponsor: the new SLOOPY. The biggest car you'll ever buy. *(Cues commercial with his own voice on tape. During the commercial, Coyote calls on the desk phone. Ronnie picks up the phone.)* Yea, who is it?

COYOTE *(Howls)*

RONNIE What the ...

COYOTE: I just have a question for you, Ronnie.

RONNIE: Who are you? How did you get this private number?

COYOTE: I heard what you said to that boy. About the discovery of America. I have a few stories I can tell him about that. Do you still have his number?

RONNIE: No way. He'll have to live with my answer, which as I recall was a pretty good one. I gotta go. But wait a minute. Who are you?

COYOTE Just an old trickster *.(Howls and hangs up)*

COMMERCIAL: Friends, get yourselves down to Bigtime Motors and check out the new 1992 Sloopy. It has six full size doors. It has a turbocharged V-12. It has fins as big as wings and dark mysterious windows. All this assures you that when you get a SLOOPY, you're truly getting "the biggest car you can buy." It's so big and shiny everybody will think you are a movie star just for riding in one. So go see Sam down there at Bigtime, and ask for that special purchase deal only available to my own personal friends, you, the American radio audience. Tell Sam that Ronnie sent you. That's the all new SLOOPY, "the biggest car you'll ever buy." (*SLOOPY music up and out*).

RONNIE (looks up at Charlie, commercial ends) Ah yes, I love my Sloopy, Gets six gallons to the mile. Well, Bismarck Bob was the last call for the night. And now this is Roadrunner Ronnie signing off. It's been fun these last six hours spinning the latest news, sports, and traffic reports your way. And taking your personal phone calls. Yessir, it sure is wonderful to have you call in and share your questions with me, Roadrunner Ronnie, The Answer Man for all of North America.

BOBBY: Some answer.

RONNIE We'll be back with you bright and early at Six AM. You'll get the early weather and traffic jam reports with Buffalo Bob, the Bad Boy of Bumper-to-Bumper Broadcasting. Until then, this is Roadrunner Ronnie, along with Charlie in the engineering booth, wishing you pleasant dreams from the Number One radio voice to all of North America, WUSA, 1492 on your radio dial... (*spirals hand up in up-and-out signal.* )

Sign off music up and out. Chorus: "WUSAaaaa, fourteen ninety twooooo." Ronnie signals cut - a slice across the throat - to Charlie. The ON AIR light goes off. Clock hits midnight.

RONNIE: (*Sighs. Rubs eyes. Yawns, gets up, nods to - Charlie in a conversational, non-broadcasting voice, paces around*). Well, we've survived another night.

CHARLIE (*with irony*) Interesting questions tonight, Ronnie.

RONNIE                    Yea, right. I'm so sick of all these bozos calling in with their idiotic questions. They are all so stupid. (*mimics their voices*) Mr. Roadrunner, Mr., Roadrunner, how did the world begin? What if bouffant hairdos come back? I'll just die at school! Help me with my homework, puleeze! What kinds of questions are those? How am I supposed to know??? H just sell Sloopys. (*Burps*) These bozos are killing me. They're giving me indigestion (*slurps some pink Pepto Bismol*).

CHARLIE                    (*has left booth and entered studio through door, scratching everywhere and picking his seat*): They don't call this the graveyard shift for nothing, Ronnie-o. Nobody listening out there but lunatics, probably. (*gives a mock loon call*). Who else would he be up this late?

RONNIE                    (*burps*) Yup. I'm going home. I need some sleep. I gotta live like a normal person a little bit. By the way, how did that phone call get through on the private line? You got any idea?

CHARLIE                    Who was it?

RONNIE:                    I don't know who it was. But it sounded kind of familiar. Yeah, well, I'm outta here.

CHARLIE:                    Night, Ronnie. See you tomorrow, on good old (*sings*) Wusaaaaa, fourteen ninety twoooo (*raspberries. Exits.*)

RONNIE:                    (*burps*) Yeah, I'll see ya. If I don't die of indigestion first. Make sure you turn on the alarm system. I wonder what it's like outside.

COYOTE                    (*center stage, looks at the moon, and howls*)

RONNIE:                    Charlie, did you hear that? That howl-laugh thing?

CHARLIE:                    What? I didn't hear anything. You're dreaming, Ronnie. This job is getting to you. (*Shrugs. Exits flashing keys. Turns on ALARM switch. Ronnie exits. Sound of Door locking. Lights down on empty radio studio.*)

## Scene 4

Lights up center stage on Coyote. He begins to pace back and forth. Coyote looks over at studio. Paces. Swirls his finger into air. IDEA BULB goes off over him. Reaches into his sack. Disappears down a manhole. Immediately a saw comes up through floor in front of radio studio. Pulls himself out of hole and dusts himself off. Smiles to the audience. Goes inside. Sits down at console. Rubs paws together. Pushes up sleeves. Tries a button. Jumps as a bunch of lights come on around him. Smoke comes out of console as he tries buttons. Finally the red "ON AIR" sign. Pushes a few more buttons and dials, laughs delightedly, and rubs his paws together. Leans forward into microphone facing the audience.

