

**WE BAND OF BROTHERS**

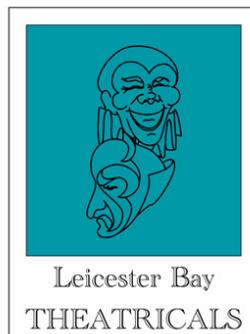


**THE COWBOY MUSICAL FARCE BY  
R. REX STEPHENSON & MIKE TROCHIM,  
& JOHN COHN**

Book by  
**R. Rex Stephenson and Mike Trochim**

Lyrics by  
**R. Rex Stephenson**

Music by  
**Jon Cohn**



**Newport, Maine**

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**WE BAND OF BROTHERS: Cody, Hickok & Jack**

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## Cast

(11M 7W + ensemble)

Texas Jack Omohondro

Buffalo Bill Cody

Wild Bill Hickok

Gambler -- on the street

Ned Buntline -- writer and entrepreneur (plays Cale Durg)

Stacy Abernathy(Female) (plays General Custer)

Mr. Nixon -- theatre owner

Sam -- the Stage Manager

Laura -- Chambermaid (plays a Stagehand and Indian)

Sally -- Chambermaid (plays a Stagehand and Indian)

Mrs. O'Leary -- yes, the famous one with the cow (plays a Stagehand and Indian)

Juanita -- a chambermaid (plays a Stagehand and Indian)

Desire -- a hopeful actress, happens to be pregnant (plays a Stagehand and Indian)

Langston Lamont III (Red Cloud) -- a professional actor

Mickey -- from the stockyards (plays a Stagehand and Indian)

Sean -- (plays a Stagehand and an Indian)

George -- a painter (also plays Glad Heart, Indian Maiden)

Mlle. Giuseppina Morlacchi (Morlacchi) -- Opera Singer and danseuse (plays Dove Eye, the Indian Princess)

Mr. Edwards (could be 'Mrs. Edwards') -- St. Louis Theatrical entrepreneur

Woman, Thugs, Chambermaids, Bellhops, Indians, Folks on the street, and others

**WE BAND OF BROTHERS: Cody, Hickok & Jack -- A Cowboy Musical Farce** Book by R. Rex Stephenson & Mike Trochim. Music by John Cohn & Brent Watkins. Lyrics by R. Rex Stephenson. 11M 7W + ensemble. A two-act musical about the real life theatrical exploits of Buffalo Bill Cody, Wild Bill Hickok, and Texas Jack -- taken a step or two further! The time is 1870, in Chicago, where three legends of the Old West trade their horses and buckskin outfits for make-up and store-bought costumes. Confronted by lines to memorize, Irish stockyard workers as Indians, and an Italian opera singer portraying an Indian Princess and more bizarre casting—this is a true story of American heroes on the stage. The only thing this farce is missing is five doors. (or seven doors, depending on which side of the Atlantic you are on.) The physical comedy is priceless. The situations are classic. “Let’s put up a play in five days (one that isn’t even written yet) and become famous, with no professional actors or even any money to mount the show.” A premise like that seems slim, but it worked! The original show that this musical is based on was called, “Scouts of the Prairie.” The show went on. It ran for several years. The musical itself was very successful in a summer run in 2000 at the Blue Ridge Dinner Theatre in Ferrum, Virginia. **ORDER #3156.**

## **Musical Numbers**

### **ACT ONE**

<b>#1 -- Prelude</b>	<b>Piano</b>
<b>#2 -- OUR CHICAGO</b>	<b>Company</b>
<b>#3 -- COWBOYS ON THE STAGE</b>	<b>Company</b>
<b>#4 -- NOT ONE INDIAN</b>	<b>Cody, Hickok, Jack &amp; Company</b>
<b>#5 -- GUNFIRE ON THE RIDGE</b>	<b>Ned, Cody, Hickok, Jack &amp; Company</b>
<b>#6 -- WHAT WILL TOMORROW BRING?</b>	<b>Cody, Hickok &amp; Jack</b>
<b>#7 -- WE ARE THE PAWNEE</b>	<b>Indians</b>
<b>#8 -- THAT LITTLE GUY'S GOT FIGHT</b>	<b>Cody, &amp; Company</b>

### **ACT TWO**

<b>#9 -- WE BAND OF BROTHERS</b>	<b>Cody, Hickok, Jack &amp; Company</b>
<b>#10 -- WHAT WILL TOMORROW BRING (REPRISE)</b>	<b>Cody, Hickok, Jack &amp; Company</b>
<b>#11 -- THE MAN THAT I LOVE</b>	<b>Morlacchi &amp; Company</b>
<b>#12 -- SEE YOU IN ST. LOUIS</b>	<b>Company</b>
<b>#13 -- Curtain Call &amp; Exit Music</b>	<b>Piano</b>

**R. Rex Stephenson** earned his Bachelor's degree in middle and secondary education at Ball State University. Upon graduation, Stephenson taught at Bayshore Middle School in Florida and Redkey High School in Indiana. He received his M.A. from Indiana State University in theatre and later accepted a position as drama professor at Ferrum College in Virginia. In 1984, he received his Ph.D. in educational theatre at New York University. Stephenson has had 13 plays for children and adults published: The Jack Tales, The Liberated Cinderella, Treasure Island, Galileo: Man of Science, The Jungle Book, A Christmas Carol, Connecticut Yankee, and Glorious Son of York. Stephenson has been a winner in two major playwriting contests: The American Alliance for Theatre and Education 1995 for Too Free For Me (Published by Encore), and he was awarded the IUPUI National Youth Theatre Playwriting Competition "Excellence in Playwriting" for Jack's Adventures with the King's Girl. In 1996, he received an Appalachian College Association, "Faculty Research Fellowship," to research and write The World is My Parish, a drama about the life of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. Stephenson lives in Ferrum, Virginia and he has three daughters, Janice, Jessica, and Juliet.

**Jon Cohn** is a 1996 graduate of Ferrum College with a major in Theatrical Arts. He and Stephenson first collaborated on Galileo: Man of Science and he has held the position of musical director of the Blue Ridge Dinner Theatre for two years. He recently completed his first play, a one man show about the life of Ricky Nelson, entitled Little Ricky. Jon is presently employed as an actor at Theatre IV in Richmond, Virginia.

## ACT ONE

### MUSICAL #1 -- PRELUDE

*[Lights come up on a bare stage that will soon be transformed into the streets of Chicago in November 1872.]*

### MUSICAL #2 -- OUR CHICAGO

*[About the reconstruction of the city after the Great Fire of 1871. ACTORS bring in cutouts of the new Chicago skyline. There are four self-standing sets. They are the Famous Water Tower, the exterior of the Chicago Amphitheater, a brick building, and a hardware store. Once the set pieces are in place, a sign is brought out saying, "State Street."]*

### COMPANY:

WE'RE REBUILDING OUR CHICAGO,  
WORKMEN SCURRYING TO AND FRO,  
A HOTEL HERE, A THEATER THERE.  
NEW BUILDINGS EVERYWHERE YOU GO.

BURNED DOWN TO THE GROUND, CHICAGO.  
IT WAS IN OCTOBER LAST.  
AN OLD MILK COW WE HAVE TO BLAME,  
KICKED A LANTERN, SPARKED THE FLAME.

SHE BURNED AND BURNED, OUR CHICAGO DID;  
MILES AND MILES OF STORES AND SUCH.  
WE DID OUR BEST TO FIGHT THE BEAST,  
BUT THE WIND, IT HAD A FEAST!

WE ARE HAPPY IN CHICAGO,  
FOR THE FLAMES HAVE GONE AWAY.  
WE LOOK AROUND – WE'LL NEVER FROWN  
IF THE STOCKYARDS STAY DOWNTOWN.

WELCOME NOW TO OUR CHICAGO.  
WE'RE REBUILDING JUST FOR YOU:  
PAVED STREETS, GAS LIGHTS IN OUR FINE CITY.  
WE WILL NEVER BE BURNED AGAIN!

BURNED AND BURNED, OUR CHICAGO DID;

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LEFT US MILES OF NOTHIN' MUCH.  
WE DID OUR BEST TO FIGHT THE BEAST,  
BUT THE WIND, IT HAD A FEAST!  
NOW, IT'S THE GREATEST CITY IN THE EAST!

*[The crowd mills about as Texas JACK Omohondro enters.]*

**JACK:** Hey Bill, I found it. Sign here says "State Street."

**CODY:** *[From off stage.]* Where are you, Jack?

*[Throughout this scene, people stroll by representing pedestrian traffic on State Street.]*

**JACK:** I'm over here, Bill. Under the sign that says "State Street."

*[CODY enters.]*

**CODY:** Jack, I'm glad you found this. We've been walking the streets of Chicago for over an hour.

**JACK:** Now, Buffalo Bill, a fine scout you turned out to be. I always thought you had the best sense of direction in the world. But now I see it was all luck. All them buffalo you shot to feed those fellas on the Union Pacific—it had to be that the buffalo found you.

