

Plays for Young Audiences

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

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The Scarecrow and His Servant

Based on the Book by
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Adapted for the Stage by
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PROLOGUE

IN THE DARK, BEFORE THE RED CURTAIN
RISES, WE HEAR-

VOICES
(ad lib)

It's over!-- The war is over! Hurray!- The War's over!-- It's
over!--It's over!-THE WAR IS OVER!

SOUND: BOOMS! BANGS! AS-

THE RED CURTAIN RISES TO REVEAL OUR
FIRST BACK DROP

SCENE ONE

BACKDROP: A GREEN AND PLEASANT VALLEY

THE STAGE IS SUDDENLY FILLED WITH SOLIDERS. MORE BANGS AND BOOMS AS THE SOLIDERS ENTER.

PANDOLFO, AN OLD FARMER, IS TRYING TO SHOO THE SOLIDERS AWAY WITH AN ANCIENT MUSKET.

PANDOLFO

Move on! Keep moving! All of you! Get out of my field!

RETURNING SOLIDER 1

Watch where you point that thing, old man! Don't you know we been in the war?

OTHER RETURNING SOLIDERS

Tell him! - - That's right!- - We were in the war!

PANDOLFO

Well, I was in the war before this one, and the war before that. And when I came marching home, I stayed out of our farmers' fields, now move!

PANDOLFO COCKS HIS MUSKET AND AIMS

RETURNING SOLIDERS

Wo!- All right!- Don't shoot, we're goin'!- -

PANDOLFO

Go on! Go! Keep marchin'! Hup-two-three-four!

THE RETURNING SOLIDERS SCRAMBLE OFF, SHOOTING THEIR GUNS AS THEY GO. FINALLY THE BANGS AND BOOMS FADE. THE ONLY PEOPLE REMAINING ON STAGE ARE PANDOLFO AND- -

A VERY THIN MAN IN AN ELEGANT BLACK SUIT. HIS NAME, WE SHALL LEARN IN DUE COURSE, IS CERCORELLI.

PANDOLFO (con't)

Gotta be firm with these soldiers. Spring Valley's the only farm round these parts that hasn't been trampled to mud.

CERCORELLI

It's true. One must be wary, especially these days, with so many scavengers about.

CROWS FLAP ON THE BACKDROP.

CROWS

CAW-CAW! CAW-CAW! CAW-CAW!

PANDOLFO

Ya see? The crows from over yonder pick clean what's left of them burnt out fields, then they fly over here to steal *my* crop! Shoo! Go! Go on! [COUGH!] [WHEEZE!]

CERCORELLI

Problem?

PANDOLFO

Don't have the wind to chase 'em no more. Everything's giving out on old Pandolfo: legs, eyes, back, knees.

CERCORELLI

What still works?

PANDOLFO

My natural suspicion.

CERCORELLI

I'm just a passer-by.

PANDOLFO

So pass by.

CERCORELLI

This farm wouldn't happen to be part of the Buffaloni property, would it?

PANDOLFO

It would not. This is Pandolfo property. The Buffalonis are on t'other side of those mountains. We are sworn enemies, the Buffalonis and me.

CERCORELLI

Why is that?

PANDOLFO

Because they make poison. Every kind of poison you can imagine. You wanna see what they do, look at what's left of them farms over there. Nothin' but smokestacks turnin' the sky black and the grass gray. Besides, the Buffalonis are my relatives. It's natural not to like your relatives.

CERCORELLI

Well, I am Signor Cercorelli, and I have been engaged by the Buffalonis to go about these parts and make certain "enquires."

PANDOLFO

Such as?

CERCORELLI

Whether you would welcome their offer to buy your farm at a fair-some-would-even-say-inflated estimate of its value.

PANDOLFO

I'll never sell, least of all to them poison merchants!

CERCORELLI

But then, who will you leave it to? Seeing as you have no heirs and your relations with your closest relatives are somewhat poisonous. I suppose Spring Valley will be left to the crows.

CERCORELLI TIPS HIS HAT AND EXITS.

THE CROWS RETURN AND EXIT ONCE MORE.

PANDOLFO

He may be an oily and unpleasant fellow, but he's right. I do need something to scare these crows. "Scare these crows." "Scare." "Crow." That's it! I need a "Crowscare!" What've I got here that I can use to put him together?

AS HE SPEAKS, HE TAKES TWO BROKEN PIECES OF FENCE AND MOUNTS THEM IN THE SHAPE OF A CROSS. HE POPS A TURNIP ON TOP OF THE CROSS, THEN PUTS HIS SHOES AND CLOTHES ON IT. WHEN HE'S DONE, THERE STANDS A SCARECROW WITH A TURNIP HEAD, A HAT, WOODEN ARMS, AND A SUIT.

PANDOLFO (cont'd)

In recognition of the courage and bravado displayed by you towards them that would harm Spring Valley, I hereby award you the Order of the Shiny Penny and the Field Flower Medallion.

A GRUBBY FARMER (1) ENTERS.
CERCORELLI DUCKS OFFSTAGE.

GRUBBY FARMER 1

Hey, Pandolfo. Why is it my land t'other side of the valley is so barren and picked-over while yours is such a picture of lushiousness? Tell me what's your secret?

PANDOLFO

Crowscare.

GRUBBY FARMER 1

Ho! You wouldn't want to sell this Crow-scare-crow, would ye?

PANDOLFO

Sell this brave and dashing gentleman? Never!

PANDOLFO EXITS.

GRUBBY FARMER 1

Thought not.

GRUBBY FARMER 1 PULLS THE SCARECROW
OUT OF HIS HOLE.

GRUBBY FARMER 1 (cont'd)

Say, Scarecrow, what say you and me go over the hill, across the lane and down the way to scare some crows off my land?

BACKDROP: A BARREN FIELD WITH CROWS.

CROWS
(in fear)

AIIEEEEEEE!!

THE CROWS FLY AWAY AND- -

**BACKDROP: THE BARREN FIELD TURNS
GREEN**

GRUBBY FARMER 2 ENTERS.

GRUBBY FARMER 2
Say, neighbor, ye wouldn't want to sell this brave and dashing
scarecrow, would ye?

Nope.
GRUBBY FARMER 1

Thought not.
GRUBBY FARMER 2

GRUBBY FARMER 1 EXITS.

GRUBBY FARMER 2 STEALS THE SCARECROW
IN THE SAME MANNER AS DID GRUBBY
FARMER 1.

GRUBBY FARMER 2 (cont'd)
Say, Scarecrow, what say you and me go over the hill, across the
lane and down the way to scare some crows off my land?

BACKDROP: A BARREN FIELD WITH CROWS.

CROWS
(in fear)

AIIEEEEEEEEEEE!!

THE CROWS FLY AWAY AND- -

**BACKDROP: THE BARREN FIELD TURNS
GREEN.**

GRUBBY FARMER 2 EXITS as-

GRUBBY FARMER 3 ENTERS.

GRUBBY FARMER 3
Say, Scarecrow- - C'mon, you know the routine.

GRUBBY FARMER 3 pulls the Scarecrow
out and plants him at- -

**BACKDROP: THE BARREN FIELD TURNS
GREEN.**

END OF SCENE 1

SCENE TWO

**BACKDROP: GRUBBY FARMER 3'S GREEN,
FIELD**

SOUND: LOW RUMBLE OF THUNDER.

LIGHTS: DARKEN.

GRUBBY FARMER 3
Uh-oh. Storm comin'. Got you in place just in time.

GRUBBY FARMER 3 EXITS.

THUNDER. LIGHTENING. WIND. RAIN.