COYOTE:                   Ahem. Ahh ... Good evening, North America, and welcome to ...  
ahh, WCOY, Coyote All Night Talk Radio, radio for the free at  
night, on the All Mythic Network. This is Coyote the Trickster  
talking at you. I'll be howling tales your way throughout the dark  
of the night, until, ah (looking at nameplates around) Roadrunner  
Ronnie and Buffalo Bob the crew roll back in at sunrise. Then I  
suddenly get the notion that I gotta be in motion. if you get my  
drift. (*mimes hasty exit, howls with laughter*) But for now the night is  
ours. Yours and mine. I love the night. It's quiet time. Story-telling  
time. Howling time. (Coyote looks out the window at the moon. He  
tilts back and howls.) Ahh, yessir. Feels good. All you radio people  
need to learn to howl like that. Howl to the mom. Howl to the stars.  
Howl to your feet at the end of your bed. Howl to your toes  
wiggling underneath your covers. Why not howl to your  
refrigerator as you sneak down for a big fat midnight snack. (*licks  
lips, slurping sounds, stomach rumbles*) Oh boy. Just talking about  
midnight snacks, has made me very hungry. What do you say,  
stomach? (*stands up so microphone is at stomach*)

STOMACH:               Rumble. Rumble. You bet. I'm running on empty. Got any food in  
your sack? Anything? Coyote, you'd better take better care of me.  
(*thunderous rumbling*)

COYOTE                   (*to stomach*) How's pizza sound?

STOMACH               Yeah! With anchovies.

COYOTE                   (*looks around, sees all the stacks of music cassettes lying on the console.  
Waves finger in air.*) Hmm.. And- that means it's time for a word

from our favorite nighttime sponsor. The.. ahh .. ahhh ... Coyote School of Howling. (*Picks up an empty cassette plastic case and rattles it in front of the microphone. Then he speaks in a different, advertising voice*): Say, Bunko, you say you feel down? You say you haven't laughed in weeks? You say you can't sleep?? Well, kiddos, let Old Man Coyote tell you what you need. You need to learn how to howl. Like this. (*howls*). Say you don't know how? No problem. Just bring ... ahh, some food, to Old Man Coyote's School of Howling, here at old WUSA, and I'll give you right away my famous ... (*looks around, grabs a second cassette*) two cassette howling course (*rattles both cassettes*). Not one but two complete lessons of "How to ..." Coyote howling, so that you too can learn how to laugh, no matter what. But better act fast. Right away tonight. (*aside*) Because I haven't had dinner yet. (*back to microphone*) Bring your midnight snacks to Old Man Coyote down here at the old WUSA radio building. Just knock on the door and I'll let you in. Then you'll be able to laugh like this, no matter what... (*tilts back and howls*). (*Off mike, to audience*): This may be my best scheme yet. (*back to DJ voice*): Thank you, sponsors. Now, all you listeners out there in radioland, call me with your questions. Any question will do. No question is too tough. After all, I am Coyote, part of the North American Mythic network. I know the oldest and best stories. (*Indian style music up, but soft. Coyote speaks over music*) For the last few hundred years it's been tough getting people to listen to me. Of course the Indians still tell stories about me - oh, we still laugh and laugh together - about how the Trickster - that's me - tricks everybody, including himself.

PHONE RINGS and a red light on control panel goes on.

COYOTE                    Hey, here's my first caller. (*Coyote runs back to the microphone, drops music, puts on headphones*): Hello, you're on Coyote Ali Night Talk Radio. This is Coyote howling at you. What's cooking?

Lights up in Bobby's bedroom .Bobby is talking on the phone.

BOBBY                    Hey? Who are you? What happened to Roadrunner Ronnie?

COYOTE                    Who? (*looks around*) Never heard of him. What's on your mind, Bub?

BOBBY                    My name's Bob.

COYOTE:                OK, Bob, what's sizzling in your kitchen?

BOBBY                    I gotta ask you something.

COYOTE                 Ok, shoot.

BOBBY                    Well, you see, I got this homework paper due on the Discovery of America. I've never written a paper before. This teacher, he's driving me crazy. He gives us an assignment, but never tells us how to do it. I don't even have a sentence written yet. And the paper's due tomorrow! I called Ronnie, but...

COYOTE                 You're the guy who called before. I heard that. Boy, are you in trouble.

BOBBY                    Have you got that right!

COYOTE                 No problem. I know all about that. I get into trouble myself all the time.

BOBBY                    Yea, sure, I bet. Like what?

COYOTE                 Like the time this bird taught me how to juggle my eyes.

BOBBY                    Your eyes???

COYOTE                 Yea, my eyes.

BOBBY                    Ohh, gross.

COYOTE                 It gets better. He told me I could only do it. four times. But I liked the trick so much that I kept juggling and juggling, until I lost my eyes and was blind for a long time. I had to trick a mouse and a buffalo into giving me one of their eyes. I've been cockeyed ever since.

BOBBY                    Awesome!

COYOTE                   Or like the time this plant talked to me.

BOBBY                    A plant?

COYOTE:                 That's right. It stood there and said, "Don't eat me! Don't eat me!"  
But it sure looked good. So I ate it.

BOBBY:                  You did? What happened?

COYOTE:                 Next thing I knew (*farting sound*) ...poof. Then poof, poof, poof.  
Turned out it was a bean. plant, Bobby! Tasted great, but eating it  
sure has "consequences." (*rips another one*)

BOBBY:                  (*laughing*) Double gross. "The musical fruit? The more you eat, the  
more you toot?"