**CODY:** Jack, don't be so hard on me. I never been east of the Mississippi before.

**JACK:** Neither have I, but I been to St. Louis. And what I learned there, Bill, was the secret of finding your way in a "metropolitan area."

**CODY:** I'm waitin', Texas Jack, tell me.

**JACK:** Well, you follow the mostest number of people that's in the biggest hurry. And that will invariably take ya to where it is that you wanna be. By the way, what happened to Wild Bill?

**CODY:** Bill's got himself in a game o' peas-n-shells.

**JACK:** Them city slickers'll rob country boys like us blind.

**CODY:** Nobody in his right mind could rob Wild Bill Hickok blind...and live.

*[CODY shouts to Wild Bill HICKOK, who is offstage.]*

Come on, Bill. We found State Street. Come on, won't ya.

*[Wild Bill HICKOK enters.]*

**HICKOK:** I been playing the darndest game! Most fun I've had in years. Lost a five-dollar gold piece.

*[He hollers to man offstage.]*

Hey mister, bring that game over here. I wanna show it to my friends.

*[A gambler enters with small table and three shells, speaking as he sets up table.]*

**GAMBLER:** Step right up, gentlemen, and try your luck. Find the pea and double your money. Your friend here...

*[Indicating Wild Bill]*

...John, wasn't it?...John Sweetly? He hasn't had much luck.

**CODY:** John? John Sweetly?

**HICKOK:** Yes, John Sweetly. And I want to try again.

**GAMBLER:** *[He starts the shell game.]* Now you see this pea? I'm putting it under this shell. Now watch the shells.

*[He moves shells around rapidly.]*

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Mr. Sweetly, get your friends to help you, if you'd like.

*[He finishes moving shells.]*

So, gentlemen, where is it?

**HICKOK:** Bill, where do you think it is?

**CODY:** I don't have the slightest idea. Do you, Jack?

**JACK:** I think it's the one there in the middle.

**HICKOK:** I think you're right, Jack.

*[Gambler raises the middle shell; the pea is not there.]*

**GAMBLER:** Sorry, boys. Well, Mr. Sweetly, care to try again?

**HICKOK:** You know, mister, I think I'm getting the hang of this game. So why don't we up the stakes a little?

Now, I got here a shiny, new fifty-dollar gold piece. I'll put that down, and we'll see how I do.

**GAMBLER:** I don't usually go for such high stakes, but in your case, Mr. Sweetly, I'll make an exception.

Now you see this pea?

*[He starts shell game afresh.]*

I'm putting it right here under this shell. Now watch the shells.

*[He proceeds with moving the shells.]*

**HICKOK:** Sir.

*[HICKOK grabs the GAMBLER'S hand and stops him from moving the shells.]*

Let's do this just a little bit different. You see, I know it ain't under this one.

*[HICKOK turns over one shell to reveal nothing underneath.]*

And I know it ain't underneath this one.

*[HICKOK repeats the process with a second shell.]*

So that would have to mean that, if there's a pea, it's under this one. I think I win your fifty dollars.

**GAMBLER:** *[slapping his hand down over the money]* That's not the way we play the game!

*[HICKOK puts his other hand on his gun.]*

**CODY:** I wouldn't do that if I were you. Wild Bill's got a mighty short fuse.

**GAMBLER:** Wild Bill? I thought your name was Sweetly.

**JACK:** No, that's Wild Bill Hickok. The only thing sweet about him is the way he draws his gun. Oh, this is Buffalo Bill Cody. My name's Texas Jack.

**GAMBLER:** You all aren't the gun fighters, the scouts of the plains?

**HICKOK:** Now you take your hand off'n that money, and I'll take my hand off'n my gun, and we'll go back to bein' friends again.

**GAMBLER:** *[Speaking as he packs up his shells and table, he begins backing off the stage.]* Well, it's certainly an honor to know you gentlemen. I wish you a pleasant stay in our fair city.

*[Aside]*

Wait till I tell the kids about this.

*[GAMBLER's about halfway off the stage at this point.]*

**JACK:** Yep. You can tell your kids that you was almost shot by the great Wild Bill Hickok.

*[GAMBLER runs off the stage, dropping everything; off stage crash.]*

**HICKOK:** My daddy always said you could make your fortune in the big city. I didn't believe it would be so easy. I hope this play actin' you got us into, Bill, is half as lucrative.

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**CODY:** Well, Buntline promised us we'd make a fortune. And we were supposed to meet him at two o'clock in front of the Chicago Amphitheater.

*[A WOMAN walks by and Texas JACK speaks to him.]*

**JACK:** Excuse me, sir, could you tell me where the Chicago Amphitheater is?

**WOMAN:** It's right behind you, son. And you're lucky to be in town when you are, me takin' by your dress that you're not native to Chicago, because in five days they're opening a new play with Buffalo Bill and Wild Bill Hickok themselves in it.

**JACK:** And Texas Jack, too!

**WOMAN:** So, you're here to see the play, are ya?

**HICKOK:** Ma'am, we are the play!

**WOMAN:** You mean you're Hickok, Cody, and Texas Jack? Right here in the flesh?

**HICKOK:** That we are.

**WOMAN:** Well, welcome to Chicago, bugs.

**MUSICAL # 2 -- COWBOYS ON THE STAGE**

**WOMAN:**

REAL HEROES

COWBOYS ARE THE RAGE!

REAL HEROES

**ALL:**

COWBOYS ON THE STAGE!

GUNS AND GRIT AND DUST!

ARE BOUND TO MAKE US BUST

'CAUSE WE GOT REAL COWBOYS ON THE STAGE!

(REAL HEROES!)

**CODY:**

WELL, THANK YOU MIGHTY KINDLY,

BUT WE'RE NERVOUS AS CAN BE.

**HICKOK:**

I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE, BUT CAN YOU

POINT ME TO THE NEAREST PRIVEE?

**JACK:**

MIGHTY DIFF'RENT HERE THAN LIVIN' IN THE WEST!

I JUST HOPE WE DO OUR BEST!

**CODY & HICKOK & JACK:**

AND PASS THE TEST!

**ALL:**

REAL HEROES

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COWBOYS ARE THE RAGE!  
REAL HEROES  
COWBOYS ON THE STAGE!  
SURE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE

**BOY:**

THE MASSACRE THERE'S GONNA BE!

**ALL:**

WHEN WE GOT REAL COWBOYS ON THE STAGE.

*(DANCE SECTION. THE CITYFOLK PRETEND TO BE COWBOYS, IMITATING WHAT THEY HOPE THEY ARE GOING TO SEE IN THE SHOW, MOSTLY UNSUCCESSFULLY, AND MANAGE TO CAUSE NEAR PANIC IN THE THREE REAL COWBOYS WHO WATCH, TRY TO CORRECT THEM AND THEN DESPAIR. FIRST MAN, WOMAN, BOY, GIRL GATHER AS A FAMILY "THE HOMESTEADERS"; THEN INDIANS PREPARE TO INVESTIGATE; THEN CAVALRY PREPARES TO MARCH IN AND SAVE THE DAY, EVEN THOUGH NOTHING HAS HAPPENED; THEN THE COWBOYS [OUR COWBOYS] APPEAR, UNSURE; COWBOYS AND CITYFOLK DANCE; INDIANS CREEP IN; CAVALRY SNEAKS IN; THERE ARE GUNSHOTS (5) AND ALL INDIAN AND CAVALRY FALL DEAD, HOMESTEADERS AND COWBOYS ARE SAFE. {COWBOYS SHOOT THE CAVALRY AS CAVALRY SHOOT THE INDIANS. THE COWBOYS WONDER WHAT WENT WRONG.})*

**ALL:**

REAL HEROES  
COWBOYS ARE THE RAGE!  
REAL HEROES  
COWBOYS ON THE STAGE!

**BOY:**

LOTSA KILLS!

**MAN 1:**

AN' GIRLS WITH FRILLS.

**MAN 2:**

BE SURE TA SHOW THEM BUFFALO!

**WOMAN 1:**

COWBOY DANCIN'!

**GIRL:**

AND ROMANCIN'!

**MEN:**

JEST BE SURE TA TAKE A CHANCE'N

**WOMEN:**

WIN THE FIGHT!

**ALL:**

AIN'T NO COWBOY EVER FOUGHT A LOSIN' BATTLE!

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**BOY:**

THERE'S GOTTA BE CATTLE!

**ALL:**

ON THE STAGE?

REAL HEROES,

REAL COWBOYS,

BE SURE TA SHOW US HOW BOYS!

REAL COWBOYS ON THE STAGE!

*[When the song ends, NED Buntline emerges from the crowd as dancers exit. He is speaking with a WOMAN; they cross right to be alone.]*

**NED:** Stacy, have you ever thought of embarking on a stage career?

**STACY:** [*Coyly*] Oh, Mr. Buntline!

**NED:** Why don't you come up to my hotel room later and we can discuss the possibilities.

**CODY:** There's Buntline over there.

*[CODY hollers over to NED. STACY exits.]*

Hey, Ned. Over here!