THE SCARECROW IS BLOWING IN THE WIND,
LEGS AND ARMS WAVING AND JANGLING
WILDLY AS IF THEY'LL TEAR APART.

SOUND: A WILD CRACK OF THUNDER.

A SPLINTER OF LIGHTENING AND --

THE SCARECROW IS LIT UP BY A SHOWER
OF SPARKS AND SMOKE. HIS ARMS SHAKE
AND TREMBLE, WAVING IN THE AIR AS IF
HE'S BEING ELECTROCUTED.

ANOTHER CRACK OF LIGHTENING!

AND A HUGE BOOM!

BLACKOUT

END OF SCENE 2

SCENE THREE

GRUBBY FARMER 3'S FARM

BACKDROP: HEAVY WET BRANCHES FROM THE PREVIOUS RAIN.

IT'S THE NEXT MORNING.

THE SKY IS BLUE. SOUND OF BIRDS CHIRPING.

THE SCARECROW IS LEANING TO ONE SIDE, STUCK DEEPER INTO THE MUD.

CONSTABLES (O.S)

Come on! -- This way! -- He can't be far!

JACK (AGE 12) RUNS ONSTAGE, OUT OF BREATH. HE WEARS RAGGED 18TH CENTURY PEASANT GARB: LOOSE SHIRT, TORN TROUSERS, NO SHOES. JUST BARE FEET.

CONSTABLE 1 (O.S.)

Check that farm there!

CONSTABLES (O.S.)

Yes, sir! - On the double, sir!

JACK LOOKS LEFT AND RIGHT, TRAPPED. HE SEES THE SCARECROW AND SCAMPERS BEHIND HIM TO HIDE.

THREE POLICE CONSTABLES RUN ON, TWO FROM STAGE LEFT, ONE FROM STAGE RIGHT, THEIR RIFLES DRAWN.

CONSTABLE 1

You see him?

CONSTABLE 2

He didn't come our way!

CONSTABLE 1

Let's check the house!

Yes, sir!

CONSTABLES 2 AND 3

CONSTABLES 1, 2, AND 3 RUN OFF STAGE RIGHT.

JACK COMES OUT FROM BEHIND THE SCARECROW AND LOOKS AROUND. HE STARTS TO TIP-TOE AWAY, THEN STOPS. HE LOOKS AT HIS FEET. HE LOOKS AT THE SCARECROW. HE CHECKS TO SEE THE CONSTABLES AREN'T NEAR, THEN GOES TO THE SCARECROW.

JACK PULLS THE SCARECROW'S SHOES OFF AND PUTS THEM ON HIS FEET. THEY FIT. THEN HE PUTS ON THE SCARECROW'S HAT. IT'S LARGE, BUT IT WILL DO.

JACK STARTS OFF.

Thief.

SCARECROW

JACK STOPS IN HIS TRACKS.

I see you know your name.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

JACK TURNS TO THE SCARECROW.

And he pivots. You think just because my work is of a stationary nature I don't need shoes or a hat? I grant the shoes are for show, but no Scarecrow of dash and bravado can seek fame and glory without a proper hat.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

You talk.

JACK

And you steal.

SCARECROW

CONSTABLES 2 AND 3 ENTER, THEIR RIFLES AIMED AT JACK.

CONSTABLE 3
All right!

CONSTABLE 2
Hands up!

JACK RAISES HIS HANDS.

CONSTABLE 1 ENTERS.

CONSTABLE 1
Well, captured at last!

JACK
You got the wrong boy!

CONSTABLE 1
I don't think so.

CONSTABLE 2
Nope, you're the one we've been after!

SCARECROW
Here, now, excuse me. Just what has this boy fellow done?

CONSTABLE 1
Sir, this is the thief who's been stealing from every farm 'round these parts.

JACK
Me? You constables steal all the time!
(points to CONSTABLE 3)
This one even stole my shoes last night while I was sleeping in a ditch!

SCARECROW
Is this true?

CONSTABLE 3
Not only is it not true, but the shoes didn't fit.

SCARECROW
Do you have an official description of the boy you seek?

CONSTABLE 1

"Boy, age twelve or thereabouts, small frame, light hair, last seen wearing shirt, pants, and no shoes, goes by the name of Jack."

SCARECROW

Do you see a boy with light hair?

CONSTABLE 1

He's wearing a hat.

SCARECROW

Hat isn't in the description, is it? What's he got on his feet?

CONSTABLE 1

Shoes.

SCARECROW

Not in the description either. What name did you say he goes by?

CONSTABLE 1

"Jack."

SCARECROW

What's your name boy?

JACK

...Howard.

SCARECROW

The defense rests.

CONSTABLE 3

(looks at his shoes.)

I guess I could've stolen these off some *other* boy.

SCARECROW

I suggest you look elsewhere and chop-chop. He could be getting away even as we speak.

CONSTABLE 1

...Right, come on!

THE THREE CONSTABLES RUN OFF.

JACK

That was amazing. You told them to go, and... they went.

SCARECROW

I have a commanding and authoritative manner, Howard.

JACK

Actually my name is Jack.

SCARECROW

Just like the boy the police were chasing!

JACK

Yes. How can I repay you, sir?

SCARECROW

You can answer a question. Have you encountered any crows around here?

JACK

Not so far.

SCARECROW

Hiding in fear and trepidation, no doubt.

JACK

Just what *are* you?

SCARECROW

Well, one is what one does, and what I do is scare crows, ergo: Scare Crow.

JACK

You scare crows for a living?

SCARECROW

Sometimes I scare crows on my own time, just for the fun of it.

JACK

Uh-huh.

SCARECROW

My duty, you see, is to protect the weak and vanquish all aggressors.

JACK

Here?

SCARECROW

Well, truth be told, I had hoped for a more appealing backdrop. Why, there aren't even any flowers about.

JACK

So?

SCARECROW

So if there are no flowers here, where did these flowers that adorn my outfit come from? Good Heavens! This isn't my home! Someone planted me here against my will. Here, help me out of this mud. Take my arm and pull.

JACK PULLS. THE SCARECROW STUMBLES OUT AND FALLS, SNAPPING OFF HIS RIGHT LEG.

JACK

Your leg broke off.

SCARECROW

What?

JACK

Your leg broke off.

SCARECROW

Don't blame yourself. I'm out of shape. Must get more limber. If not more timber. HA! And I'm funny! Look here, do you think you could find me another leg?

JACK

A leg?

SCARECROW

Like this one, only the opposite.

JACK

Um, sure...

JACK FINDS A LENGTH OF FENCE.

SCARECROW

Well done. Now put it in there and slide it up inside the leg of my trousers.

JACK STICKS IT UP THE SCARECROW'S LEG.

SCARECROW

Ooo. Tickles. Yes, yes... STOP! That's as far as we'll go.

(walks on it)

Should fit perfectly once I break it in. HA! "Break." Still funny! Yes, it should last long enough to get me back to Spring Valley. Spring Valley...that is my home! Look here, you're obviously an honest and willing youth just as I am without a doubt a Scarecrow of enterprise and talent. If you came along with me, I could offer you a position as my personal servant. You're obviously well suited for the job.

JACK

How do you know?

SCARECROW

I don't know. Knowing is for people who don't have an inner conviction.

JACK

What's an inner conviction?

SCARECROW

I don't know, weren't you listening?

JACK

Sir, I'm grateful you saved me from those constables, but I haven't eaten in such a long time, I'm afraid I'd just collapse.

SCARECROW

Then securing you a good square meal shall be at the very top of our agenda. Come, what say you, sir?

JACK

The promise of food and he calls me "sir!"

(to SCARECROW)

It's a deal!

SCARECROW

Splendid! Now, which way is Spring Valley?