COYOTE                 That's the, one. "The more you toot, the better you feel...." I  
discovered it. Then there was the time I got my head stuck in a  
buffalo skull.

BOBBY                  Stuck in a buffalo skull? Are you kidding me? How did that  
happen?

COYOTE:                 No. Actual story. It's famous. Some guys made it into a hit record.  
It was top 40 on the country and western charts. I have it here  
somewhere. Here it is.. I'll just pop it in here .... Check this out. One,  
two, one, two, three, four (*music up*)

**SONG: COYOTE AND THE BUFFALO SKULL**

BART                    ONE SULTRY NIGHT IN THE WILD WEST  
I WAS RIDIN' CROSS THE SAND,  
MY FEET WERE IN THE STIRRUPS  
AND THE REINS WAS IN MY HAND.  
I PULLED UP TO A WATERN' HOLE  
WHERE THE NIGHT FOLK TEND TO PROWL  
WHEN OUTA THE NIGHT COYOTE APPEARED  
AND HE STARTED INTO HOWL!

Howling from band.

BART HE WORE A VEST OF BUCKSKIN  
AND HE PLAYED A MAGIC FLUTE.  
AND WHEN HE SAT BESIDE ME, WELL,  
I FIGURED IT'S TIME TO SCOOT.  
BUT HE SAID HE HAD A TALE TO TELL,  
AND ADDED WITH A WINK,  
"I'LL TELL IT ALL AND TELL IT TRUE  
IN EXCHANGE FOR FOOD AND DRINK."

BART/BAND OLD COYOTE TOLD HIS TALE  
ALL BUT MADE MY FACE TURN PALE  
A BUFFALO SKULL AND A MOUSE POW-WOW,  
GUARANTEED TO MAKE A BRAVE MAN HOWL.  
OWOOOOO!

BART HE TOLD A TALE OF A DRUIMMIN' SOUND  
THAT SPOOKED THAT WILEY BEAST  
HE LOOKED NORTH, HE LOOKED SOUTH  
HE LOOKED WEST AND EAST  
THEN WHAT HE SAID TURNED ME COLD  
AND MADE MY SENSES DULL,  
THAT THE DRUM BEAT CAME FROM A MOUSE POW-WO  
INSIDE A BUFFALO SKULL.

Chanting and drums of pow-wow.

BART WELL HE POKED HIS NOSE INSIDE THAT HEAD  
AND SAW TO HIS SURPRISE  
FIELD MICE DOIN' A SUNDANCE,  
RIGHT BEFORE HIS EYES.  
WELL HE SAW THEM AND THEY SAW HIM  
AND OFF THOSE MICE DID RUN.  
COYOTE'S FACE IN THAT SACRED PIACE  
HAD SPOILED ALL THE FUN.

Chorus.

BART WELL THAT BUFFALO SKULL WAS MIGHTY TIGHT  
AND IT STUCK ON COYOTE'S HEAD  
HE PULLED AND TUGGED ARID FUSSED AND CUSSED

HIS HEART WAS FILLED WITH DREAD.  
HE BEADED HOME TO GET SOME HELP  
BUT HE FELL INTO A STREAM.  
THE TREES HAD TOLD HIM WHERE TO GO  
IT WAS LIKE A HORRIBLE DREAM.

Nightmare sounds.

BART                   WHEN HE GOT TO CAMP HIS FRIENDS WERE SCARED  
BUT SOON THEY RECOGNIZED  
COYOTE WAS THE FELLOW  
LOOKIN' OUTTA THOSE BUFFALO EYES.  
THEY CRACKED THE SKULL AND LAUGHED ALOUD  
AT THE TRICKSIER'S FANCY GARNE.  
HE SAID "I'M GLAD TO MAKE YOU LAUGH"  
BUT HIS. HEART WAS FILLED WITH SHAME.

BART/BAND           I OFTEN THINK OF THAT SULTRY NIGHT  
IN THE DESERT WAY OUT WEST,  
WHEN OLD COYOTE SPUN HIS YARNS  
AND TOLD ME ONE OF HIS BEST.  
OF A BUFFALO SKULL AND A MOUSE POW-WOW  
AND FRIENDS, I'M HERE TO SAY  
AND THE VISION OF HIS PREDICAMENT  
STILL MAKES ME LAUGH TODAY.

Thank you, Coyote. Thanks for the how.

Chorus and fade. Segue to Coyote in the radio station.

COYOTE               Some story, huh? It's true. People are still rolling in the aisles at that  
one.

BOBBY:               *(laughing.)* Well... Coyote. You sure must have looked ridiculous.  
But you need to stop clowning around, Coyote. I have a paper to  
write.

COYOTE:              Oh, yea, your assignment. The discovery of America?

BOBBY                   The teacher showed us some funny old maps. But I still don't get it. Something's missing.

COYOTE                 You've come to the right guy. Maybe I know what's missing. After all, I know all there is to know about the discovery of America.

BOBBY                   You do?

COYOTE                 I was there.

BOBBY                   Roadrunner Ronnie said the same thing. What a scam.

COYOTE                 Slow down, Bobby. Give me a try. Who else are gonna talk to? Your parents are asleep, right?

BOBBY                   Ok, I'll listen. I sure can't sleep myself.