**NED:** [*Leaving the WOMAN, he walks over to the COWBOYS.*] Glad you made it, boys. Good to see ya, and welcome to Chicago.

**CODY:** Good to see you too, Mr. Buntline. This here's Wild Bill Hickok, alias John Sweetly. And you know Texas Jack.

**NED:** Good to meet you, Wild Bill. I've made you boys famous with my dime novels; now I'm going to make you rich, as world-renowned tragedians.

*[BILL and JACK look at CODY, mystified.]*

**CODY:** That means we're goin' to be actors. And we're probably gonna get killed in the end.

**NED:** [*Looking around*] Where's the Indians? You were supposed to bring ten Pawnee with you.

**CODY:** We didn't bring any. We barely had enough money to get ourselves here. I think we'd be hard pressed to get some Pawnee to set up a teepee in this town anyway.

**NED:** But I've already advertised that there'll be ten real Indians in the play.

**CODY:** Well, if the play opens in five days, I don't think we got time to get any.

**NED:** True. I'll just go down to the stockyards and hire ten Irishmen. You can teach 'em how to be Indians.

Nobody will know the difference. Now, we need to go in and see Mr. Nixon, the manager of the theater. And I'd rather you boys not tell him that you have no experience being thespians.

**HICKOK:** [*Drawing his gun*] What did he say?

**NED:** Thespians, Wild Bill. It's a Greek word for actors.

**HICKOK:** There's just too many words in this business. I thought we just had to pretend.

**NED:** Don't worry. You'll do fine. Just, don't tell Nixon you have no stage experience.

**CODY:** You know, don't you Mr. Buntline, that we've never even seen a play—'cept the ones Wild Bill used to sneak us into over in Abilene when he was Marshall. And those weren't that interesting.

**HICKOK:** Oh, that one was pretty good. We couldn't much understand the language, but it was about this fella who had these fits of jealousy and suffocated his wife with a pillow. Lots of sword fights, people dyin'

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everywhere. It was like Dodge City on a Saturday night.

**NED:** I'll write you something better than that. Now, let's go in—and you keep quiet.

*[The scenery is turned around, stage right, to become Nixon's office; a desk and a chair complete Nixon's office. These, and NIXON, are on a wagon. The four "BROTHERS" walk about the stage until the scene change is complete. They notice a sign saying "Nixon's Office" (the reverse of the "State Street" sign) and enter the office.]*

**NED:** Here we are, Mr. Nixon. Here are the stars I promised you. They're a fine trio. We'll do a sellout business and make us all rich.

**NIXON:** Let's go over the terms of our agreement.

*[He has a contract.]*

You've got a play, and a company of actors—including ten real Pawnee Indians—and you're going to have all the painted drops ready. And for that, you get sixty percent of the gross. Now, I'll furnish the theater, ticket-takers, orchestra, etc., and I'll get forty percent.

**NED:** That's what we agreed to, sir.

**NIXON:** And we're going to open on Monday night. So, is your company here ready to rehearse?

**NED:** Well, I don't exactly have a company...yet.

**NIXON:** Where are your Indians?

**HICKOK:** We didn't bring any. You couldn't get ten Pawnees on a train if you hog-tied 'em.

**NED:** But not to worry, sir. There are plenty of theatrical people here in town, and I can raise a company and start rehearsals this afternoon.

**NIXON:** You only have five days! Not much time to spare.

*[NIXON rises.]*

Let me see your script. I know a lot of actors around town and maybe I can be of some help.

*[Pause]*

**CODY:** *[Aside to NED]* Ned, he wants to see the script.

**NED:** *[Aside to CODY]* I haven't written it yet.

**CODY:** You haven't written it yet? How are we goin' to get all those words in our heads if you haven't even written it yet?

**NIXON:** *[crosses in front of his desk.]* What do you mean, Buntline, that you haven't written the play yet? I've never been in such a fix in all my life. Here it is Wednesday, and you propose to open on Monday, and you have neither a company nor a script! I'll bet you don't have any scenery either, do you?

**NED:** Not exactly. But I've got some sketches here.

**NIXON:** This is preposterous! No company, no script, and three cowboys that probably have never been on a stage in their lives. Why Buntline, you'd make me a laughing stock. I'm canceling this engagement.

*[NIXON tears up contract.]*

All four of you, get out of this office.

*[ALL start to exit.]*

**NED:** *[stopPING the COWBOYS and crosses back to NIXON.]* What rent would you charge me for your theater for next week?

**NIXON:** What do you mean rent?

**NED:** What if I took over your theater, lock, stock, and barrel, for one week and put on my play. What would

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you charge?

**NIXON:** \$600.

**NED:** Well, here's half.

*[NED pulls \$300 out and puts it on the desk.]*

Three hundred now, and the other three hundred when we open.

**NIXON:** You're crazy Buntline. You just lost \$300. But you three poor cowboys... you don't know what this guy's got you into. No script, no Indians, no company, and no scenery. That doesn't smell like success to me.

*[NIXON exits.]*

**MUSICAL #4 -- NOT ONE INDIAN**

*[During the song, Nixon's office is struck and the scenery is turned around to become two hotel rooms. Several benches, chairs, and tables are brought in to furnish the rooms. After the hotel rooms are set, the scene-movers become the chorus.]*

**CODY, JACK & HICKOK:**

THAT SURE DON'T SMELL MUCH LIKE SUCCESS TO US.

**CODY:**

SURE DON'T SMELL MUCH LIKE SUCCESS TO ME.

**JACK:**

OR ME.

**HICKOK:**

OR ME.

**CODY:**

WE'VE BEEN CAST AS THEATRICAL WANNABES.

**HICKOK:**

WE'RE GONNA FAIL AS...

**JACK:**

THESPIAN WANNABES.

**CHORUS:**

NO SCRIPTS, NO SETS, AND NOT ONE INDIAN!

**COWBOYS:**

IF HIS HORSE WAS HERE HE WOULD LEAVE PELL MELL.

MISTER BUNTLINE SURE AIN'T NO MINSTREL.

**CODY:**

THIS CHICAGO ...

**HICKOK:**

AIN'T NO CAMELOT.

**JACK:**

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THIS SHOW BUSINESS ...

**WILD BILL:**

IS ALL TOMMYROT.

**CHORUS:**

NO SCRIPTS, NO SETS, AND NOT ONE INDIAN.

*[Blackout, ALL exit. The COWBOYS and NED are in his room, stage right. Lights up.]*

**NED:** I'm ready to produce the masterpiece that will make the four of us rich and famous.

**JACK:** While your working on this, we thought we'd go out and see the sights.

**HICKOK:** Yes, I've got a hankerin' for a drink.

**NED:** No, no. I want to have this play done before sundown. So I want to keep you boys right here in the hotel to learn your lines. That is, as soon as I write them. Remember, we open in five days.

**HICKOK:** Alright. We'll go out, but we'll be back by sundown.

**NED:** Wild Bill, I know your reputation. If you leave this hotel, I probably won't see you for two days.

**CODY:** He makes a good point, Bill. We need to keep our wits about us.

**NED:** *[He moves downstage and launches into one of his stock temperance lectures.]* Yes, the evils of drink have brought many a famous man to the depths of despair. I've seen prominent businessmen end up in the very gutter, yes, the very gutter; because of the evils of drink.

**CODY:** Now, Buntline, we don't want to hear another one of your temperance lectures. You'd best get to writing this here play; we'll just mosey on over to our own room and wait on ya.

**NED:** Before you go, you boys go downstairs and hire me five or six bellhops, or cooks, or somethin' to help me make copies of this play. See, I'll write it, but we'll need lots of copies for the actors and what not. Now be off.

*[CODY, JACK, and HICKOK exit. NED crosses over to his bag to look for something. He finds and throws aside a copy of a Shakespeare play.]*

Shakespeare! That won't do. Now where's that dime novel I wrote -- Buffalo Bill's Last Victory, Or Dove Eye, the Lodge Queen. Yes, now that would make a good play ... I need a good love interest ... and Cale Durg the Trapper is a great character. I could play him. "Scene One: On the Plains; the Trapper and the Scouts."

*[A knock on the door of the hotel room; CODY enters with some young MEN and WOMEN.]*

**CODY:** We brought you some copiers. This is the best we could round up.

**NED:** *[He crosses over to CODY.]* Why the women?

**CODY:** We couldn't find any more men. These here are chambermaids.

**NED:** Well, I suppose they'll do.

*[NED begins flirting with the WOMEN, who giggle.]*

Yes, I think they'll do nicely.

**CODY:** Now, Buntline, you be about your business and write this play. Wild Bill may have a weakness for drink, but you have a particular weakness for women. So you just be about your business.

