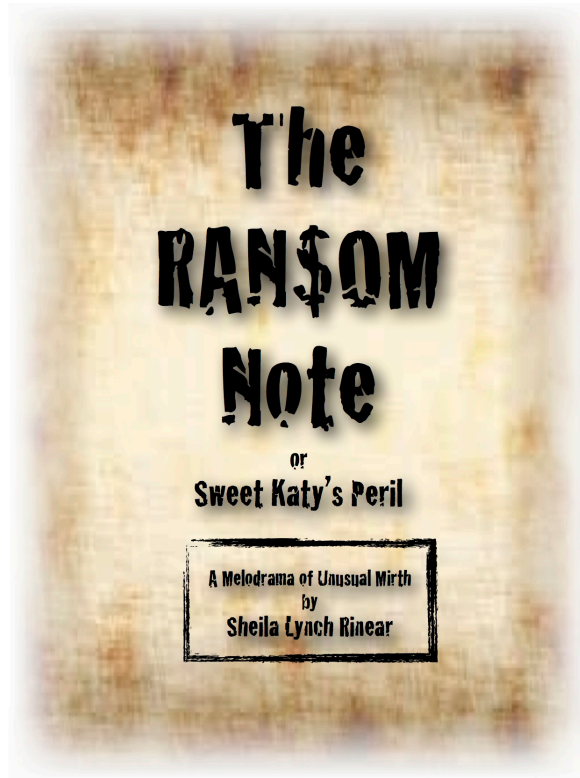


PERUSAL SCRIPT



A Melodrama of Unusual Mirth by
Sheila Rinear



Newport, Maine

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CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Wunsa Ponatime (narrator)
Beauregard Hiss(villain)
Cologne Despoilée (speaks a completely unidentifiable...and hopefully inconsistent...dialect)
Katie Did (Sweet Young Thing)
Earnest Youngman (Hero)
Ms. Iswortha Million (You need ask?)
Mr. Willy Getcha (Attorney)
Miss Gala Soirée (Entertainment Mavin)
Judge Prudence Juris
General Store (Owner of the General Store)
Chicky Youngman (Earnest's Dad)
Fluffy (Katy's dog)
Counter Girl
MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1
MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2
Conductor of Signs (Conductor Signs)
Cats
Dogs
Children
The Greek Chorus
Moron Tattered-Knuckle Choir
Townspeople
Bar Room Piano Player
The Mime Troupe
Reverend Fire N. Brimstone
The Celestial Cherubs Barbershop Quartet
The Kazoo Band
The Irish Tenors
Women's Shakespeare Auxiliary
The One-Man Band
The Fan Club Choir
Alexander's Ragtime Band
Curmudgeons
Drummer

NOTE:

Many or any of the characters listed above can be optional. You may want to add to, or subtract from, the plethora of dramatis personae. Feel free to do so.

NOTE:

AND...Cologne's dialect can be played with, used, discarded, translation shown on monitor, whatever. It's for the Director and Actor to have fun with!

ANOTHER NOTE OF NOTE:

Since Sign Carriers and Audience Participation are a huge part of the Melodrama Experience, we encourage all sorts of creativity in defining the characteristics of your Sign Holders. For instance, well...think of the 7 Dwarves: Sleepy, Sneezzy, Lazy, Groucho, Indifferent...etc. You get the picture.

FINAL NOTE, WE HOPE:

What would a Melodrama be without the fun of a "rim-shot" from a drum after what the author hopes are clever, witty, ridiculous lines in the script? Hoping you feel the same way, you now know why you will find "Rim-shot" in stage directions. Thank you! Thank you very much!

MUSIC AND LYRICS TO THE FOLLOWING SONGS (USED IN THE SHOW) ARE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN:

"Oh My Darling, Clementine!" – Vocal at the end of the script

"I've Been Working on the Railroad!" – Vocal at the end of the script

"Home Sweet Home" – Vocal at the end of the script

"Oh You Beautiful Doll!(Dog!)" – Vocal at the end of the script

"Let Me Call You Sweetheart" – Vocal at the end of the script

"Give My Regards to Broadway" – Vocal at the end of the script

"K-K-K-Katy" – Vocal at the end of the script

"Alexander's Ragtime Band" (a Marching Band arrangement can be purchased from Music Publishers)

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ACT ONE

SCENE 1: THE INTRODUCTION

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen. And welcome to our bigger, better-than-ever/maybe even your first-time-ever melodrama, The Ransom Note!