COYOTE:                OK, Bobby: I'll tell you all about it. *(Bob settles down to listen. Lights fade out on his bedroom, with the radio dial glowing. Coyote tips back in his chair. He pulls the microphone close to him. Then he sits up again fast. Shuffles in his bag. Pulls out a tape.)* I'd better put on some background music.

*Coyote Snaps in the tape. Flute music up. Tilts back in the chair again. Pulls microphone close to his face. Puts his hand behind his head. His voice changes to a softer, more "storytelling" [less DJ] one.*

COYOTE:                Well, the Great Spirit called all us animals together. "Come to my lodge," he said. "I have some important news for you." So we all gathered together, and he told us that People were finally coming to this place. North America. *(set background has darkened)*. And he gave us all our special jobs to do. Of course, I got the tough job ... teaching them how to laugh, no matter what.

*Studio light fades to black.*

## Scene 5

Lights up center stage on Ronnie's bedroom with a bed and side table with phone, lamp, radio. Clothes over chair. Phone rings. Man in bed groans, sits up, fumbles for phone, presses it between his head and his pillow, says:

RONNIE                    Hello, hello???

CHARLIE:                *(very muffled)* mumfagh mmmfsl mmgsln

RONNIE                    Speak up, I can't hear a thing. You calling from the moon or something??? *(looks, realizes pillow is between phone, throws pillow away, talks again)* There, that's better. Now who are you, why are you calling in the middle of the night?

CHARLIE:                Ronnie, this is Charlie. You won't believe this. Just as I was going to bed I flicked on the radio, set for WUSA and I heard this voice.

RONNIE:                You what? That's impossible? We're off the air.

CHARLIE                That's why I'm calling you. You're not going to believe it. Go ahead, turn it on. This guy is on our station. And he's telling stories. Weird stories.

RONNIE:                *(turning on bedside light, and fumbling for radio)* Are you sure it's WUSA 1492 ,on your radio dial?

CHARLIE:                I'm a radio engineer, Ronnie. Just tune it in.

RONNIE:                Oh, my stomach ...

CHARLIE:                And Ronnie. do something about that stomach of yours, will you. *(hangs up)*

RONNIE:                Yea Charlie. Thanks for caring. *(Ronnie turns on radio, listens to the following bit, pulls on his pants, reaches for phone and calls)*

COYOTE                *(still leaning back in his chair, arms folded behind his head, in a dreamlike storytelling voice):* So Coyote stopped running around in circles, and the other animals stopped laughing. Hey, this guy ain't no fool. So

Coyote the Trickster was glad. He went right out and began his work. This is the way it was with him. He went out to make things right.. *(The private phone rings. Coyote snaps out of it. Picks up phone)*  
Coyote here. What can I do for you?

RONNIE *(into phone, loud)* Who are you? And what are you doing on my radio station? *(burps)*

COYOTE Hey! Who are you, and why are you up so late? Can't you sleep? Sounds like you have indigestion? I hope you have your windows open. Something must be bothering you. Go ahead, you can tell Old Man Coyote.

RONNIE *(Burp)* I am Roadrunner Ronnie. I am the top DJ in North America, that's who I am. I don't have a problem. You have a problem. You are sitting in my seat!

COYOTE Well, well. Can that be possible? *(looks around)* Roadrunner Ronnie??? Let's see. Nope. Nope. Nobody here by that name. But thanks for calling Coyote Radio; *(a second red phone light goes on)*. Oops. I have another call now. Hey, but call back anytime. I'm always happy to hear from you. *(Howls and hangs up the phone.)*

*Ronnie looks at the receiver. He can't believe it. He hastily grabs his Pepto Bismol and runs out.*

## Scene 7

COYOTE: Hello, Welcome to the Coyote network, Radio for the free at Night. *(howls!)* What excitement is keeping you up this late?

BOBBY Coyote? This is Bobby again. Yeah, well, I listened to your last story. About the Animals .getting their tasks. I liked it. But what does it have to do with me?' I'm not an animal, and that happened thousands of years ago. I'm supposed to write something about Columbus.

COYOTE: Columbus? Who's he?

BOBBY                   Come on, Coyote. Everybody knows Columbus. Christopher Columbus. The one who discovered America.

COYOTE:                Discovered America! That's a joke (*Howls, then serious.*) I mean, that is a joke. Right?

BOBBY                   Well, the teacher said something about some Vikings.

COYOTE                 You mean that red-headed guy with the horns?

BOBBY                   I think so.; But hold on, Coyote. I've gotta write about Columbus. Now stick to the subject. Stop wandering.

COYOTE                 Alright, Columbus. You mean, "in fourteen hundred and ninety two ..."

BOBBY                   "Columbus sailed the ocean blue." Yea, that's the guy. And that's about all I can remember.

COYOTE                 Hey Bobby, I knew this Columbus fellow. I met him once.

BOBBY                   Yea, right. You're not helping. Look Coyote, stop scamming me. You're my only chance.

COYOTE                 Wait a minute, I'm not kidding you, Kid. Listen and I'll tell you the story of how I met Columbus. You'll see how some confusion originated here in North America as to who did the discovering. It's left a lot of people confused, Bobby. Not just you. Listen up. It may be what gets you going.