BEAT.

JACK

(indicates SR)

...Erm, that way.

SCARECROW

Then that is the way we shall go. Oh, and Jack?
The shoes you may keep. I am nothing, however, without my hat.

JACK GIVES HIM HIS HAT. THE SCARECROW
PUTS IT ON, AT A JAUNTY ANGLE.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

Look ahead, there, Jack. You know what I see before us? Adventure!

THE SCARECROW STRIDES OFF RIGHT.

JACK

(mouth waters)

I see a big plate of ham. Coming, Master!

JACK FOLLOWS HIM.

END OF SCENE 3

SCENE FOUR

BACKDROP: PANDOLFO'S FARM

SOUND: A CHURCH BELL TOLLS.

STANDING NEXT TO A SMALL CROSS STUCK
IN THE GROUND WHERE THE SCARECROW
ORIGINALLY STOOD ARE GRUBBY FARMER 1,
GRUBBY FARMER 2, AND GRUBBY FARMER 3.

GRUBBY FARMER 1

Tis a shame, dying as he did, so sudden.

GRUBBY FARMER 2

Aye, twas a good man, old Pandolfo.

GRUBBY FARMER 3

Tis true, twas good, tis dead.

CERCORELLI ENTERS.

CERCORELLI

Somber greeting, mournful farm people. Is there any word yet as to
whom Pandolfo left Spring Valley Farm?

GRUBBY FARMER 2

All I know is he wouldn't've left it to them Buffalonis.

GRUBBY FARMER 1

Who do you think'll get it?

CERCORELLI

All I'll say is where there's a will, there's a way.

(nods at the cross)

Isn't this where a scarecrowing sort of structure used to stand?

GRUBBY FARMER 2

Why d'ye ask, incongruously well-dressed personage?

CERCORELLI

The scarecrow in question is something of sentimental importance to
my client, the Buffaloni Corporation. But I see it's vanished,
almost as if it had the power of movement.

GRUBBY FARMER 3

Don't think as we know the scarecrow you mention.

GRUBBY FARMER 1

Yeah, the scarecrow I stole didn't move at all.

THE GRUBBY FARMERS ALL GIVE GRUBBY
FARMER 1 A DIRTY LOOK.

CERCORELLI

Dear me, a police matter. Where is the local constabulary?

GRUBBY FARMER 1

Don't, sir, please! That scarecrow ain't on my property.

(glares at GRUBBY FARMER 2)

Someone *stole* 'im from me.

GRUBBY FARMER 2

Well, someone stole 'im from *me*, too.

GRUBBY FARMER 3

And from me, as well, also!

CERCORELLI

I suppose my client might be persuaded to forget these crimes if
the object in question was to be returned.

GRUBBY FARMER 3

But how are we to find it?

GRUBBY FARMER 1

I heard tell the constables recently encountered "a gangly creature
of vegetable-like demeanor." He was with a boy.

CERCORELLI

What kind of boy?

GRUBBY FARMER 1

A hungry boy.

CERCORELLI

Hunger? And *that* is just how you shall catch them. Or else! Come,
rustic soil people...

CERCORELLI AND THE FARMERS EXIT.

END OF SCENE 4

SCENE FIVE

BACKDROP: A COUNTRY LANE AND STONE WALL.

JACK AND THE SCARECROW ENTER.

JACK

Sir? We've been on the road all morning, and we still haven't found anything to eat or drink.

SCARECROW

Worry not. Where I come from, we have a talent for finding springs and streams. For now let us thrill in the joys of the open road! The fresh air, the scent of adventure, the chance of a really good crow-scare. Hey-ho.

HE HAS SEEN A FOUR-PRONGED ROAD SIGN.

SCARECROW (CONT)

I must pay respects to a colleague.

JACK

(looks around)

Who?

SCARECROW

A fellow crow-scarer.

(to the sign)

Ahoy!

THE SIGN, OF COURSE, DOES NOT MOVE.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

Ho, there! Hark! Well now, that's just rude, at the very least he should respond. WAVEY-WAVEY!

JACK

Sir, that's not --

SCARECROW

Hang on, Jacko.

THE SCARECROW ATTACKS THE SIGN.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

You rogue! You pompous repeller of crows! Take that! Fight fairly or surrender!

JACK

Hey! Stop! That's not a scarecrow! That's a road sign!

SCARECROW

No! He's in disguise!

JACK

Master, I think he's had enough! I'm sure I heard him say "*I surrender, o, dashing and handsome one!*"

THE SCARECROW STOPS HIS ASSAULT ON THE SIGN.

SCARECROW

You know, I think I heard that, too.

(to the SIGN)

What do you say? Bygones be bygones, what?

THE SCARECROW SLAPS THE SIGN ON ITS BACK. THE SIGN SWINGS AROUND AND HITS THE SCARECROW. HIS RIGHT ARM POPS OUT.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

I've been disarmed! How can I rebuff crows with just one arm?

JACK

I got an idea.

(re:sign)

This fellow's arm is in better condition than your old one. Why don't we slip it up your sleeve instead?

SCARECROW

He would allow that? What a sacrifice!

JACK PULLS A PLANK OFF THE SIGN AND INSERTS IT WHERE THE ARM WAS.

SCARECROW

My word. Look at how I point.

(to the sign)

As for you, scoundrel, let this be a lesson to you.

JACK shoves the sign back into place.

SCARECROW (con't)

See there behind that bush? Hear that?

JACK KNEELS DOWN AT THE SIGN AND REACHES BEHIND IT TO BRING OUT A BIRD.

JACK

It's a baby bird.

SCARECROW

We must return this infant to its cradle.

JACK

I thought birds were your enemy.

SCARECROW

Not baby birds.

(takes bird)

A scarecrow of my breeding would never dream of hurting the weak and innocent. Must have fallen out of its nest.

(spots something o.s.)

Aha! There's its nest up in that tree. I'll be just a moment, Jack, then we'll resume our journey.

THE SCARECROW EXITS STAGE LEFT.

AN OLD LADY CARRYING A BASKET ENTERS FROM STAGE LEFT. HER HEAD IS COVERED IN A SHAWL AND SHE'S SNIFFLING INTO A HANKIE, MAKING PATHETIC CRYING SOUNDS.

OLD LADY

Kind sir, I pray thee, help an old woman.

THE OLD LADY BLOWS HER NOSE AND WE SEE IT'S REALLY GRUBBY FARMER 3 IN DISGUISE.

JACK

What's the matter?

OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3)

Just now a gang of highwaymen robbed me.

JACK

Highwaymen? Did they hurt you?

OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3)

No, but they took all I had. The only thing they didn't steal was my basket of groceries.

(opens basket)

See?

JACK

Is that... is that sausage I smell?

The OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3) holds up a BIG SAUSAGE.

OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3)

You got a good noser on you. Sausage...

JACK reaches for the sausage, but we now see that the OLD LADY has the sausage and BREAD and FISH all dangling from a string or fishing line at the end of a stick.

OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3)

...and fresh baked bread and fish...

The OLD LADY plays a game of keep-away with the food, all dangling at different levels. JACK reaches for and item, then the OLD LADY moves the stick, and the item swings away. There is a marionette/hypnotism quality to the bit.

JACK

Sausage! Bread! Fish!

OLD LADY

That's right, sausage and bread and fish and all sorts of wonderful things.

JACK

(reaching, missing)

Thank -- Oh! - Hey!

OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3)
I give you all of this wonderful food, and you give me something in return.

JACK
(grabs for food)
Like what?

OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3)
Like a scarecrow?

JACK grabs hold of the sausage.
JACK
(just about to eat)
...A scarecrow?

OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3)
(grabs JACK, low, gruff voice)
Yeah, and if you've seen that big stack a' straw, you better tell me now or else --

JACK PULLS OFF THE OLD LADY'S SHAWL.
JACK
Hey! You're not an old lady at all!

THE OLD LADY WHISTLES AND --
GRUBBY FARMERS 1 and 2 SWEEP IN WITH HATS AND HANDKERCHIEFS OVER THEIR FACES TO MAKE THEM LOOK LIKE HIGHWAYMEN.

GRUBBY FARMERS
(ad lib)
Grab the boy - Don't let him get away!

THE GRUBBY FARMERS GRAB JACK.
JACK
Who are you?

OLD LADY (GRUBBY FARMER 3)
We are agents in the employ of the Buffalonis.

JACK

The Buffalonis?! Master! Master! Hey! -- Don't --

GRUBBY FARMER 2

Does he have the scarecrow?

GRUBBY FARMER 3 (OLD LADY)

Where'd ye put him, boy?

(points off STAGE RIGHT)

Did ye plant him in the field there?

GRUBBY FARMER 1

(gazes off RIGHT)

I don't see anything propped up in *that* field.

THE SCARECROW ENTERS FROM STAGE LEFT.

SCARECROW

Well, the babe is back in his nest, safe and sound, comfy and cozy as can be.

THE GRUBBY FARMERS TURN TO SEE HIM.

GRUBBY FARMERS

AIIEEEEEEE! It's alive! -- AHH! - RUN! -- AIIEEEE!

THE GRUBBY FARMERS RUN OFF STAGE RIGHT.

SCARECROW

Didn't mean to scare you, but scaring's what I do!

JACK

They said they were "agents in the employ of the Buffalonis."

SCARECROW

"Buffaloni." What a marvelous name.

JACK

They started out making sausages. Now all they make is poison.

SCARECROW

But what did they want with you?

JACK

They didn't want me, they wanted you.

SCARECROW

And you sure these weren't crows?

JACK

No, these were people. Sometimes people are a lot worse. Come on. We've got to make it to the next village before they find us.

JACK AND THE SCARECROW EXIT OFF LEFT.

END OF SCENE 5

SCENE SIX

BACKDROP: BUFFALONI EXECUTIVE OFFICE

A gaggle of GRUBBY FARMERS, their back to us, are all jabbering, complaining, weeping, shuddering as they describe what happened to them.

GRUBBY FARMERS

It was horrible! - His head, his arms! - Thing's a monster! - You shoulda seen the way he overpowered us!

CERCORELLI (UNSEEN)

Just to be clear...

The GRUBBY FARMERS part, revealing a VAT OF POISON. It swivels to reveal that it is in fact a chair. In it sits CERCORELLI petting a dead cat.

CERCORELLI

...we're talking about an inanimate object made of sticks, straw, and light outer wear.

GRUBBY FARMER 1

It was the surprise factor.

CERCORELLI

Was he alone?

GRUBBY FARMER 2

He was travelin' with the boy.

CERCORELLI

Obviously this scarecrow and his boy are dangerous criminals.

GRUBBY FARMER 3

How do you come to that conclusion?

CERCORELLI

They attacked you, didn't they?

GRUBBY FARMER 1

After we attacked *them*.

CERCORELLI

It all depends on when one starts the story. This story starts with an attack by a deranged criminal scarecrow and his vile henchmen upon a small band of helpless country folk.

GRUBBY FARMERS

Ohhh.

CERCORELLI

Come, gentle agrarians, let us rehearse our story.

THEY EXIT.

END OF SCENE 6

SCENE SEVEN

BACKDROP: ENTRANCE TO A COUNTY FAIR

SCARECROW AND JACK ENTER.

JACK

I was *this close* to having sausage, cheese, bread, fish, and other wonderful food right here in my mouth, on my tongue, on its way to Destination: Tummy! And then to have those..

The SCARECROW stops and peers down at the ground.

JACK

..Master, have you heard a word I said?

SCARECROW

Sorry, Jack, I'm trying to make sense of something that doesn't make sense. If we're close to Spring Valley, the vegetation should match my flowers, but there's nothing at all similar.

TWO BARKERS entice the crowds.

BARKERS 1 and 2

Big country fair today!

BARKER 2

Big show starts in just five minutes!

BARKER 1

Come for the show, stay for the food!

BARKER 2

Come for the food, stay for the show!

BARKER 1

Show!

BARKER 2

Food!

BARKER 1

Show!

BARKER 2

Food!

BARKER 1 and 2

Hey!

BARKERS cross back upstage.

BARKERS 1 and 2

Hey!

BARKERS exit.

SCARECROW

Just where are we?

JACK

At a fair.

SCARECROW

And what, pray tell, is a "fair"?

JACK

It's a place where people come from all around to a big open field and play games and smell food and sell food and eat food and --

AN UMBRELLA SELLER ENTERS.

UMBRELLA SELLER

Umbrellas for sale! Umbrellas for sale! One penny. Umbrellas for sale!

UMBRELLA SELLER exits as a MEAT VENDOR enters.

MEAT VENDOR

Roast fowl. Roast duck. Roast beef. Roast fowl. Roast duck. Roast beef. Roast pork encased in entrails for your taste bud enjoyment. Gotta penny?

JACK

Uh uh. (shakes head no. MEAT VENDOR EXITS.) No, wait! Sir, please! We don't have a penny. I'm going to starve to death!

SCARECROW

Jack, I'm sorry about all of this "not having a penny" business. Why, I don't even know what a penny looks like.

JACK
A penny? A penny looks like your medal there.

SCARECROW
This?

JACK
(peers at it)
Say, that is a penny!

SCARECROW
Is it? Take it. Go on, and buy one of those roasted pig things.

JACK
Thank you, master! Thank you, thank you!
(calls as he runs off)
Hey! Hey, Meat-Man!

JACK EXITS AS --

A BIRD VENDOR ENTERS WITH A CAGE
FILLED WITH BIRDS.

BIRD SELLER
Birds! Birds for sale! Birds that do fly when released from their
heretofore lengthy term of enclosure.

SCARECROW
My merciful heaven! (addressing the birds) Jailbird! Though a state
of war exists between your kind and me, to see you locked away in
this cruel, demeaning manner makes my turnip boil!

BUT THE SCARECROW HAS OPENED THE
CAGE, AND ONE BIRD FLIES OUT,
CHIRPING AND CHEEPING AS IT GOES.

SCARECROW (con't)
Escape! Fly! You're free! You're free!

BIRD SELLER
Hey! These birds are my sole means of income!

SCARECROW
Yes, and now you'll have to get a job that doesn't exploit the
defenseless and weak. You will finally be able to like yourself.
(to bird in the distance) You're free!

You'll pay for this, you --!

BIRD SELLER

THE BIRD SELLER GRABS THE SCARECROW'S LEFT ARM, AND IT POPS OUT.

SCARECROW

I say! Unhand me, sir!

BIRD SELLER
(horrified)

AHHHH!

THE BIRD SELLER RUNS OFFSTAGE WITH ARM, SCARECROW RUNS AFTER HIM.

JACK ENTERS WITH THE MEAT VENDOR.
JACK HOLDS A LARGE CHOP-ON-A-STICK.

JACK

Thank you Master! I got a chop! A whole, giant, beautiful chop and just for a penny! Now I'm going to put this whole, giant, beaut...

SCARECROW ENTERS

SCARECROW
(dejectedly)

Hi Jack. Notice anything different?

JACK

You lost your other arm?

SCARECROW

I am really falling to pieces. It's an occupational hazard, but I can't go around with just one arm.