*[CODY, JACK, and HICKOK cross to their own hotel room, which is dark. They freeze in various positions. NED addresses copiers.]*

**NED:** Here's pen and ink; spread yourselves out here, and I'll dictate to you the lines the characters will speak.

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical**

Now, I've got to have this play done by sundown, so write neatly and precisely.

*[NED dictates.]*

“Scene One: The Prairie.” Cale Durg: “Well, Buffalo Bill Cody, here we are on the plains of your home state of Nebraska. You, the famous Indian fighter and scout for Gen. Phil Sheridan and Gen. Custer; a member of the Nebraska state legislature, are here to quiet a rebellion of the Shawnee Indians.” Now Cody speaks.

“Yes, Cale Durg, famous trapper and temperance lecturer, also the author of numerous successful dime novels; here we are in Nebraska to stop an Indian uprising.” Did you get all that? You look a little bewildered. What did you write down ... just the last sentence.

**ALL THE COPIERS:** *[Reading back in unison.]* “Cale Durg, famous trapper and temperance lecture, also the author of numerous successful dime novels; here we are in Nebraska to stop an Indian uprising. Did you get all that? You look a little bewildered.”

**NED:** You all are goin' to do fine. We'll have this play written in about four hours. Yes sir, you're gonna do fine.

**MUSICAL #5 -- GUNFIRE ON THE RIDGE**

*[During the song, NED dictates lines of dialogue; the COPIERS write them down, and then take them over to the COWBOYS in their hotel room, after which they return to take more dictation. Lights up in COWBOY's room.]*

**NED:**

COME ON BOYS AND FOLLOW ME,  
AND IN THIS ROOM I'LL WRITE  
A DRAMA TO DELIGHT  
WITH GIRLS AND GUNS AND DYNAMITE.  
IT WILL HAVE A BATTLE, YES, WE'RE GONNA SHOOT TONIGHT!

ALL YOU GUYS AND GALS, WELL YOU'RE GONNA DO JUST FINE.  
WRITE QUICKLY NOW AND CAPTURE EVERY SINGLE LINE. CODY SAYS...

**CODY:**

“THESE INDIANS ARE FULL OF WICKEDNESS.”

**NED:**

AND WILD BILL STATES...

**HICKOK:**

“BUT CODY WE ARE FEARLESS.”

**CHORUS:**

DID YOU GET THAT LINE DOWN RIGHT?  
YES WE DID. SHOULD WE RECITE?  
NO, WE'RE NOT THE PLAYWRIGHT;  
I'LL BET HE WRITES TILL MIDNIGHT.

**NED:**

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical**

THIS PLAY'S SURELY GONNA BE A GOLDMINE,  
OR MY NAME'S NOT MISTER NED BUNTLINE.

**CODY:**

“QUICK JACK, HIDE BEHIND THAT ROCK.”

**NED:**

GIVE THAT LINE TO HICKOK.

**CHORUS:**

HERE'S SOME PAGES THAT DEMONSTRATE  
THAT WE CAPTURE ALL THAT HE DICTATES.

**HICKOK:**

“QUICK JACK, HIDE BEHIND THAT ROCK.”

**JACK:**

“I WILL DO IT, BILL HICKOK.”

**HICKOK:**

WHAT'S THIS MESS HE HAS US SAYING?

**CODY:**

HERE BUNTLINE HAS GOT US PRAYING!

**NED:**

INDIANS ARE READY TO ATTACK.

**JACK:**

“OH, SAVE ME, LORD,”

**CHORUS:**

SAYS TEXAS JACK.

**NED:**

WRITE QUICKLY NOW, GET EVERY SINGLE WORD.

**JACK:**

“WAS THAT GUNFIRE WE JUST HEARD?”

**HICKOK:**

“THERE WAS GUNFIRE ON THE RIDGE.”

**CHORUS:** *[This line is spoken.]*

Did he say ridge, or bridge?

*[At end of song, NED, carrying loads of papers, goes over to check on COWBOYS in room.]*

**NED:** Boys, here's the rest of the script.

*[NED hands each one a copy of the script.]*

You need to commit to memory all of your words. Do your level best to have this dead letter perfect.

**HICKOK:** There's a lot of pages here.

**NED:** True. But you need to have it all in your head for rehearsal, which takes place at ten o'clock in the morning. We need to show Nixon that we're gonna be ready on time.

**JACK:** We gotta memorize all o' this?

**NED:** No, no. Just the parts next to your name. There's a lot of actors in this play.

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical

**JACK:** Well, that's good.

**CODY:** [*speaks after looking through his copy.*] I seem to be speaking about every other line. Seems like I've got a whole lot of words to get in my head.

**NED:** That's 'cause, Buffalo Bill, you're the star of this show.

**HICKOK:** Why is he the star?

[*In a threatening manner*]

I thought we was all the stars.

**NED:** Yes, yes, you're all stars. What I meant was...

**CODY:** [*Aside to NED*] Yeah, Ned, talk your way out of this one.

**NED:** Now about this "star" business, Wild Bill...

**CODY:** I'll give him as many of my words as he wants. We can sit down right now and divide 'em up all equal-like.

**NED:** No, no, we couldn't do that. You'd ruin my masterpiece. Just read the play and learn your words. If we need to make any changes, we'll do it tomorrow at rehearsal. I'll have some food sent up 'cause I don't want you boys leaving this room tonight.

[*NED exits.*]

**JACK:** You ever memorized anything before, Wild Bill?

**HICKOK:** Not since I learned the alphabet. I was some time doin' that. How long will it take you to commit your part to memory, Cody?

**CODY:** [*still flipping through the pages*] Oh, about six months, as near as I can calculate. How long will it take you?

**HICKOK:** It will take me about that length of time to learn the first line.

**CODY:** Maybe if we kind o' recited it out loud, it would stick better in our minds. You know, like we used to cipher in school.

[*COWBOYS simultaneously read in an exaggerated, stylized, manner. They give new meaning to the word "declaiming."*]

**CODY:** "Yes, Cale Durg, famous trapper and temperance lecturer and also the author of numerous successful dime novels, here we are in Nebraska to stop an Indian uprising."

**HICKOK:** "I'm happy to see you as well. No beast nor foe could prevent me from helping my true friends."

**JACK:** "I, Texas Jack, have finally arrived to help my brother scouts fight the evil Red Cloud."

[*COWBOYS stop.*]

**HICKOK:** I can't concentrate! I don't know if I'm hearin' my words or your'n.

**JACK:** This memorizin' is mighty dry business.

**HICKOK:** That's it! I'm sure if I had a drink or two, these words would stick right in my head.

[*HICKOK goes over to get his coat from the rack.*]

Let's take these pages and find a saloon.

**CODY:** No. We promised Buntline we wouldn't leave the hotel.

**JACK:** Well, jerk that bell over there. We'll have one of the bellhops bring us some up.

**CODY:** True. We didn't say we wouldn't have a drink in our room. I think a shot o' whisky would calm us all down.

**HICKOK:** I ain't waitin' for no bellhop. I'm goin' down to get us a bottle right now.

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical

[HICKOK exits.]

**CODY:** We got to make a pact, though. We're not goin' to drink any more than two drinks.

**JACK:** That sounds like a good plan.

**HICKOK:** [re-enters with a bottle.] I found one of those bellhops outside and got this. Boys, this is the elixir that's gonna help implant these lines in our heads.

**CODY:** We made a pact to have only two drinks. Does that seem fair, Wild Bill?

**HICKOK:** I think I could live with that.

**JACK:** [begins to pour drinks from the bottle into three shot glasses] I propose a toast: that this here whisky implants these words in our heads, and we become the richest scouts this side of the Black Hills.

[ALL drink the toast.]

**HICKOK:** I think I'll have my second drink now.

**CODY:** That's alright Wild Bill, but remember, no more whisky till this play is learned.

**HICKOK:** I said two drinks, Cody. You know I'm a man of my word.

[HICKOK goes over to his saddlebag, pulls out a beer stein, and fills it with whisky.]

This is my second drink. This here memorizin' is mighty dry business.

[HICKOK guzzles half the drink straight down.]

Let me spout a while now. "Wild Bill enters with buffalo rifle, turns to Cody and says, 'Well, Buffalo Bill, have you seen any Indians?'"

[To JACK]

Well, how was that?

**JACK:** That's fine. Now, can you do it without readin' it?

**HICKOK:** [drinks about a half of what's left in his glass.] I'm ready to spout. "Wild Bill enters with buffalo rifle, turns to Cody and says, 'Well, Buffalo Bill, have you seen any Indians?'"

**CODY:** You had that letter perfect, Bill. Letter perfect!

**HICKOK:** Good. I think I'll have a drink to celebrate.

[HICKOK drinks the rest of the whisky in his glass.]

You know, that plumb tuckered me out. I think if I lay down here and sleep atop o' this script, maybe some of these words will kind of seep into my head.

[HICKOK lays down and goes to sleep.]