BOBBY                   I hope so. (*He settles back at the desk to listen. Lights down and out.*)

COYOTE                 (*Red phone light goes out. Coyote tilts back as if to start a story again, then rocks forward quickly*) Then again it may be what gets you kicked out of school... Oh, what year was this? You know the answer to that. 1492. Over 500 years ago. Well, see, I was standing around with some of my friends shooting hoops....

Lights go down on the studio.

## Scene 8

Lights up on center stage. Indians and Coyote playing basketball. Ball goes of into water. Bounces out. Enter Christopher Columbus as Elvis, two crew, three backup singers, in a rock and roll production number: The Manifest Destiny Blues.

PINTA                    Hey Nina, who was that fella we saw you with last night?

SANTA MARIA        Yeah, Nina who was that hot boy?

NINA                    That was no boy, girls. That was the one and only Duke of Discovery, the Godfather of Gold, the Sultan of Spice and the icing of Exploring.

PINTA                    You mean –

SANTA MARIA        Could it be –

PINTA                    Don't believe it.

NINA                    Uh-huh. And his name is C, H, R, I, S.

PINTA/SANTA MARIA    Chris Columbus?!

NINA                    YEAH! 2, 3,4!

Chuck Berry guitar lick as CHRIS enters playing guitar. Solo ends arid segues into blues.

CHRIS                    I'M CHRISTO COLUMBUS, I'M SPEAKING TO YOU ALL  
AND I'M HEADED WEST, IN SEARCH OF THE TAJ MAHAL

I'M MERE TO PROVE 'THAT THIS WORLD OF OURS IS ROUND,  
SO TELL ME THE TRUTH BOYS, I'M FROM OUTTA TOWN.

AND I'IM HERE TO CLAIM  
THIS LOWLY PIECE OF REAL ESTATE FOR SPAIN.

TRIO                    DO-WOP, DO-WOP, DO-WAH

CHRIS                    IN THE NAME OF QUEEN ISABELLA AND KING FERDINAND

I'M LAYIN' CLAIM TO ALL OF YOUR LAND.

CHRIS

And all your gold and spices and mineral rights too.

THESE THREE LOVELY LADIES WITH THE SONG  
UPON THEIR LIPS,  
ARE THE REASON I'M HERE NOW, THEY'RE THE SPIRIT OF  
MY SHIPS.  
HERE'S SANTA MARIA, THE PINTA AND NINA TOO,  
OUR BASIC IDEA WAS TO COME DISCOVER YOU.

Repeat chorus and end with ...

IN THE NAME OF QUEEN ISABELLA AND KING FERDINAND  
I'M LAYIN' CLAIM TO ALL OF YOUR LAND.

I STAND HERE BEFORE YOU, MY SABRE IS IN MY HAND  
THERE'S CHANGES IN STORE DUDES,  
WHEN THIS BLADE DIGS IN THE SAND.  
ALL THIS WILL BE MINE,  
THIS LAND OF THE BRAVE AND HOME OF THE FREE  
IT'S A MATTER OF FATE, I'M TALKIN' 'BOUT  
MANIFEST DESTINY.

Repeat chorus and end with ...

IN THE NAME OF QUEEN ISABELLA AND KING FERDINAND,

And for all the little people back home keep those cards and letters  
comin' in and thank you for your support.

I'M LAYING CLAIM TO ALL OF YOUR LAND.

Segue to 'James Brown Funk'.

CHRIS

[As "Funk" plays in underscore.] Alright! Feels good! Don't stop now!

I'd like to take a little time and feature my lovely ladies back there  
on the vocals. Let's hear a big round of, applause for the hot vocal  
styling of Pinta, Nina and sweet Santa Maria!

TRIO DO-WOP-WOP, SEARCHIN FOR GOLD AND SPICE,  
WOP-WOP.  
MIGHT HAVE TO SAY IT TWICE,  
WOP-WOP.  
BEEN ALL AROUND THE WORLD,  
WOP-WOP.  
IT'S A GAS BEIN' CHRIS' GIRLS

CHRIS Oh ladies, so fine, sublime, take your time and blow my mind!

Now we gotta pack on up and take this gig back on the road to Spain. But before we go me and my guitar got a musical message for ya'll.

On fifth beat CHRIS goes into a Jimi Hendrix style guitar cadenza finishing up with "The Star Spangled Banner." On cue BAND and CHRIS go into quiet blues turn-around interrupted by...

INDIAN Well, there goes the neighborhood.

CHRIS/TRIO Oh yeah!

Columbus has dropped to knees. Gets up. Dusts off. Wobbles a bit.

COLUMBUS: (Burps.) What a trip. We made it! Well, down to business. I claim this land for Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand, the monarchs of Spain, the greatest monarchs in the history of the World, (aside) not to mention the guys who paid the bills for this voyage. In their honor, I shall name this place Hispaniola, New Spain. Heap big praise on the mighty Spanish monarchs! (Columbus ,gets up.) Well, it's our now. (Sees Indians.) Well, what have we here?

INDIAN 1 I was about to ask you the same thing. How?

COLUMBUS (raises hand) How?

INDIAN 2 Yea. How ... d you get here?

COLUMBUS Oh. We sailed in our mighty boats over the big water more than a full moon ago, from the east, out of the rising sun ... over there,

from the kingdom of mighty mighty Spain, the mightiest, heap most powerful kingdom on earth ...