SCARECROW EXITS.

JACK

Oh Master.

THE UMBRELLA SALEMAN ENTERS.

UMBRELLA SALESMAN

Umbrellas!

JACK

Say again how much your umbrellas cost..?

UMBRELLA SALESMAN

One penny.

SCARECROW
(off stage)

My Arm!!!

JACK

Mr. Meat Man?

MEAT VENDOR ENTERS.

JACK

I'd like to return my... big, beautiful, wonderfully fat and mouth watering, salivatingly succulent chop.

MEAT VENDOR

Your loss. One chop for one penny.

JACK gives the chop on a stick back to the MEAT VENDOR. The MEAT VENDOR gives him a penny. JACK turns to the UMBRELLA SALESMAN.

JACK

One penny.

UMBRELLA SALESMAN

One umbrella.

JACK gives the UMBRELLA SALESMAN the penny, she gives JACK an umbrella, then tosses the coin in the air.

UMBRELLA SALESMAN

Now I can get me one a' them chops!

The UMBRELLA SALESMAN give the penny to the MEAT VENDOR who then gives her the chop. The UMBRELLA SALESMAN and MEAT VENDOR exit as the SCARECROW reenters.

JACK

Now lemme slip this in your sleeve...

JACK STICKS THE UMBRELLA IN THE
SCARECROW'S ARM SLOT.

SCARECROW

I do believe... almost got it... yes!

THE UMBRELLA SHOOTS OPEN. SCARECROW
ADMIRE'S IT.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

Oh, I just know this is going to come in handy!

TWO CONSTABLES enter, passing out
flyers. One falls to the ground.

CONSTABLES
(overlap)

Criminals on the loose! Criminals on the loose! Be on the look-out
for a pair of deranged and dangerous criminals!

The CONSTABLES go off.

JACK snatches up the flyer and hands
it to SCARECROW.

JACK

Master, look!

SCARECROW

Hm, faces look familiar.

JACK

It's you and me!

SCARECROW

Not a very good likeness. It doesn't even have my new arm.

JACK

It's a Wanted poster, can't you see?

SCARECROW

Of course I can see. I just can't read.

JACK

(reads)

"SCARECROW AND HENCHMEN OF REDUCED SIZE SOUGHT IN VICIOUS ATTACK UPON HARMLESS FARM PEOPLE."

SCARECROW

Oh, good. They want both of us this time.

JACK

Master, they want to arrest us! Uh oh... the Buffalonis and the Constables are working together. They must really want to get their hands on you.

SCARECROW

Hands. Now there's a concept.

TWO CONSTABLES ENTER WITH MORE FLYERS

JACK

Master, over there. The Constables are passing out flyers with our pictures on them. We've gotta hide!

SCARECROW

Hiding is the coward's way out.

JACK

Yeah, but it's a way out.

The stage is now built, and SIGNOR RIGATELLI STEPS OUT FROM BEHIND THE RED CURTAIN.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Ladies and gentlemen, in-a one moment on this stage, the Rigatelli traveling theatre will present for your theatrical enjoyment, the play that has delighted three, if not four continents: "The Woman She Loves Too Much".

SCARECROW

Oh, Jack, we can't miss this!

JACK

We don't have time!

SCARECROW

You, sir, Signor Rigatelli, is it?

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Si?

SCARECROW

I have the honor to present myself to you as an actor of modest experience but boundless genius.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

(grins)

Say. You-a good. Do-a some more.

SCARECROW

More what?

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

That! Make-a the dummy talk!

JACK

Master, we really -

SCARECROW

Jack, please, I'm talking to this theatrical person.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

You-a pretty good ventriloquist, eh? Do some more.

(flips up his coat tails)

Lemme see-a you strings.

SCARECROW

(flips them down, affronted)

Signore, please!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Oh, you play hard to get, eh? How much-a you want?

JACK

Look, this is a big -

JACK sees the CONSTABLES coming closer and changes gear.

JACK

Whatever you wanna offer, we'll take!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Oaky, come on-a backstage.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI exits.

JACK

Come on, Master, we can hide backstage until those police move on.

JACK AND THE SCARECROW GO AROUND THE
BACK OF THE STAGE.

END OF SCENE 7

SCENE EIGHT

BACKDROP: BACKSTAGE

THE PLACE IS CRAMMED WITH COSTUMES, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, WIGS, A MIRROR and STAGE FLATS. A few RAKES AND BROOMS ARE STREWN ABOUT.

JACK enters with the SCARECROW and SIGNOR RIGATELLI.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Yeah, that's-a right, come-a back stage.

SCARECROW

(looks around)

Oh, I say. This. Is. Magic.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Tell-a you what: you gonna come onstage from-a right where you standin' now.

SCARECROW

Perfect!

JACK

Master!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

(to JACK)

And you -

JACK

Oh, no, not me! If they see my face..!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Oh, to do-a the dummy! Right!

JACK

Yeah, so -

MIRANDA enters. She reacts (badly) to seeing the SCARECROW.

MIRANDA

Signor Rigatelli, what's going on?

SCARECROW

I am.

MIRANDA

You expect me to act with this! Look at his head!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

What, you never seen an actor with-a big-a head?

MIRANDA

(makes to hit him)

Why, you --!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Hey! Is-a joke! He's-a no actor! He's a dummy! We gonna use him like-a, like-a prop!

MIRANDA

A prop, eh? Just make sure it doesn't upstage my performance!

MIRANDA exits.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Oh, he won't, Madame Miranda! (to JACK) Quick, let's-a sign-a you contract.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI leans the broom against something and exits.

SCARECROW

Jack, did you hear? I'm going to be a prop! My first time on the stage, and already I'm playing a prop!

JACK

Do you know what a prop is?

SCARECROW

No, but I'm sure it's something very important.

JACK

It's what's called a "silent part." You don't move and you don't talk.

SCARECROW

Perfect. I'll do it all with my eyes.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

(from o.s.)

Hey, you coming?

JACK

Be right there! (sits SCARECROW down) Now just sit here, and don't do anything.

JACK exits.

JUST THEN THE BROOM FALLS INTO HIS LAP.

SCARECROW

I beg your pardon.

THE SCARECROW LEANS IT BACK UP AGAIN.
THE BROOM FALLS ONTO HIS LAP AGAIN.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

You just can't keep off me, can you?

THE SCARECROW STANDS AND STARTS TO LEAN THE BROOM AGAINST THE OTHER TOOLS A SECOND TIME. THEN HE THINKS TWICE ABOUT IT AND EXAMINES THE BROOM. HE BLOWS ON ITS BRUSHES, SPINS IT, DOES A FEW BATON TWIRLER TRICKS WITH IT. THEN HE SETS IT DOWN UPRIGHT AND INSTEAD OF THE BROOM FALLING OVER, IT REMAINS UPRIGHT.

The SCARECROW looks at us.

SCARECROW

YOUR HANDLE SO SLENDER
YOUR BRISTLES SO TENDER
I HAVE TO SURRENDER
MY HEART TO YOUR CHARMS
I'm-a in love.

(Singing, Scarecrow takes broom and dances)

*RETREATING, ADVANCING
AND SECRETLY GLANCING
OH, NEVER STOP DANCING
ALL NIGHT IN MY ARMS!*

YOUR GENTLE DEMEANOR

*SWEEPS EVERYTHING CLEANER!
I NEVER HAVE SEEN A MORE ELEGANT MISS
SO GRACIOUS, SO CHARMING
COMPLETELY DISARMING,
OH WHERE IS THE HARM IN
A MAIDENLY KISS?"*

As the music and the dance end, the
SCARECROW BOWS TO THE BROOM. THEN HE
MAKES THE BROOM CURTSEY.