Music comes up indicating high melodrama.

*A **Sign Holder** holds up an APPLAUSE sign, encouraging applause.*

Throughout the remainder of the script, the Sign Holders will be listed in the stage directions followed by a colon followed by the emotional display that is listed on the sign they should be holding up. They should try to get the audience to respond with the emotion on their sign.

*Example: **Sign Holder:** YAY!*

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: That's the spirit. Tonight we will not be asking you to sit back, relax and fall asleep as you probably have at our other shows. No, tonight we invite you to be part of our show.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: Yes, but many of you may ask: how can we be part of this show? First, let me ask you this: how many of you have ever been to a melodrama before?

Masters of Ceremonies try to count the raised hands.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: Wow! Four hundred twenty six. Great! So you know what to do when our Sign Holders use their signs, right? Let's do a trial run, shall we?! Take it away.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: Glad to! In our show tonight, we have a villain. A villain who is mean, low-down...he's just no darned good. The best kind of villain.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: Here's what you do whenever our villain makes an entrance. I give you your villain for tonight's show: Sir BOWREGARD HISS.

Music for Villain comes up.

The Villain, Bowregard Hiss, sitting in the front row, stands, makes mean faces at the audience and especially at the Masters of Ceremonies, and goes up to the stage to take a bow. Then Hiss stands on the stage glaring at the audience.

While Hiss is doing all of this,

***Sign Holder:** Boo! Hiss! Argh! Yuck!*

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: That's wonderful, Folks. But say, this year we have an extra added attraction! Besides the Geek Chorus over there...

pointing to the Greek Chorus

Aren't they lovely?

GREEK CHORUS: *(yelling at the Master of Ceremonies)* GRRReek! Not GEEEEK!

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: So sorry. I did mean to say, Greek. I would never want you Folks to think that I consider you geeks.

Master of Ceremonies#1 winks at the audience while the Greek Chorus grumbles at the slight.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: Besides the Greek Chorus tonight, for those of you in the audience who love to sing, we've got an alternative to yelling out your "Boos!" And "Hisses!" Along with the

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Greek Chorus, we've got with us tonight...the Moron Tattered Knuckle Choir here to SING the appropriate sign-held responses after the Geeks SAY theirs.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: Without any further ado or adieu, may I introduce to you our very own MORON TATTERED KNUCKLE CHOIR!

The Moron Tattered Knuckle Choir bows and hold up their hands displaying wrapped-up, tattered knuckles.

Sign Holder: Really?

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: Let's have a trial run. Mr. Hiss, could you please take your entrance again?!

BOWREGARD HISS: (*graciously bowing*) Of course. Delighted, I say. Jolly good show.

He returns to his seat.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: Ladies and Gentlemen, our villain for the evening: Sir Bowregard Hiss.

Sign Holders: Boo! Hiss!

Conductor Sign leads the Greek Chorus to speak a huge round of Boos and Hisses. The Conductor encourages the audience to join in. THEN...

Conductor Sign conducts the Moron Tattered Knuckle Choir to sing a huge round of Boos and Hisses. The Conductor encourages the audience to join in. This will be the procedure with all the signs throughout the performance.

Bowregard acts outraged, of course.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: Good job, Everyone! Let's see if you know what to do now when you see the signs raised. For example, I'd like to introduce our heroine...

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: Yes, and what a dear she is, too. Whenever she comes on stage we put our hands over our hearts and sigh. Like this. And here she is now with her bug collection and several stray dogs and cats following her: MISS KATY DID!

Music for entrance of Heroine comes up.

Katy can carry a large pail or jar of bugs as she curtsies her way to the stage.

Sign Holders: OHH! AHH! SIGH!