**NED:** [NED knocks and enters the COWBOYS' hotel room.] Well, how we doin', boys?

**CODY:** This memorizin' words just isn't our forte. Shucks, I'd rather face a hundred Indians than do this.

**NED:** Don't weaken now, Bill. You'll come out on the top of the heap yet. Let me hear you recite your part.

**CODY:** "Yes, Cale Durg, famous trapper and temperance lecturer, also the author of numerous and successful dime novels, here we are in Nebraska to stop an Indian uprising."

[CODY obviously skips over Durg's line.]

"I'm sure that you are, for you, like me, have always been ready at a moment's notice to kill the red savages, to protect our homes, our women, and our cows."

**JACK:** [has been following the script] That's children, Cody, children!

**CODY:** Yes... "our homes, our women, and our children." That's right, they've done killed our cows.

**NED:** Stop, Bill, stop. You're not saying it right. You have to pause at the cue.

**CODY:** Cue? What the mischief do you mean by "the cue?" I never saw any cue except in a billiard room.

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical**

**NED:** Here, look at the script. You see, you say that first part; but there at “Indian uprising” you have to stop and let me say my line. You got that?

**CODY:** [*To JACK*] I think we had best go back to Nebraska and get to huntin’ again.

**JACK:** Yeah, I’ll wake up Hickok. Let’s pack our bags and catch the next train.

**NED:** See here, boys. You can’t back out on me at this stage of the game. You got to stick to it. I promise you that this will be the turning point in your lives. Remember what I said, fame and fortune will be ours.

**CODY:** Well, fortune is what we’re after. So we’ll give the wheel a turn or two, and see what luck we have.

**NED:** You boys study the rest of the night and meet me at the theater at ten o’clock sharp tomorrow. I’m going to go out and hire a company of actors right now. Who can tell what tomorrow will bring. [*Buntline exits.*]

**MUSICAL # 6 -- WHAT WILL TOMORROW BRING?**

**CODY:**

WHAT WILL TOMORROW BRING,  
WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR US?  
IS THERE REASON TO SING?  
OH, THEY WILL LAUGH AT US,  
SCORN US RIGHT OUT OF HERE!  
WHAT WILL TOMORROW BRING?

**JACK:**

BILL, HE HAS DRUNK HIS FILL,  
WE ARE TOO SCARED TO DRINK.  
OH, NOW WHY DID WE LEAVE?

**JACK & CODY:**

WHAT WAS IT WE DID THINK  
AND MADE US BELIEVE THAT WE  
COULD BE SOMETHING WE AIN’T?

*[While music continues, the following dialogue takes place.]*

**CODY:** Let’s wake Wild Bill; he can play guitar.

**JACK:** Aw, he’s too drunk to play guitar.

**CODY:** There’s two things Wild Bill can do no matter how drunk he is: play guitar and shoot.

**HICKOK:** [*Waking up*] Actually, boys, there’s three things I can do when I’m drunk.

*[SONG continues.]*

**HICKOK:**

WE USED TO BE COWBOYS  
THAT USED TO RIDE AND FIGHT,  
AND BACK THEN WE WERE REAL.  
BUT NOW THAT WE’VE BEEN BOUGHT  
RE-MEMBER HOW WE FOUGHT, BUT NOW WE HAVE BEEN BOUGHT.

**ALL THREE COWBOYS:**

WE CAN BE FAMOUS NOW

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical**

AND BE RICH SOMEHOW,  
WALKIN' THE STAGE TILL OLD AGE.  
SUN, RAIN, AND PRAIRIE DUST  
SAY GOODBYE AND NEVER FUSS  
LIMELIGHT FOR WE THREE.  
LIMELIGHT FOR WE THREE!

*[Blackout after song. Lights come up on Nixon's Amphitheater. Scenery is changed. The stagehand (including the chambermaids from the hotel scene) are getting the theater ready for rehearsals. They continue to work as the scene goes on. NED is on stage with SAM, the Stage Manager.]*

**NED:** Now I'm gonna audition actors here at ten o'clock. So you need to take your boys and get 'em crackin' to get this theater ready.

**SAM:** Alright, Mr. Buntline, but my boys wanna know when they're gonna get paid.

**NED:** Tomorrow. They should get paid tomorrow. My money's tied up right now. Let's get this scenery off of here.

*[Hotel scenery is struck and theater scenery replaces it. False proscenium allows "back stage wings" to be visible to audience.]*

**SAM:** Most of my regular hands have already quit. All I have to work with are these chambermaids you brought with you.

**NED:** They'll do fine. Don't worry about a thing.

*[SAM and STAGEHANDS improv some lines while moving scenery, and LANGSTON LAMONT comes down from the back of the house.]*

**NED:** *[To man entering]* Hurry up, fella. Get up here and help with this scenery. We gotta get this banner hung.

**LANGSTON:** But don't you remember, Mr. Buntline, I am Langston Lamont III. You engaged me to play Red Cloud, chief of the Pawnee.

*[LANGSTON LAMONT is the epitome of all that is frustrating about a self-taught method actor.]*

**NED:** Oh, that's right, I did. And very happy to have you, too. You'll be a wonderful chief. Now climb that ladder.

**LANGSTON:** Mr. Buntline, I am an actor! And I have been mentally preparing all morning to think like an Indian. Now let me ask you, would an Indian climb a ladder?

**NED:** Well, that might all depend.

**LANGSTON:** Depend on what?

**NED:** If an Indian wanted to hang a banner so a show could rehearse, and he couldn't fly, he'd probably climb a ladder.

**LANGSTON:** Let's try this motivation: the Indian is on the plains. And he needs to see if Buffalo Bill is approaching. So he climbs the ladder.

**NED:** Good. Good. Now there's the ladder.

**LANGSTON:** *[He climbs about halfway up the ladder and stops.]* Now where would an Indian get a ladder?

**NED:** Darned if I know. Maybe he burned down a fort and stole a ladder.

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical

**LANGSTON:** Ah ha. I like that. That's good.

*[Nixon and GEORGE enter.]*

**NIXON:** You're very lucky, Buntline. I found you the very best scene painter in Chicago. He also happens to be my brother-in-law, so he's a good fellow.

**NED:** I've seen some of the scenery you already have laying around here, and I thought we could make that work.

**NIXON:** Impossible! Impossible! A new drama needs new scenery. Besides, I've already promised my sister we'd employ this man.

**NED:** Of course, if you're willing to hire him...

**NIXON:** Not me. That's your responsibility.

*[CODY, HICKOK, and JACK enter.]*

**NED:** Ah, Mr. Nixon, the scouts of the prairie have arrived. You're right on time, boys, right on time.

*[To NIXON]*

I know you've got pressing business to attend to, Mr. Nixon. Perhaps we could hire your brother-in-law as an Indian if he needs work that badly.

**NIXON:** No, no. Now if you're going to use my theater, you're going to hire my brother-in-law to paint the scenery.

**CODY:** As we say out in Nebraska, Mr. Nixon has got you over a barrel.

**NED:** When you put it that way...we'd be very happy to avail ourselves of the services of this talented scenic artist.

**NIXON:** Fine, fine. He charges \$200. That's \$100 today and \$100 when the show opens. My sister's behind in the rent. Good day to you, gentlemen.

*[NIXON takes the GEORGE aside.]*

Now, George, when you get that \$100, you take it straight to my sister. I don't want you going around any gambling parlors or playing any poker before the rent's paid. She wouldn't be in this fix if you hadn't got in the big poker game last week.

*[NIXON exits.]*

**GEORGE:** *[To NED]* I'll take it in gold, silver, or greenbacks.

**NED:** OK. You go off and work on the drop, and by twelve o'clock I'll have your \$100.

*[GEORGE exits. NED speaks to CODY and others.]*

You see. We got everything just about ready for you. Now these folks...

*[He indicates the CHAMBERMAIDS/BELLHOPS who are now the STAGEHANDS.]*

...here moving the scenery, they're going to be your Indians.

*[Speaking to STAGEHANDS.INDIANS]*

Why don't you folks come over here and I'll introduce you to the scouts of the prairie.

*[THEY form a line to be introduced.]*

Now this is Mickey. I found him working in the stockyards.

*[MICKEY attempts to shake hands with CODY, but NED pushes him aside.]*

Go stand over there, Mickey. This is Laura.

*[LAURA comes forward.]*

She's a fine actress.

**HICKOK:** Isn't she one of the chambermaids that helped you write this play?

**NED:** Well, yes. But she's decided to change her career.

**LAURA:** Mr. Buntline is going to make me a big star!

*[She cuddles up affectionately to Buntline.]*

**NED:** That's right, honey, a big star.

*[LAURA moves off to stand with MICKEY.]*

And this is Sally.

*[SALLY comes forward.]*

She wants to learn all about the Wild West.

**HICKOK:** Isn't she one of the chambermaids that helped you write this play?

**SALLY:** Mr. Buntline is going to teach me how to be a real cowgirl!

*[SALLY gives NED a little kiss.]*

**NED:** Not now, sweetheart. After rehearsal.

*[SALLY moves off to join the others who have already been introduced.]*

And this is Mrs. O'Leary.