JACK runs on stage.

JACK
Master, the police are gone. We can get out of here!

SCARECROW
Jack, I don't want to get out of here. I don't know how to tell
you this, but...I've fallen in love.

THE SCARECROW PICKS UP THE
BROOMSTICK.

JACK
With a brush?

SCARECROW
Broom, sir, broom, don't be vulgar!

JACK
But Master, this broom isn't like you.

SCARECROW
Is this prejudice rearing its ugly head? Because if so, I warn
you: we're getting married.

JACK
Has she even spoken to you?

SCARECROW
We haven't been properly introduced. Besides, I don't want to push
it.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI comes back.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI
Okay, we about-a to a-start. Take your-a place!

SIGNORE RIGATELLI dashes off with broom.

SCARECROW
(calls to broom)

My love, I shall be the finest prop that ever was!

JACK has found a basket and starts to puts it on SCARECROW's head.

SCARECROW
Here, what's this?

JACK
I've got to disguise you, so the police won't recognize you.

SCARECROW
Tilt it, would you? So I look jaunty.

JACK puts the basket over SCARECROW's head.

SCARECROW
Perfect!

JACK
Now don't move and don't talk.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI rushes on.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI
O.K. everybody. It's-a magic-a time!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI gestures for the curtains to close.

JACK dashes off as --

SOUND: A crash of cymbals and a blast on a trumpet. SIGNOR RIGATELLI comes through the curtains.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI
Ladies and gentlemen, today we present-a for you "The Woman She Loves Too Much," sponsored by the "Buffaloni Company," makers of fine pork, beef and other as yet unidentified meat products.

SOUND: DRUM ROLL.

THE CURTAINS OPEN.

Our view is now that of the audience facing the performance.

BACK-DROP: A GREEN WOODED GLEN.

MIRANDA

"Oh, but I am full of woe and heartbreak! For I am a woman without my love! I...I cannot rest, I cannot sleep! I cry and cry, my tears don't stop! OHHHH! OHHHHHHH! OHHHHHH!"

SCARECROW

(moved, and so imitates)

OHHHH! OHHHH! OHHHHHHH!

MIRANDA

(falls on her knees)

OHHHH! OHHHHHHH!! OHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

SCARECROW comes down behind her and falls on his knees. She takes out her handkerchief.

MIRANDA

OHHH!!!!

SCARECROW

OHHH!!

MIRANDA looks up and sees the SCARECROW.

MIRANDA

(turns, sees him)

Aaagghhh! Get this thing back to its place!

JACK

(peeks out)

Master!

SCARECROW TURNS TO JACK WITH MIRANDA'S HANDKERCHIEF ON HIS HAND. HE TRIES TO SHAKE IT LOOSE

MIRANDA

"And..." erm... "...and now I find..."

MIRANDA begins to pace back and forth.

The SCARECROW grabs up her handkerchief and tries to slip it back to her, shadowing her every step like she's Margaret Dumont and he's Groucho.

MIRANDA

"...I find myself lost in a dark, forbidding wood, with no --"

JACK darts out and pulls SCARECROW back to his upstage spot, but SCARECROW still holds the other end of the hankie, and as MIRANDA moves downstage, the hankie is stretched out as long as it will go.

MIRANDA

"...with...with no means of --!"

The hankie is stretched to its limit. MIRANDA turns to see SCARECROW holding on to it.

MIRANDA
(hisses)

Let go!

SCARECROW

I can't!!

SCARECROW pulls at the hankie, and MIRANDA lets go. The hankie whips back and hits SCARECROW in the face, making him tumble against the back-drop.

BACK-DROP: The GREEN WOODED GLEN becomes a SNOW STORM.

MIRANDA

Idiot! Whadda we do now?!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI and JACK struggle to lift the new drop, but it won't budge.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Skip to the snow scene!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI and JACK dash off.

MIRANDA

Skip to the .. "Oh! Now look what comes! A snow storm!"

FAKE SNOW COMES DOWN.

SCARECROW
(looks up)

Oo. Pretty.

MIRANDA

"A snow storm! And me with no way to build a fire! For I have no wood! I know!"

The BROOM is tossed on stage from the wings. MIRANDA catches it.

SCARECROW

That's my fiancé! She didn't tell me she was an actress!

MIRANDA

"I shall use this old broom for kindling."

SCARECROW

...What was that?

MIRANDA

"Yes, I shall cut up this useless old thing and set it on fire. Now where is my saw?"

A SAW comes flying on stage from the wings. MIRANDA catches it.

SCARECROW

Oh, no you don't! Unhand that broom!

The SCARECROW struggles with MIRANDA for possession of the broom and saw.

JACK dashes on and tries to disengage them, but they all struggle.

SCARECROW
You won't saw my fiancée into kindling!

MIRANDA
Signor Rigatelli! Signor Rigatelli!

JACK
Master, no! Stop!

Now SIGNOR RIGATELLI enters and tries to pull them apart.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI
Hey, hey! What's-a matter you?

SCARECROW
Help! Police! POLICE!

JACK
No, no, no! Don't call for the police!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI
Yeah, this is just-a the broom that goes with the rake!

SCARECROW
Rake?! NOOOOOO!! Not the rake!

SCARECROW pulls the broom from the others' grasp and begins to duel with SIGNOR RIGATELLI. The SCARECROW wields his broom while SIGNOR RIGATELLI swings away with the saw.

SCARECROW
En garde! Advance! Parry! Thrust! Riposte! Reprise! Croisé!

SIGNOR RIGATELLI
Ahh! Stop! What'a you do? Help! This-a puppet, he go-a crazy!
AHHHH!!!

THE two CONSTABLES rush the stage.
It becomes a wild melee ending in a
pile-up in the middle of the stage.

ALL

Hey! - Ouch! - Yow! - Move! - Get off me! - Stop hitting me!

CERCORELLI enters.

CONSTABLE 3

Signor Cercorelli! We got 'em!

CONSTABLE 2

Look!

The POLICE step aside and we see the
SCARECROW's hat on the stage. They
lift it, but underneath is the open
trap door of the stage.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI holds up the broom.

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

At least-a he didn't-a get-a my broom!

CERCORELLI

Broom?

SIGNOR RIGATELLI

Yeah, thatta big thing, it was like-a he was in love with her!

CERCORELLI

Love, eh? Heh-heh-heh. Come, Officers, I think we're going to
make this a clean sweep! (exits, twirling broom) Hee-hee-hee-hee-
hee.

END OF SCENE 8

SCENE NINE

BACKDROP: A COUNTRY LANE

JACK AND THE SCARECROW RUN ON AND COLLAPSE DOWNSTAGE OF A TALL HEDGE.

SCARECROW

I can't believe it. My broom with a rake. I just know he treats her like dirt.

JACK

Your broom nearly got us caught! Should've run away when I had the chance.

SCARECROW

What about our quest to protect the weak and vanquish aggressors?

JACK

That's not our quest, that's your quest. I don't want anything to do with --

SOUND: THE TRAMP OF BOOTS, AND A DRUM BEATING

JACK AND THE SCARECROW CROUCH.

SCARECROW

What's that?

JACK

Get down, master! Those are soldiers!

SCARECROW

Soldiers? Soldiers mean battles and victory and fame and glory.

JACK

GET DOWN!

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HEDGE, WE CAN SEE THE MUSKETS, THE TOP OF THE MILITARY HELMETS AND FLAGS.

SOLDIERS

WE'RE OFF AGAIN TO WAR!

'CAUSE PEACE WAS SUCH A BORE.
WE'RE SHARING A GUN,
MY DAD AND MY SON.
WE ALL DESERVE A WAR!