Katy exits.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: Now isn't she just Toute Sweet? And now let's introduce our hero. He's strong. He's brave.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: He's just not too, how shall we say? Got the razor's edge? I give you: MISTER EARNEST YOUNGMAN!

Music for hero plays.

Earnest, complete with little band-aids or pieces of tissue stuck to his face where he's obviously cut himself shaving, arrives on stage and bows kinda foolishly.

Sign Holder: YAY! HOORAY! MY HERO! AIN'T HE GREAT?!

It might add a nice touch if Earnest tangles himself up trying to display some rope tricks with his lasso.

Sign Holder: SIT DOWN!

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: You'll meet the rest of the cast as the show proceeds. But before we begin, we want to thank The Grizzled Gulch Glee Club for traveling all the way from...from...where

are you good folks from?

GRIZZLED GULCH GLEE CLUB: Grizzled Gulch.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: Exactly so. We want to thank them for all the per-show singing and their piano accompanist, Tone Deaf. Maybe if we're lucky they'll sing for us at intermission.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #2: That'd be lucky for the concession stand since no one'll probably stay to listen--

Almost in self-defense, Tone Deaf begins to play (probably off key) HOME SWEET HOME. As The Grizzled Gulch Glee Club stands and begins to sing, Conductor Sign, ever-alert to preventing crises, instructs the Sign Holder to hold up the APPLAUSE sign.

Sign Holder: APPLAUSE

Once everyone starts applauding, the piano-playing and sign waving stop and the Grizzled Gulch Glee Club sits down.

MASTER OF CEREMONIES #1: And now we would like to take the house lights down and turn our show over to our Narrator, Wunsa Ponatime. Ms./Mr. Ponatime will tell you our story tonight entitled: The Ransom Note!

SCENE 2: THE STORY BEGINS – *House lights go down and spot comes up on Center Stage where Wunsa Ponatime enters.*

WUNSA PONATIME: Good Evening, Ladies and Gentlemen! I am your Storyteller for the evening, and I truly must say...that of all the stories I've even told, this certainly is one of them. It all started during the latter days of the Gold Rush more than a hundred years ago.

SONG: "Oh My Darling, Clementine!"

Music begins softly.

If there's a curtain, it opens to reveal the inside of the General Store that belongs to the town merchant, General Store.

The town's rich widow, Iswortha Million, is shopping.

Various Townspeople enter the stage and take their places.

WUNSA PONATIME: There once was a town called Lost Mind Gulch. Yep, you got it. Everything was a gulch back in the day. But no one ever knew just why this town was called Lost Mind Gulch. Now Lotsa folks thought that anyone who'd lived there might have lost their minds...

Sign Holders: *Uh-OH! OH DEAR! OH MY!*

Right, but these people were happy. They didn't really know exactly why they were happy. But one thing was for certain: they sure liked to sing. Perhaps if we listen in our imaginations, we can span the arc of the plus hundred years time and hear them as they sing one of their happy, gold miners' songs!

As the song starts, all the performers and singers are joyous and bon vivant until they start paying attention to how awful and sad the song is. By the end of the number, they're in tears, loud nose blowing on their scarves, etc. As the song is sung, Bowregard

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Hiss and Cologne Despoilée make their entrance as though it's the first they've arrived at Lost Gulch.

TOWNESPEOPLE:

IN A CAVERN, IN A CANYON, EXCAVATING FOR A MINE,
LIVED A MINER, FORTY-NINER, AND HIS DAUGHTER, CLEMENTINE.
OH, MY DARLING, OH, MY DARLING, OH, MY DARLING, CLEMENTINE,
YOU ARE LOST AND GONE FOREVER, DREADFUL SORRY, CLEMENTINE.
DROVE SHE DUCKLINGS TO THE WATER, EVERY MORNING JUST AT NINE,
STUBBED HER TOE UPON A SPLINTER, FELL INTO THE FOAMING BRINE.
OH, MY DARLING, OH, MY DARLING, OH, MY DARLING, CLEMENTINE,
YOU ARE LOST AND GONE FOREVER, DREADFUL SORRY, CLEMENTINE.
RUBY LIPS ABOVE THE WATER, BLOWING BUBBLES SOFT AND FINE,
BUT ALAS, I WAS NO SWIMMER, SO I LOST MY CLEMENTINE.
OH, MY DARLING, OH, MY DARLING, OH, MY DARLING, CLEMENTINE,
YOU ARE LOST AND GONE FOREVER, DREADFUL SORRY, CLEMENTINE.