*[MRS. O'LEARY comes forward.]*

For some reason nobody else in this town would give her a job.

**O'LEARY:** Thank you, Mr. Buntline.

*[She moves off also.]*

**NED:** And this is Desire.

*[DESIRE steps forward.]*

**THREE COWBOYS:** Mr. Buntline!

**NED:** No! You boys have it all wrong. Desire here came to Chicago several months ago to become an actress, and this is her first big break.

*[DESIRE moves off to join the others.]*

**NED:** And this is Juanita.

*[Another of the CHAMBERMAIDS comes forward who is obviously not the Indian type.]*

**HICKOK:** Isn't she one of the chambermaids who helped you write this play?

**NED:** Yes. But I've convinced her to become an actress, too.

**HICKOK:** *[Calling NED aside]* Ned, are you sure she can play an Indian?

**NED:** Oh, don't you think so?

**HICKOK:** Well, I don't know. What do you think, Bill?

**CODY:** I don't know. What do you think, Jack?

**JACK:** *[Looking around]* I wish I had someone to ask.

**JUANITA:** *[beginning to cry loudly, then turns to HICKOK.]* You don't want me to be in the show!

**HICKOK:** *[willing to do anything to get her to stop crying.]* Alright, alright, you can be anything you want to.

*[JUANITA gradually stops crying as she moves off to join the other STAGEHANDS/INDIANS.]*

**NED:** *[To JUANITA]* There, there. You'll make a wonderful Indian.

*[Turning to COWBOYS]*

Now these are real fine people. They just don't have a lot of experience at this sort of thing. So you need to teach 'em how to be realistic Indians.

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical**

*[NED addresses the INDIANS as a group.]*

All you Indians! Gather around Buffalo Bill here. He'll school you up in the ways of the noble savage.

*[THEY gather; NED and the STAGE MANAGER move to the background.]*

**CODY:** Now folks, this oughta work out right smartly. We got experience with Indians and you got experience in the theater. So maybe you can help us a little bit, and we can help you.

**LANGSTON:** I'll be happy to help, Mr. Cody. I'm Langston Lamont III. I've performed at many a New York theater, and I wouldn't hesitate to show you the ropes, as it were, that will make you great thespians.

**CODY:** I wouldn't use that word. It makes Wild Bill nervous.

**MICKY:** But Mr. Cody, we don't have any experience at all in the theater. I've been workin' in the stockyards. Mr. Buntline hired me, tellin' me that I'd become famous sure enough.

**JACK:** Stockyards? I thought this theater smelled like home.

**CODY:** Now this first thing you have to know about the Indian is...

**LANGSTON:** I hate to interrupt you, Mr. Cody, but if I could just demonstrate. After all, I probably have more experience as a thesp...er...as an actor, than anyone here. Just follow me, gentlemen, and do as I do.

*[LANGSTON does an overly broad characterization of an Indian stalking—crouched over and putting his hand to his forehead now and then to search the horizon. The others imitate his actions.]*

**HICKOK:** What on earth are they doing, Bill?

**CODY:** I don't know. Say, Mr. Famous Actor III, what in tarnation are you doing?

**LANGSTON:** That is how an Indian walks! He has rather a sneaky aspect to his character, for he has learned to mistrust the white man.

**JACK:** Now if that don't beat all! You ever met an Indian?

**LANGSTON:** Not in person, no. However, last night, at home, as I was beginning to build my role, I envisioned the noble savage out on the barren plains. There in his teepee, beside a bubbling brook, with a buffalo grazing nearby...

**HICKOK:** Cody, this greenhorn ain't got no idea. Listen, Mr. Famous Actor Number Three, I think I could teach you to speak Indian in about five minutes.

**LANGSTON:** How?

**HICKOK:** See, you're learning already.

*[Everybody in the troupe laughs at him.]*

**LANGSTON:** You're making sport of me, sir. Of course, without my costume, it's extremely difficulty for me to assume my character properly.

*[NED, STAGE MANAGER, and MORLACCHI enter.]*

**NED:** Buffalo Bill, I want you to meet your co-star, Mlle. Giuseppina Morlacchi. Wild Bill, why don't you and Texas Jack take these Indians back stage and perfect them in their parts.

*[HICKOK, JACK, and INDIANS exit.]*

**CODY:** *[Shaking MORLACCHI's hand]* Very pleased to meet you ma'am.

**MORLACCHI:** *[In a very thick Italian accent]* The pleasure is all mine, I assure you, Mr. Buffalo Bill Cody.

**CODY:** *[Aside to NED]* Who's she going to play?

**NED:** Why, she'll play Dove Eye, the Indian princess, of course.

**CODY:** *[Sarcastically]* Oh, she'll do jes fine, Mr. Buntline, jes fine.

**PERUSAL SCRIPT -- We Band of Brothers -- A Cowboy Musical**

**NED:** Bill, she's famous! Not only has she sung operas in this country and in Europe, but Mlle. Morlacchi is also a renowned danseuse; she introduced the can-can to America.

**MORLACCHI:** However, Mr. Cody, this is my first acting part—in a western. Now I may need your help...  
[*MORLACCHI puts her hand on CODY'S arm warmly.*]

...in affecting the Indian manner of speech.

**CODY:** Maybe Texas Jack would be better at that sort of thing. He's real good at accents. And he's single!

**MORLACCHI:** Where would I find Signor Texas Jack?

**NED:** He's off back with the Indians. Sam, would you show Mlle. Morlacchi back stage.

[*MORLACCHI and STAGE MANAGER exit scene. GEORGE enters. In the background the STAGEHANDS are putting up scenery with HICKOK supervising.*]

**GEORGE:** Mr. Buntline, I've started on the drop and we're ready to hang it. So where's my \$100?

**NED:** It is almost twelve o'clock, isn't it? But the money hasn't arrived from my New York bank yet. So just go back to painting. I'm sure it will be here by two o'clock.

**GEORGE:** Nope. My brother-in-law, Mr. Nixon, said that if you didn't pay me I was to go straight to his office.

**NED:** Have you ever met the famous Mr. Buffalo Bill Cody? He is my business associate in this play, a member of the Nebraska state legislature, winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor, You go back and help hang that drop, and I'll discuss this matter with my associate, Mr. Cody.

[*GEORGE goes back to help with the drop.*]

**HICKOK:** [*upstage with the STAGEHANDS.*] How 'bout a game o' draw poker. I'll show you how we play it out west.

**MICKEY:** That's an idea now. Playin' cards with Wild Bill Hickok. I'm in.

**SEAN:** I'm in, too. This should be interestin'.

[*To GEORGE*]

Hey, you want to play?

**GEORGE:** I'd love to, boys, but I'm a bit short on funds right now.

[*They start playing cards without the GEORGE.*]

**CODY:** Why don't you just pay him the \$100?

**NED:** I ain't got it! Bill, I haven't got one red cent to my name.

**CODY:** You don't have any money? Who's gonna pay our hotel bills and buy our meals?

**NED:** Oh, come Monday night, we'll be rollin' in money. This show will be a smash. And I give a temperance lecture of Friday night, and that should bring in thirty or forty dollars. But right now, I'm plumb tapped out. You got any money?

**CODY:** Only enough to get me back to Nebraska.

[*Looks back to card game going on in background.*]

But I have an idea how we can get that drop painted and come by a few dollars right now.

**NED:** You'd better have an idea, or be prepared to spend what money you've got to buy that train ticket.

[*NED moves to the background.*]

**CODY:** Wild Bill, why don't you all move your poker game up here. The light's better. Mr. Buntline said we could take a break.

[*The poker game comes forward. As it's moving:*]

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George, that's a mighty fine piece o' work on that canvass. It reminds me of the Badlands.

**GEORGE:** If I don't get my \$100, you'll end up painting it.

**CODY:** You know, it's a shame that while we're takin' this break you can't play some cards with the famous Wild Bill Hickok. Yes, sir. That would be somethin' to tell the grandkids. Not that you'd get the best of Wild Bill, but just for the honor of the thing.

**GEORGE:** If Mr. Buntline would give me my \$100, I'd be in that card game right as rain.

**CODY:** That gives me an idea. I think we both arrived at the same water hole at the same time. You see, I could get Mr. Buntline to write you an IOU for \$10 or \$20 so you could get in the game. But I don't know if I should do it or not. Wild Bill's my best friend, and you know the cards have been goin' against him. He's even tried to change his name to John Sweetly in hopes that his luck would change. But it's made it even worse.

**GEORGE:** Do you think Mr. Buntline would really give me an IOU?

**CODY:** What's a hundred dollars to a man like Buntline? I'm sure he could be persuaded. [*To Buntline*] Mr. Buntline, could you come here, sir?

[*CODY moves to stand behind HICKOK.*]

Wild Bill, have you had opportunity to overhear any of the conversation I've been havin' with this fella?