SCARECROW

Funny, I seem to remember a war just ending.

JACK

There's always a war just ending, and there's always a war just beginning.

SCARECROW

Oh, it's such a glorious parade! Men dressed head to foot in red and gold, their belts, boots and buckles all gleaming in the sun! And there above them all...*is my broom!*

JACK

That's not a broom, that's a flag pole. See on the top? That's a flag!

SCARECROW

She's a patriot!

THE SCARECROW LEAPS OVER THE HEDGE.

JACK

What're you doing? Master? MASTER!

WE HEAR CHEERS FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HEDGE, THEN THE SCARECROW'S HEAD APPEARS OVER THE TOP.

SCARECROW

Jack! Good news!

JACK

You found her?

SCARECROW

We've enlisted! We're in the army now!

JACK

Do you even know what this war's about?

SCARECROW

The cause we fight for is grand and noble, and they're going to tell us what it is right before the shooting starts.

A SECTION OF HEDGE COMES CRASHING DOWN. SOLDIERS MARCH THROUGH THE GAP IN THE HEDGE THEY'VE JUST CREATED.

SOLDIERS

WE'RE OFF TO WAR AGAIN!
FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY MEN.
WE JUST GOT BACK,
IT'S TIME TO ATTACK!
WE'RE OFF TO WAR AGAIN!

SERGEANT-MAJOR

TROOPS, HALT!

A SOLDIER ENTERS WITH TWO ARMY HATS, TWO ARMY COATS AND TWO RIFLES. HE GIVES THEM TO THE SCARECROW AND JACK. THEY PUT THEM ON.

AN ARMY COOK ENTERS AND SETS DOWN A BIG, EMPTY POT. A SERGEANT-MAJOR ENTERS AND BLOWS THE LOUD WHISTLE! COLONEL BOMBARDO, A POMPOUS FOOL, ENTERS. HE FACES AWAY FROM THE OTHERS.

COLONEL BOMBARDO

Sergeant! What have we here?

SERGEANT-MAJOR

Sir. New recruits reporting for duty, sir.

SCARECROW AND JACK LOOK AT THE SERGEANT-MAJOR. THE SERGEANT-MAJOR GRABS THEM AND PULLS THEM AROUND TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COLONEL, SO THAT HE DOESN'T HAVE TO MOVE TO SEE HIM.

COLONEL BOMBARDO

Bravo!

(shakes SCARECROW's hand)

First rate! Grand you signed-up!

(to SERGEANT-MAJOR)
Put them down under "fodder." Rhymes with "slaughter".

COLONEL BOMBARDO EXITS.

SERGEANT-MAJOR
Right, all recruits have to take an aptitude exam before their rank as private becomes official. Who's first?

SCARECROW
Oo! Me! Pick me!

SERGEANT-MAJOR
This way.

SCARECROW
Jack, you stay here and get something to eat whilst I overwhelm them with my aptitude.

THE SERGEANT-MAJOR AND SCARECROW
EXIT. JACK GOES UP TO THE COOK.

JACK
'Scuse me, are you the cook in charge of feeding the troops?

COOK
I am.

JACK
Great 'cause I could eat a horse!

COOK
Then you've come to the right place. What're you hungry for?

JACK
Everything! Chicken!

COOK
Yeah...

JACK
Steak!

COOK
Yeah...

JACK

Pork! Venison! Fish!

COOK

Oh, yeahhh...

JACK

Cheese! Fruit! Bread!

COOK

Keep `em coming!

JACK

Pudding, cakes, pies!

COOK

Mm-mm-mm!

JACK

I want it all!

COOK

Great, then go get it. Confiscate yourself a cow. Liberate a few chickens. Must be coupla farms and fields that weren't picked clean by the last army that came through.

JACK

What you mean is..?

COOK

What you eat is what you steal.

THE SERGEANT-MAJOR ENTERS.

COOK

How'd that new recruit do?

SERGEANT-MAJOR

Perfect score. He got every question wrong.

COOK

Every question?

SERGEANT-MAJOR

Yeah, it was amazing. He doesn't know anything.

JACK

So he can't be a private?

SERGEANT-MAJOR

He's nowhere near clever enough to be a private. He's going to be an officer.

The SCARECROW ENTERS IN A RED COAT,
WHITE TROUSERS, SHINY BLACK BOOTS,
SWORD, SASH AND A FLOOFY HAT.

SCARECROW

They said I could be a captain.

JACK

But he doesn't know how to be an officer.

SERGEANT-MAJOR

None of them do. That's why they invented sergeants.

THE SERGEANT-MAJOR EXITS, SWINGING
HIS ARMS. THE SCARECROW PREENS.

SCARECROW

Handsome, eh? No scavenger bird would dream of trying to get the better of me now. (MARCHES) Tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp! Tramp, tramp, tramp, tramp! See, Jack? Fortune, fame and glory!

JACK

And terror and danger and death. Did you at least get a horse so we can ride out of here?

SCARECROW

'Course not. Horses eat hay.

JACK

But you're not made of hay. You're made of straw.

SCARECROW

Are you sure? Heavens! It's like finding out you're Canadian.

SERGEANT-MAJOR
(offstage)

FALL-IN!

SOLDIERS AND COLONEL BOMBARDO ENTER.

COLONEL BOMBARDO

Men, we are most fortunate in having with us for today's battle a representative of the Buffaloni Corporation, proud sponsor of this war and so many others.

CERCORELLI ENTERS.

CERCORELLI

Brave fellow countrymen! Our beloved nation is under a grave threat!

SOLDIERS

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SIR!

CERCORELLI

The enemy that we shall face today shows no regard for life, liberty, or the pursuit of property.

SOLDIERS

PROPERTY IS SACRED, SIR!

CERCORELLI

Two of their most vile and despicable agents have crossed into our territory, sowing terror among our people. They have attacked those who till the fields, engaged in combat with our blessed civil authorities, and made such a shambles of a local theatrical performance that the theatre was forced to give the audience...

(LOOKS AT OUR AUDIENCE)

...a refund.

SOLDIERS

THAT'S UNHEARD OF, SIR!

CERCORELLI

And we shall not rest until both of them have been brought to justice in whatever form justice takes.

SOLDIERS

THEY'RE AS GOOD AS DEAD, SIR!

CERCORELLI EXITS.

COLONEL BOMBARDO

Sergeant, distribute the maps!

SERGEANT-MAJOR

Yes, sir!

SCARECROW RAISES HIS UMBRELLA AGAIN.
JACK GRABS IT AND PUSHES IT DOWN.

JACK

Master, why are you drawing attention to yourself?

SCARECROW

So my lady broom can see me! She's probably amid those flags and standards! When we return from the battle, and she sees how many medals I've earned --

JACK

We probably won't return at all! Sometimes I don't think you have any more brain than a pea!

SCARECROW

How did you know I have a pea for a brain?

THE SERGEANT MAJOR GIVES JACK A MAP.

SERGEANT-MAJOR

Map. Don't lose it.

SCARECROW

Righty-tight.

SERGEANT MAJOR

Troops! MARCH!

THE TROOPS MARCH OFF.

JACK STARES DOWN AT THE MAP.

SCARECROW

..Jack? Something the matter?

JACK

No, Master, everything's going to be fine. I know the territory on this map. These hills, that stream, those fields..and this farm. Come on!

JACK AND THE SCARECROW MARCH OFF.

CERCORELLI AND COLONEL BOMBARDO
ENTER. CERCORELLI OPENS A SPYGLASS.

CERCORELLI

Colonel, look through there.