*Sign Holders (barely able to hold signs up as they're so depressed): Yay! Bravo!
The stage has emptied and Wunce continues.*

WUNSA PONATIME: Why so sad? The gold mining at this point in our story was kinda Kaput! But then along came the Steel Monster!

We hear the sound of a train whistle.

You got it. The Railroad. It was progress. The Railroad paved the way from the East Coast to the West Coast and it had to go through some dying mining towns like Lost Mind Gulch to get from one side of the country to the other. And installing railroad tracks meant jobs for the townspeople.

Again we hear the train whistle and all the townspeople return to the stage and come alive, placing their hands up to an ear to listen.

SONG: "I've Been Working on the Railroad!"

TOWNESPEOPLE:

I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE RAILROAD, ALL THE LIVE-LONG DAY.
I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE RAILROAD, JUST TO PASS THE TIME AWAY.
DON'T YOU HEAR THE WHISTLE CALLING, "RISE UP SO EARLY IN THE MOM."
DON'T YOU HEAR THE FOREMAN CALLING, "DINAH, BLOW YOUR HORN"
DINAH WON'T YOU BLOW, DINAH WON'T YOU BLOW,
DINAH WON'T YOU BLOW HOUR HO-O-ORN!
DINAH WON'T YOU BLOW, DINAH WON'T YOU BLOW,
DINAH WON'T YOU BLOW HOUR HORN!

As the song ends, the townspeople all happily leave the stage.

SCENE 3: STORY CONTINUED

WUNSA PONATIME: And so, off to work they all go. But not everything in Lost Mind Gulch is so joyful. Some serious decisions are being made. Let's join the town's most wealthy widow, Miss Iswortha Million as she shops in the General Store owned by General Store.

When schtick lines like that are delivered, it could be fun to follow with: RIM-SHOT!

Let's listen in as Iswortha Million speaks with her attorney, Mr. Willy Getcha, as they discuss a change in her will.

Bowregard and Cologne have already entered the store and are already stealing some items when they happen to overhear Iswortha and Willy's conversation.

ISWORTHA MILLION: You heard me correctly, Willy. Change my will.

WILLY GETCHA: But the dog pound...which I've recently purchased. And the disease control center...which I've recently purchased. You've already left everything you own to those very excellent causes.

ISWORTHA MILLION: Don't be a silly goose, Willy. The whole point is this: we will soon be able to close both the dog pound and the disease control center since my dear, sweet attendant, confidante and general all-around-good-helper, Katy Did, came along.

BOWREGARD HISS: *(to Cologne)* Sure sounds like Katy Did something!

RIM-SHOT!

ISWORTHA MILLION: Katy is such a sweet, loving child that all the stray animals and children just naturally follow her around. She has adopted them all and takes very good care of them.

WILLY GETCHA: Yer right, there. Katy Did has got a powerful lot of goodness about her.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Whoeffe dis "chilt" eezz, I tink I dispishe her already. [Translation: Whoever this child is, I think I despise her already.]

Sign Holder: BOO! HISS! GET OUTTA TOWN!

Iswortha notices General Store is about to kill a bug and stops him.

ISWORTHA MILLION: No, no, General. You mustn't kill that poor helpless bug. Willy please gather up the creature and be sure to give it to Katy to care for.

WILLY GETCHA: *(gets bug into jar)* You know what? You're right, Iswortha. Lost Mind Gulch just don't have the bug problem no more that we used to have since Miss Katy gathered them all up, tamed them with her goodness, and saved our town.

BOWREGARD HISS: *(to audience)* I am going to be ill. No one is THAT good.