**HICKOK:** I've heard bits and pieces. Specially that part about my luck turnin' against me.

[*A wink and a nod*]

**CODY:** Sad but true. I can see by the hand you're holdin' that you'll have to fold.

**HICKOK:** [*Aside to CODY*] But Bill, I've got a straight.

**CODY:** Yes, Mr. Sweetly, you're out of this game.

**MICKEY:** I guess that makes me the winner. An' I only had a pair o' kings! [*Buntline comes in.*]

**CODY:** Mr. Buntline, I have a proposition for you. George here would like the privilege of playin' cards with Wild Bill, but he's a bit short of funds, and I was wondering if you couldn't give him an IOU against his salary for ten or twenty dollars so he could play.

**NED:** Now a man has to be careful who he gives IOU's to. My money will be arriving from New York in a couple of hours. Couldn't he just wait?

**CODY:** Boy, Wild Bill, there's that streak o' bad luck again. You're gonna have to fold that hand, too.

**MICKEY:** Faith'n I win again. Two hands in a row against Mr. Wild Bill HICKOK hisself. I'm thinkin' I should turn professional.

**GEORGE:** [*Very excited*] Please, Mr. Buntline, an IOU for ten or twenty dollars.

**NED:** Alright, alright. Twenty dollars.

[*He writes out the IOU and gives it to the GEORGE, who sits in on the game.*]

**CODY:** I think, Mr. Sweetly, we've got a new player for you. And not to put any pressure on you, but if a fella would happen to lose this game it could be the end of our stage careers.

**HICKOK:** I got your drift, Bill. Y'all wouldn't mind if I changed seats, would you? I never like to sit with my back to the door.

[*They all switch seats. GEORGE, MICKEY, SEAN, and HICKOK are in the game.*]

You wanna cut the cards, Georgie?

[*The GEORGE cuts, and CODY starts dealing. JACK and MORLACCHI enter.*]

**JACK:** Hey, Buffalo Bill, are we ready to start rehearsin' again?

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**CODY:** No, not for a few more minutes yet. Why don't you come on over and watch the game?

**JACK:** Boy, I love to watch Wild Bill play poker!

**MORLACCHI:** No, no, Signor Texas Jack. Come to my dressing room and help me with my Indian accents, eh?

*[MORLACCHI pulls him off stage. By this time the cards are dealt.]*

**HICKOK:** I'm in for twenty.

**OTHER PLAYERS:** "Me too", etc.

*[ALL ante in. Mickey takes one card, the GEORGE takes two, HICKOK takes three.]*

**GEORGE:** I'll raise you twenty.

**HICKOK:** You ain't got twenty more dollars.

**GEORGE:** Mr. Buntline, could I have another IOU, just for twenty more dollars?

**NED:** Can I see your cards first?

*[GEORGE shows him the cards, and speaks aside.]*

Kings and Queens! I'll advance you the twenty...no, thirty!

*[CODY sees the raise.]*

**GEORGE:** I'll see your twenty and raise you ten.

**MICKEY:** *[folds.]* Too rich for my poor Irish blood.

**HICKOK:** Well, I'll see that ten, and raise you forty more.

**CODY:** Bill, what in tarnation are you doing? You can't bluff these Chicago city slickers like you do sodbusters in Nebraska.

**HICKOK:** *[speaks in a stage whisper loud enough for all to hear.]* Shh! I don't want him to know I'm bluffin'.

*[Aloud]*

Besides, I've said raise, and raise it is.

*[HICKOK puts his money in.]*

**GEORGE:** Mr. Buntline, I really need fifty dollars.

**NED:** You've got a good hand. I'll write it out.

**GEORGE:** Here's my fifty-dollar IOU from Mr. Buntline. I'll call. Two pair! Kings and Queens! With an ace as a kicker.

*[The GEORGE starts to reach out to take the pot. HICKOK stops him.]*

**HICKOK:** Whoa there, pardner.

*[Laying out his cards]*

I've got two pair...aces and eights. That's a winner where I come from.

**GEORGE:** I'm sorry, Mr. Buntline. I seem to have lost all your money.

**NED:** No, I think you just lost all of your money. Looks like you'll have to do that painting gratis so I can settle those IOU's with Mr. Hickok.

*[GEORGE goes off to get some paint.]*

Wild Bill, thank you. Why don't you take these boys off and see to it they can act at least a little like real Indians

*[The GEORGE comes back to work on the scenery. STAGEHANDS go off with HICKOK to rehearse as Indians.]*

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**NED:** Where's Stacy Abernathy? That's the person I've employed to play General Custer.

**CODY:** Yeah, I saw ole George's name in the script. I didn't think he was gonna give up his army commission to do any play actin'.

**NED:** No, I've hired someone to represent him. I'm sure he wouldn't mind. It will make him all the more famous.

*[From the back of the house, STACY carrying bags and feminine stuff.]*

**STACY:** Oh, I'm sorry I'm late, Mr. Buntline. But I needed to go out and round up a few things.

**CODY:** I don't remember another female in the play.

**NED:** You're correct, Bill. Stacy here is what you'd call a versatile performer. I've employed her to enact the role of General Custer.

**STACY:** That's the reason it took me so long. I had to stop and get this wig, *[She puts on a long blonde wig.]* and I thought this moustache would help.

*[She puts on moustache.]*

And I just love all this gold braid. Striking, don't you think? Wait, I'll do it for you in character.

*[In a very false deep voice]*

"Well, Buffalo Bill, we've ridden the trail together many times." How's that?

*[CODY is silent.]*

**NED:** You'll do fine, honey. Go get into your general's outfit.

*[She starts to exit.]*

**STACY:** How's the moustache? Does that work? I got a beard, too, but I thought that would be too much, you know. I mean does General Custer have a beard? I know he has that lovely long blonde hair.

**NED:** It's perfect, sweetheart. Use the beard. Now go get dressed.

**STACY:** Give us a kiss first.

*[NED kisses her and she exits.]*

**CODY:** She's gonna play General Custer!!?

**NED:** Well, Bill, on such short notice, I just couldn't find all the actors I really wanted. But she'll do fine. Very versatile. Let's see what progress the boys have made with those Indians.

**CODY:** Wild Bill! Bring the Indians on.

*[INDIANS enter, arms akimbo, walking ramrod straight, almost like robots, for about eight steps. Then they go back into their exaggerated sneaky walks for about eight steps. They stop and look around with their hands to their foreheads. Then they go wild running around and doing caricature Indian war whoops.]*

**MUSICAL #7 -- WE ARE THE PAWNEE**

**INDIANS:**

*WE ARE THE PAWNEE.*

*OUT TO KILL YANKEE.*

*SNEAK FROM OUT TEEPEE.*

*SCALP WITH TOMAHAWK-EE.*

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*WE ARE CRAFTY INDIANS  
SNEAKING LIKE REPTILIANS.  
OUR STYLE IS WAGNERIAN.  
WE'LL PLAY LIKE OLYMPIANS!*

*WE DO A WARDANCE,  
PART OF PERFORMANCE.  
TALK YOU MUST TRANSLATE,  
VERBS WE NO CONJUGATE.*

*SOLDIERS BUILD WOOD FORTIFICATIONS,  
NEVER PRACTICE REFORESTATION,  
DESTROY ALL OF THE VEGETATION,  
MAKE US LIVE ON A RESERVATION.*

*WE ARE THE PAWNEE.  
OUT TO KILL YANKEE.  
SNEAK FROM OUR TEEPEE.  
SCALP WITH TOMAHAWK-EE!*

*[At the conclusion INDIANS stop and look at CODY for approval.]*

**CODY:** Plenty picturesque. Lots of energy.

**LANGSTON:** I wasn't good, was I? I didn't feel it. I told Mr. Hickok that without the war bonnet I wouldn't be a real Indian.

*[To NED]*

So when, sir, do I get my war bonnet?

**NED:** *[He calls over SAM.]* Where's the war bonnet for Red Cloud?

**SAM:** Remember, sir, you told me...

**NED:** I know what I told you! How can this fine actor create the role of Red Cloud without a war bonnet? Now go find him one at once.

**SAM:** But sir, you said ...

**NED:** *[To LANGSTON]* There's a box of tomahawks and things down in storage. Why don't you go and pick out the very best one for the Chief.

*[LANGSTON exits.]*

**SAM:** But you told me we couldn't afford a war bonnet.

**NED:** We can't, we can't. We'll have to make one. We've got to keep him happy. He's the only actor in this whole show that knows his lines.

*[SAM exits.]*

Time for rehearsal! Where's Texas Jack and Mlle. Morlacchi?

**MICKEY:** I think they're still back in her dressing room.

**NED:** Well, run down there and tell 'em it's time to begin.

**HICKOK:** I'd knock first.

**NED:** Now this scene is where Dove Eye, the Indian Princess, has fallen in love with Buffalo Bill. And she recounts her love for him and vows to leave the prairie if he will have her. Buffalo Bill, have you got your words for this?