- INDIAN 1            Yea, yea, ok, we got that part in your earlier bit. (*Indians agree around.*) But we weren't too excited about what you want to name this place?
- COLUMBUS            You mean, Hispaniola
- INDIAN 1            That's right.
- COLUMBUS            What did you call this place before we got here?
- INDIAN                Ours.
- COLUMBUS            Ours? What is Ours?
- INDIANS              Ours. Get it? Ours.
- COLUMBUS            No, I'm afraid I do not get it. You are quite mistaken, this is not - how do you say - OURS. This is India ..
- INDIANS              India?
- TRIO                    India.
- COLUMBUS            Is there an echo in here?
- TRIO                    (*To the tune of "Hollywood"*) India! We've discovered India! Where we always wanted, wanted to go. Oh India, the land of our dreams, filled with spices and gold.
- COLUMBUS            Thank you, ladies. And gentlemen. By the way, I'd like to introduce my crew. That's Marchello on the sword. And Al Varez in the robes. Now, where was I?
- INDIANS              (*Chorus*) That's what we'd like to know.
- COLUMBUS            Ah, yes, India. Indeed, India, the home of the sweet smelling spices and yellow gold much desired in my country.

CREW                    *(chanting)* Spices!! ! Gold!! ! Spices!! ! Gold!! ! *(Columbus waves them off with a half smile.)*

INDIAN 1              This is not India.

COLUMBUS            Is so.

INDIAN 1              Is not.

COLUMBUS            Is so.

INDIAN 1              Is not.

COLUMBUS            *(stomping his foot on one of the Indians, who hops around in pain)* Is so!

INDIAN 1              Alright, so it's India. What does that make us? *(gestures to his companions)*. Indians? *(Laughter.)*

COLUMBUS:            Hmm. That's right, Indians. People of India. Get it?

INDIAN 1              *(looks at his friends. They all shrug)* Well, whatever you say. You're the one that's lost. *(laughter)*

COLUMBUS            *(expostulating)* I cannot believe I have found the westward route to India! Those dummies back in Europe would not believe me, but I have proven it! The world is round!

INDIAN 2              You mean you didn't know the world was round?

C O L U M B U S        Nobody did. .. before me, that is. I am the first to prove it. Me. –I will be famous.

*(sings)* I WILL BE FAMOUS  
                              I'LL GO DOWN IN HISTORY  
                              THE REAL SHAME IS  
                              THEY'LL BE GOING THERE WITH ME  
                              BECAUSE I AM THE MAN  
                              WHO PUT UP THE PLAN  
                              TO TAKE THIS GIG OUT OF TOWN

## TO PROVE THE WORLD IS ROUND

I, Christopher Columbus, “have proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that ... *(big musical finish)* The world is round!

- INDIAN 2            Well, I don't know about proving it. But we knew it. Right fellas?  
*(nods and smiles around)*
- COLUMBUS:            Huh? How did you know that?
- INDIAN 3            Are you kidding me? It's obvious. *(holds up the basketball)* The sun  
and the moon are round, haven't you noticed? I mean, did you  
think this place was something different? Even the seasons form a  
circle, summer fall winter spring, summer fall winter spring, and  
back again. Right? Now let's look at you. The life of a man is a  
circle, from childhood to childhood. *(others inspect Columbus)* The  
way of the world is circles, so it only stands to reason that the earth  
is round. What'd you think it was? Flat? It's round, Like this ball.
- COLUMBUS            Ball?? What's a ball??
- INDIAN 1            Like this – we've invented it to play games. *(He passes it around.)*
- COLUMBUS            Games? Games?
- INDIAN 2            Yea, games. For fun. Don't you have any fun? Come on. You be the  
shirts.
- COLUMBUS            And you can be the redsk ...
- INDIANS            Ahh, ahh, ahh ... *(Indians pass it around, ball bounces of Columbus' chest)*
- INDIAN 3            So. . looks like he doesn't play ball. Maybe he eats.
- INDIAN 1            Looks like he eats. You eat, don't you?
- CREW                Burgers and beer! Burgers and Beer! *(Columbus silences them)*

INDIAN 3            Come over *to* our lodges. We'll get something to eat (*Columbus smiles*) and discuss your accommodations.

INDIAN 2            Don't forget to ask him if he has reservations.

INDIAN 3            Oh, yea. Mr. Columbus, I presume you have reservations.

COLUMBUS            (*looking puzzled*): Reservations?

CREW                (*to each other*): What are reservations?

INDIAN 2            Get it? It's just a joke.

COLUMBUS            Oh.

CREW                What's a joke?

INDIANS             Let's hit the food.

## Scene 9

Lights right back up. Same group, facing the other way, dances in. Coyote holds sign, "Two Hours Later". Columbus heads toward water, Indians group downstage.

INDIANS            (*waving good bye*) Well, thanks for coming. It was a fun visit. Have a safe trip home. Give our best to Queen Issy and King Freddy. Don't call us, we'll call you.

COLUMBUS            Wait a minute, I almost forgot. There's one more thing I have to ask before we go.

INDIAN              Sure, anything. Name it.

COLUMBUS            I need one of you to come back with me. To Spain: You will not believe Spain. It is this amazing place. Castles all over. Beautiful scenery. Great food. Good wine. You'll really enjoy it. Dancing (*breaks into Spanish dance*)

INDIANS                    Hey, thanks for the invitation."To your country. Really. It sounds great. Ahh, Spain. Castles. Dancing.