COLONEL BOMBARDO

(takes it, looks)

I see. It makes things far away look close.

CERCORELLI

I mean those two soldiers. It's them! Colonel, issue a change in battle plans.

COLONEL BOMBARDO

Any old change or something specific?

CERCORELLI

Come, obtuse militarist, I shall detail the tactical alterations.

END OF SCENE 9

SCENE TEN

BACKDROP: A FARM FIELD

IT'S NIGHT NOW.

THE SOLDIERS MARCH THROUGH.

SOLDIERS

THE WAR IS ALMOST HERE.
THE SEVENTH SO FAR THIS YEAR.
AND ALL OF THE DEAD'LL
BE GIVEN A MEDAL
THE WAR IS ALMOST HERE!
THE WAR IS ALMOST HERE!
THE WAR IS ALMOST HERE..!

AS THE OTHER SOLDIERS MARCH OFF, JACK
HOLDS THE SCARECROW BACK.

SCARECROW

Jack, we can't stop to rest, we'll fall behind the others.

JACK

Shh! (points RIGHT) See that farmhouse across the field there?

SCARECROW

The one with smoke rising from the chimney?

JACK

(nods)

You stay here and wait for me.

SCARECROW

I will not. I'm going with you.

JACK

You might scare them. They won't be surprised by a little boy.
Now stay down and keep quiet. I'll be back when the coast is
clear.

JACK DARTS OFF RIGHT.

SOUND: CHIRP!

SCARECROW

Hey-ho, a bird! It can't be a bird. There's nothing left in these fields to build a nest out of. Even a crow couldn't thrive on this.

JACK RE-ENTERS, SLOWLY.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

Jack, what did you find? Was it the farm on the map?

JACK

...Yes.

SCARECROW

What's the matter? Are there enemy soldiers camped there?

JACK

No.

SCARECROW

Highwaymen? Scavengers?

JACK

There's no one.

SCARECROW

But that smoke coming out of the chimney. They wouldn't lay a fire in the hearth and then abandon the place.

JACK

That smoke isn't coming out of the chimney. The soldiers set fire to the farm.

SCARECROW

Then I must rush into the inferno, braving the blaze, fighting the flames, saving the survivors right and-

JACK

There aren't any!

SCARECROW

I don't understand.

JACK

All day long since we met this morning, we haven't been travelling south to Spring Valley. We've been travelling north, away from it.

I tricked you into going where I wanted to go! The day the last war started, my father and mother sent me to sell some sheep at market. I was on my way back when the war started. No one was allowed to cross the battlefield, so I ...I just tried to stay alive, hiding from soldiers, sleeping in ditches, stealing. Then the war ended, and I started home. I knew they would be worried about me, so all I wanted was to get back home...

JACK starts to cry.

SCARECROW

...This was your farm?

JACK nods, crying.

SCARECROW

Where are your mother and father? Your --

JACK

They're dead!

SCARECROW

Dead? ...Dear me. Jack, I... I'm afraid I don't know what that means.

JACK

(looks up, eyes red and wet)

"Dead?" It means they're gone and they're never coming back.

SCARECROW

Never. ...I...I don't know quite what to say. I'm not certain as I was made for a moment like this. I know I was made to be courteous, brave, honorable and all that, but... Look, Jack, when those trumpets sound, I just know you'll dust yourself off and--

JACK

I don't want to hear about fame and glory and dash and bravado! You're a vain, pompous turnip-head! Every time there's danger you run straight for it! I'm getting out of here before the battle starts, and if you know what's good for you, you will, too!

SCARECROW

I can't do that. Jack, I have to protect the weak and vanquish the aggressor. And once the battle's won, I have every intention of taking my lady love back with me to live in Spring Valley.

JACK

What makes you think that'll happen? That you'll take her to Spring Valley or win the battle or even survive?!

SCARECROW

I have an inner conviction.

JACK

I don't.

SCARECROW

Jack, where will you go?

JACK

It doesn't matter. Anywhere, any direc--...
(looks off)

...Oh, no.

SCARECROW

What is it, Jack?

JACK

(points in various directions)

Look there! And there! And there!

SCARECROW

It's our troops. I recognize the red uniforms. Over here! This must mean the battle is about to start. Hooray-hoorah!

JACK

No. They're all pointing at us. They are waiting for the signal to attack!

BOMBARDO

Ready! Aim!

SCARECROW

Stop!

BOMBARDO

Stop!

SCARECROW

I knew it was a bird. A bird's nest with two new eggs. There we are all safe and sound compliments of the regiment. Right then, carry on!
C H A R G E !!!

THE SCARECROW LIFTS HIS UMBRELLA UP
LIKE A SWORD AND CHARGES OFF.

SMOKE FILLS THE STAGE AS WE HEAR THE
CLANK OF STEEL, GUN FIRE, CANNONS,
HORSES, TRUMPETS, BUGLES, AND DRUMS.

THE SCARECROW, HIS BODY RIDDLED WITH
HOLES, STUMBLES BACK ON STAGE.

SCARECROW (cont'd)

Re-group! On my order, we take the hill! CHARGE!

And the BATTLE STARTS UP AGAIN AT
FULL FORCE.

SOUND: THE WHIZZING PING OF A
BULLET.

A CHUNK OF HIS HEAD FLIES OFF.

SOUND: ANOTHER BULLET.

THE SCARECROW'S REMAINING ORIGINAL
LEG GETS DAMAGED. JACK RUNS TO HIS
SIDE.

SCARECROW

Damage report!

AS JACK CHECKS THE SCARECROW
DOWNSTAGE—

CERCORELLI AND COLONEL BOMBARDO
APPEAR UPCENTER. COLONEL BOMBARDO IS
MOPPING HIS BROW WITH A BIG WHITE
HANKIE.

CERCORELLI

What kind of army is it that can't defeat a Scarecrow?!

COLONEL BOMBARDO

Ours?

CERCORELLI

We must find a way to finish this!

COLONEL BOMBARDO

We could surrender.

CERCORELLI

Surrender?!

CERCORELLI IS ABOUT TO HIT BOMBARDO WHEN HE NOTICES THE COLONEL MOPPING HIS BROW WITH THE HANKIE. HE SNATCHES IT FROM THE COLONEL.

CERCORELLI

Why, yes. Yes, that is just what we shall do.

CERCORELLI AND COLONEL BOMBARDO EXIT, CERCORELLI SWINGING THE HANKIE LIKE A 1940s CHIPPIE SWINGING A PURSE.

FOCUS BACK ON DOWNSTAGE.

SCARECROW

Well, Jack, how bad is it?

JACK

You're full of bullet holes and part of your turnip's---

SOUND: THE SOUNDS OF BATTLE DIE OFF.

JACK (con't)

Master, listen. Maybe it's over. And look on the hill there! It's a white flag on a pole! They're surrendering!

SCARECROW

And it's my lady love they're using to wave their white flag of shame! I shall be humble in victory as I would have been giddy in defeat.

JACK

Master, something's not right. That flag on the broomstick! They're lowering it!

SCARECROW

Fame!

COLONEL BOMBARDO

READY!

JACK
We're right in the line of fire!

SCARECROW
Glory!

COLONEL BOMBARDO
AIM!

JACK
It's a trick!

SCARECROW
Bravado!

COLONEL BOMBARDO
FIRE!

SOUND: WILD EXPLOSIONS OF GUNFIRE!
EXPLOSIONS OF CANNON FIRE. AND THEN...

PIECES OF THE SCARECROW'S TURNIP HEAD
SPLATTER AROUND THEM TO THE STAGE.

PLOPPA PLOPPA PLOPPA

JACK
Master!!

BLACK OUT

END OF ACT ONE