*[MORLACCHI comes running on stage adjusting her costume, which had become disarranged during her liaison with Jack.]*

**MORLACCHI:** I'm a-ready.

**NED:** Wild Bill, you and Buffalo Bill take your places. Texas Jack, you come on in a minute. Are you ready?

**JACK:** I'm here, ready or not.

**NED:** Begin!

**MORLACCHI:** *[Singing to an operatic tune]* "Oh Buffalo Bill, the King of the Hill, you are the man that I love. I hope you will love little Dove. My heart soars far above."

**NED:** Wait! Stop! These aren't the lines I wrote.

**MORLACCHI:** I know, but they didn't fit the meter of the song.

*[NED pulls her off to the side.]*

You didn't like it, did you?

*[Breaking into tears]*

You hated it; they all hated it!

**NED:** No, no. It wasn't that bad. It's just that this isn't an opera, my dear. It's border drama. Cowboys, Indians.

**MORLACCHI:** You hated it. I should quit.

**NED:** Don't quit, don't quit.

**MORLACCHI:** But I'm a singer, a dancer of the can-can.

**NED:** Yes you are, and very accomplished, too. But this is a new direction for your career. I've got you a song to sing, an opera song, but it comes later in the show. I haven't shown it to you yet. So, let's just go back to this scene and do the lines I wrote for you. And say them in an Indian accent. Did Texas Jack help you with the accent?

*[NED looks at JACK, who waves to MORLACCHI, and she waves coyly back to Jack.]*

**MORLACCHI:** Oh yes. He said I am the perfect Indian princess.

**NED:** Alright. Let's begin again.

**MORLACCHI:** *[has a pronounced Italian accent.]* "Oh, Buffalo Bill, the Scout of the Prairie, you are the one that I love. I, Dove Eye, will stop-a my father from a-killing you just as Pocahontas saved Capitano John-a Smith."

**CODY:** *[Crossing over]* "Yes ma'am, my heart is about to bust."

**NED:** Take the hand, take the hand!

**CODY:** *[Swinging his hand wildly around]* Take it where, take it where?

**NED:** Take her hand, Buffalo Bill. It's a love scene.

**HICKOK:** Then why am I here? I mean if these two are going to do some serious courting, ole Buffalo Bill would have sent me packin'.

**NED:** You have to be there because the Indians are coming.

**SAM:** Cue Indians! Attack!

*[INDIANS all pile out on stage, and HICKOK and CODY pull their guns and begin shooting]*

**NED:** *[shouting]* Stop! stop!

**LANGSTON:** Stop! Stop!

*[ALL finally freeze into a tableau with dead INDIANS everywhere. CODY and HICKOK have their guns out and JACK is holding the Indian Princess(MORLACCHI) in his arms.]*

**LANGSTON:** *[Jumping up]* I can't do this scene without my war bonnet! And Mickey, here, took the best tomahawk. And I want it back!

*[From the back of the house come a group of local THUGS from the stockyards.]*

**HICKOK:** And these Indians don't die when I shoot 'em. When I shoot a rustler or an Indian, I shoot 'em once and they die. Folks that see this play will think I'm a bad shot.

**NED:** Now, Bill, no one's gonna think that. It's just more dramatic if it takes a couple of shots to kill 'em.

**HICKOK:** I don't care about drama! One shot, and they're down.

**JACK:** That's right, Mr. Buntline. When Bill here shoots 'em, they may not be dead, but they ain't gonna do any square dancin' for a while.

**THUG 1:** Pretty tough, ain't ya, Buffalo Bill?

*[Mistaking HICKOK for CODY]*

**CODY:** I'm sorry, were you gentlemen talking to me?

*[THUGS should be up on the stage at this point.]*

**THUG 2:** Nope. We're talkin' to that man right over there: Buffalo Bill Cody.

**THUG 3:** But we know he ain't the real Buffalo Bill. He's just some fancy pants from New York City pretending that he's a real hero.

**SEAN:** Wait a minute now. You've got it all mixed up. This is Buffalo Bill...

**THUG 2:** *[Interrupting]* Shut up, you counterfeit Indian. Now the four of us, we wrangle the meanest longhorns they got down at the stockyards, and we're here today to prove that y'all are just a bunch of fancy pants imitators.

**THUG 1:** And we aim to start with that phony Buffalo Bill right over there. *[Pointing to Hickok]*

**CODY:** Maybe you boys want to think this over. Now, that man you're pointing to is not Buffalo Bill Cody. But he certainly is a man that I wouldn't want to make angry.

**THUG 3:** Shut up, you. After we take care of him, it'll be your turn.

**CODY:** This is the last time I'm gonna interfere. But if I were you, I'd go back to the stockyards and leave this man alone.

**THUG 2:** Just you keep out of the way before you get hurt.

*[THUGS start to close in on HICKOK.]*

**SEAN:** Hold on there, Wild Bill, we'll help ya.

*[To THUGS]*

You'll have to go through us...

*[INDIANS wave their little tomahawks menacingly.]*

...to get to him.

*[THUGS face down the INDIANS.]*

**THUG1:** Now get out of the way.

**LANGSTON:** Where's my war bonnet? If I just had my war bonnet, I could take on all four of these stupid

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scalawagging simpletons from the smelly stockyards!

*[LANGSTON comes face to face with one of the THUGS.]*

**THUG 1:** Oh yeah?

**LANGSTON:** *[Meekly]* However,...since I don't have my war bonnet, I'm afraid I won't be able to save you, Bill.

**CODY:** Excuse me, gentlemen, but let me try this just one more time. You don't want to make Bill here angry. You see, when he gets mad at somebody, he loses all control of himself. You all are liable to get hurt, or maybe even killed. Then we gotta file police reports, and all of that, give your widows free passes to the show....It's just somethin' you don't want to do. Now, if you'll go on your way right now, I'll get Mr. Buntline to give you eight free tickets to Monday night's show.

**THUG 3:** *[angrily grabs CODY by the lapel.]* Have it your own way then. Before we beat Buffalo Bill up, we'll beat you up.

**CODY:** Wild Bill, they're all yours.

*[A big fight ensues, with improv lines. HICKOK breaks a bench over one of the THUGS, breaks a beer bottle over another THUG, faces down another THUG with a gun. All the THUGS end up beaten and bloody, lying around the stage.]*

**THUG 1:** *[To CODY, pointing at HICKOK]* Who is that little guy?

**CODY:** I tried to tell ya. That's Wild Bill Hickok.

**THUG 1:** But that don't make no sense. We're all bigger and stronger than him.

**CODY:** You know, I was down in New Orleans once. And they had a saying along those lines, and it went somethin' like this: "It ain't the size of the dog in the fight; it's the size of the fight in the dog."

**MUSICAL #8 -- THAT LITTLE GUY'S GOT FIGHT**

**CODY:**

IT'S NOT THE SIZE THE DOG  
THAT BE IN THE FIGHT,  
SIZE OF FIGHT IN THE DOG  
THAT MAKE IT BE ALRIGHT.

SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
LET ME GUIDE YOUR LIGHT,  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
THIS LITTLE GUY'S GOT FIGHT.

**WOMEN:**

BETTER WATCH WHO YOU CHOOSE.  
DON'T LOSE THE SETTING SUN.  
BETTER SHOW US YOUR SHOES,  
YOU MA NEED TO RUN.  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,

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LET ME GUIDE YOUR LIGHT,  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
THIS LITTLE GUY'S GOT FIGHT.

**MEN:**

WILD BILL, HE COME TO TOWN  
TO PLAY BUT NOT TO LOSE.  
STRAIGHT POKER WAS TO BE THE GAME  
THAT WILD BILL DID CHOOSE.  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
LET ME GUIDE YOUR LIGHT,  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
THIS LITTLE GUY'S GOT FIGHT.

**ALL:**

'T WAS FOUR MEN ALL DRESSED IN BLACK  
THAT PLANNED FOR BILL TO LOSE,  
BUT WHEN HE LAID OUT THAT STRAIGHT,  
WILD BILL MADE NEWS.  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
LET ME GUIDE YOUR LIGHT,  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
THIS LITTLE GUY'S GOT FIGHT.

THESE FOUR MEN, THEY ALL PLANNED  
A GRAVE FOR WILD BILL.

**CODY, HICKOK & JACK:**

BUT BILL'S TWO SIX-SHOOTERS  
SENT THEM TO BOOT HILL.  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
LET ME GUIDE YOUR LIGHT,  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
THIS LITTLE GUY'S GOT FIGHT.

**HICKOK:**

NOW LET ME SAY, AND I SPEAK FREE,  
I'M SO BAD THAT I SCARE ME.

**ALL:**

SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
LET ME GUIDE YOUR LIGHT,  
SAY YOU, HEY NOW, HEY NOW,  
THIS LITTLE GUY'S GOT FIGHT.

**(END OF ACT ONE)**

**17 pages make up Act Two**