INDIAN 1                    But I don't think so. You see, I like it here. My friends are here. My relatives are buried here. I think I'll live my life here as well. If you don't mind.

COLUMBUS                    *(gestures deferentially back)* I'm afraid I do mind, my friend. You don't understand. The Queen and King want me to bring back gold and spices. In fact, they expect me to bring back gold and spices. *(quickly looks at crew, about to break into chant again. Silences them of his hand)*. But you don't have any of that stuff *(looks hard at crew)*. I need to bring back something to prove I was here. You're it.

INDIAN 1                    I'm not it.

COLUMBUS                    You're it.

INDIAN                        Not it.

COLUMBUS                    *(gruff and pointing his sword at the Indian)* You don't understand. You're it. You don't have any choice in the matter. I am taking you with me.

INDIAN 1                    *(reaches for the sword):* What is this? *(grabs the blade, cuts his hand)* Ouch. You could hurt somebody. *(Columbus' men grab him and start to hustle him off)*

COYOTE                        Howl.

COLUMBUS:                    What's he laughing about? Who's that? Where did he come from?

INDIAN 2                    That's Coyote. He's a friend of ours. Does tricks.

*Coyote picks up stones and begins juggling them.*

COLUMBUS:                    That's no big deal. Half my crew can do that.

*Coyote takes out his eyes and begins juggling them.*

CREW: He's juggling his eyes! He's juggling his eyes!

COLUMBUS: How does he do that?

INDIAN 2 I don't know. He just can. Says he learned it from a bird.

COLUMBUS : Maybe we should take him too. What do you think, guys?

CREW: Yea! Yea?

COI,UMBUS What's his name?

INDIAN 3 His name is Coyote. The Trickster. In real life, he's just a little wolf.

COLUMBUS/CREW (terrified): A wolf!!! A wolf!!!

One of the Crew grabs a cannon, aims it at Coyote, who has just picked up his eyes, and shoots. Huge smoky explosion. In the chaos, they drop Indian and exit. The smoke clears. Coyote is lying on the floor on his back, paws up.

INDIAN 3 Well, I can see we're not off to a very good start with these visitors. That's a fact, Jack. If they ever come back, these guys are going to be very hard to get along with. They're sooo serious. Well. Want to play ball, furface? *(He throws the ball to Coyote, who gets up. Basketball game resumes. Coyote dunks one. Fade to black.)*

## Scene 10

Lights up on radio studio. An empty pizza box is lying on the table.

COYOTE *(Juggling cassettes in reverie to himself, then drops them.)* So that's the way it was Bobby, at least that's how I remember it.

BOBBY That was, some story, Coyote. So that's how Columbus discovered America, Huh. Old lard butt never told us about it that way. He is sooo serious.

COYOTE.                   Hmmm. Bobby, maybe you can be the one to start to catch on and learn how to howl for yourself.

STOMACH:               rumble, rumble.

COYOTE:               Oops. Hang on a second, kiddo. My stomach is calling. Easy, boy. Relax, I'll take care of you. (In the microphone.) That rumble means I gotta do a commercial. (*commercial tone*) Whoever out there in radioland who sent me that pizza, that was a great idea. I thank you. My stomach thanks you. (*checking time*): Aiee. It is getting late. So for you other radio listeners out there in North America – remember the more pizzas, the more stories I can tell. (*Pauses, remembering his scam.*) And in return, of course, you get my famous "How To Howl" cassette course. Here, let me play you just a bit of one of these tapes. (*Coyote puts a handkerchief over his mouth, slightly altering his voice.*) Welcome to Coyote Radio's famous educational cassette course: Howling With Laughter in Te Easy Steps (*fade to black*)

## Scene 11

Spot up stage right. Ronnie enters with his shirt hastily . tucked in. A cab [cut out] comes by behind scrim. He hails it.

RONNIE:               To the WUSA station, and step on it! (*burp*)

Cabdriver turns to the audience and smiles.

INDIAN 1               (*nasal speech.*) So where did you say you want to go, buddy? All over the USA?

RONNIE               No, no, to the radio station, dummy. WUSA. You must know it. (*sings*) WUSAaaaa, fourteen ninety twoooo ... (*burp. Hits some Pepto Bismol*)

INDIAN 1               Okey dokey. And you said to step on it, right?

RONNIE Right.

INDIAN 1 *(pause)* So you want me step on the radio station? Okey dokey. How big is it?

RONNIE I don't mean step on the station, you idiot! I mean step on the gas! Drive fast!

INDIAN 1 Hey, I get it. Okey dokey. Hey, I'll tell you a story on the, way.

RONNIE: I'd prefer you keep your stories to yourself. And drive! *(swigs more Bismol)*

INDIAN 1 *(ignores him)* Ok, so you see, there's this guy where I come from, always howling and laughing at the moon. He keeps showing up. So one day ... *(howls)*

*Cab pulls across stage slowly, Ronnie hanging out the window in the back seat. INDIAN 1 is taking him for a joyride. Exit. Fade to black.*

## Scene 12

*Lights up on Bob's room and Radio studio.*

COYOTE ...So send me pizzas and I'll send you my cassettes right away. I like my pizzas with everything, but hold the anchovies.

BOBBY *(pacing around)*: Pizzas? Cassettes? Coyote, we gotta stop joking around. Look at the time. *(touches his watch)* Yeow! Seventh grade and I'm already pulling an all-nighter .

COYOTE Wait a minute, Bobby. Telling stories is easy.

BOBBY For you, maybe. But I don't know any stories.

COYOTE Come on, Bob. You ever travelled anywhere?

BOBBY No. That's the point. I'm a kid. I've never done anything.

COYOTE                    Nowhere?

BOBBY                    Well, the whole family went to Mt. Rushmore for vacation once.

COYOTE                    *(perking up):* Yea?

BOBBY:                    I mean, what a booring deal that was. I wanted to go to Disneyland, but nooo, it's some dumb mountain. 'Course this year I won't be able to go on vacation anyway if I have to go to summer school.

COYOTE                    Mt. Rushmore! Hey, that's in the Black Hills. I love that place.

BOBBY                    You mean you've been there too?

COYOTE.                    Of course. The Sioux call it Paha Sapa. It's where you go to find out who you are. So, tell me what you saw at Mt. Rushmore.

BOBY                    I didn't see anything. The stone heads were so far away they only looked this big. *(holds out two fingers.)*

COYOTE                    What do you mean by this big?

BOBBY                    This big. Oh yeah, this is radio *(laughs, embarrassed)* . I'd say they were the size of a... quarter. And there was this souvenir stand. Then a tour guide put on this big show. Booooring.

COYOTE                    Oh yea? Is that all?

BOBBY                    Come to think: of it, it was kind of beautiful around there. There were dark green mountains all around. And...

COYOTE                    *(warmly)* Take us along, Bobby. Tell us all about it.

BOBBY                    Well ... Mom drove the Sloopy up this windy road. Dad was shooting videotape ,out the window ... and then we rounded this bend, and suddenly we could see it. *(with real awe)*

Radio station and Bobby's room blackout.

### Scene 13

Tableau behind the scrim of Buffalo Bill, Annie Oakley, Prospector, Cowboy, Sitting Bull and Coyote playing the flute. Flute music up. Intruded on by sounds of a car driving up, sounds of doors opening. Voices are all offstage.

MOM                      Oh my!

BOBBY                    Is this it:!

DAD                      It sure is. Just look at those heads. *(with feeling)* This is America!  
*(doors slam)*

MOM:                    Isn't it beautiful?

DAD                      Bobby, go stand over there with your mother. I want to get a shot of you with the heads in the background.

MOM:                    We should go up there to get a better view.

DAD:                      Right. We'll have to hurry to catch the next guided tour.

All exit except Coyote, who has put on a ball cap and shades.

RONNIE                   Ahhh, here we are... the ultimate spot on our tour, this magnificent vista. There they are Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, in front you... the BIGGEST HEADS IN THE WORLD. Each is 60 feet high. The eyes are eleven feet across. The noses are twenty feet long. Why, Lincoln's mole is 16 inches across. It makes me proud to be an American. I don't know about you, but I wouldn't want to catch a cold with a twenty foot nose, would you? Heh, heh, heh. But if they did, they sure could pay for all the cold medicine they needed. Because right under that mountain over... there... they found a ton of gold. Let's face it friends, the Black Hills have been a real gold mine to all Americans.

CHARLIE:                Golden Ice Cream! Golden Ice Cream! Too soon Ranger Ron?

RONNIE:                *(To Charlie.)* Yes!*(Getting back to business)* My fellow Americans, you are here. This is it, this is what it is all about. This shrine of

democracy, the icon of freedom, this quartet of greatness – carved out of the stone granite of God’s green earth, and I’m proud to be a part of it. It symbolizes the hopes, the dreams, the determination and the Geo-political success of the greatest national on earth... America, of thee I sing. (*Belch*) Well, that’s the end of our tour.

CHARLIE: Now Ranger Ron?

RONNIE: Now Ranger Charlie.

CHARLIE: Golden Ice Cream! Golden Ice Cream!

RONNIE: Now, if you’ll please step right over here to Custard’s Last Stand, you can buy yourself a little memento of your visit to America’s historic vacationland.

CHARLIE: Golden Ice Cream! Pennants! There you go , sonny. A Golden Ice Cream too? Lucky you. Thank you, maam.

RONNIE Visitors. Vacationers. And if I may say so, friends. Your attention please. It will be your great privilege to be a part of a very special day of all of us here at the Mount Rushmore National Monument. Not only will we be presenting our moving historical pageant.

CHARLIE The Mount Rushmore story.

RONNIE And not only will my favorite Rangerettes, Mavis and Oona, offer you helpful happy camper tips on...

OONA/MAVIS The Mavis and Oona show!

RONNIE But, today there will be a very special announcement. An announcement of plans which will forever change the face of America. I have come to understand that the American people sorely need a new vision of what it means to be an American. I firmly believe that America must be discovered anew. And so my fellow Americans, today is the day that you will be the first to learn of a project that will bring new life to Old Glory. But first we must do our show. Take it away Ranger Charlie!

CHARLIE:

Ladies and Gentlemen, boys and girls, the Mount Rushmore  
Ranger Station Civic Light Opera Company, along with Custard's  
Last Stand, proudly presents: RUSHMORE: THE MOUNTAIN, ITS  
CREATION, ITS DREAM.