Sign Holder: BOO! HISS! GET OUTTA TOWN!!

ISWORTHA MILLION: Katy Did did do all that! And what's more, Katy is good to me. I took pity upon the poor child and it has paid off. Because of her goodness, I want to name her the one and only heir to my fortune.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Some won say, Fort Toon? [Translation: Someone say 'fortune?']

ISWORTHA MILLION: *(looking to find source of the unusual voice)* No. I said fortune. The fortune that my dear, departed husband, Wunnino, left to me. Katy reads and sings to me...and, to the bugs, and to all the stray pets and children of the town. She cooks...

As Willy changes the will right there in front of Iswortha, the Greek Chorus picks up on Iswortha's listing of Katy's good traits in a sing-song manner to the tune of

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ABCDEFG...

GREEK CHORUS: She cooks, she cleans, she bakes, she sews, she won't take pay for any of it, Heaven knows.

As the Greek Chorus repeats the above chant, the Moron Tattered Knuckle Choir tries to sing the chant in an operatic fashion, or maybe you'd prefer down-home country style?

WILLY GETCHA: (*shushes everyone*) Shh. Cain't hear myself think with all that gargling going on.

Okay, Iswortha, I'm to the part in the will that states how much you're planning on leaving to Katy Did. How much you worth?

ISWORTHA MILLION: A million dollars! Just get on with it, Willy.

Bowregard and Cologne both faint all over each other when they hear the amount Iswortha's worth. They try reviving each other by whispering plans.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: (*stage whisper*) Uuuu no vot vee mite doh vit sue moch doe-leers?

[Translation: You know what we might do with so much dollars?]

BOWREGARD HISS: Get you elocution lessons for starters.

WILLY GETCHA: So let me get this straight. You're leaving a cool million bucks to a child who plays with bugs?!

ISWORTHA MILLION: Shh! I want it to be a surprise. I hear her coming now!

Iswortha cups her hand to her ear to listen.

WILLY GETCHA: Strange. I thought I was hearing a swarm of bees.

RIM-SHOT!

SCENE 4: ENTER KATY DID – *From far off but getting closer, we hear: children giggling; dogs barking happily; cats meowing in harmony; and bugs chirping cheerfully! The Chorus and Choir could help with the noises as Katy and her entourage enter to the applause and admiration of the audience.*

Sign Holders: APPLAUSE!

Music for Female Hero should play.

Sign Holders: OHH! AHH! SIGH!

KATY: (*comforting her cat*) What's that you say, Kitty-Kat?

CAT ONE: Meow, mroowwffffy? [Translation: Where's our Fluffy Dog?]

KATY: Oh my. You needn't worry about our Fluffy Dog. I'm sure she's gone home ahead of us.

DOG ONE: Rouwff? Wuff...wuffff!! [Translation: Home? Fluffy Dog has a home?]

KATY: Of course my Fluffy Dog has a home. Just like you and I do. Ms. Iswortha Million is the kindest, most gracious lady God ever put onto the face of this earth.

launching into a sing-songy rant

I realize that I cook, clean, bake, read, pull weeds, and sew for her...with no pay, heaven knows....but Ms. Million has given me, and you my friends, a home! Which is all that matters in the end.

CHILD ONE: We surely are lucky, ain't we Miss Katy Did?!

As Katy pets the animals and children who gather into a perhaps pathetically tearful hug, music comes up.

SONG: "Home Sweet Home"

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KATY: I know we are fortunate and I don't know what any one of us would do if it weren't for Ms. Iswortha Million. She is the mother I've never had but keep on looking for.

KATY, CHILDREN, ANIMALS:

MID PLEASURES AND PALACES THOUGH WE MAY ROAM,
BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME!
A CHARM FROM THE SKIES SEEMS TO HALLOW US THERE,
WHICH, SEEK THROUGH THE WORLD, IS NE'ER MET WITH ELSEWHERE:

HOME! HOME! SWEET, SWEET HOME
BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE
THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME!

AN EXILE FROM HOME SPLENDOR DAZZLES IN VAIN
OH, GIVE ME MY LOW, THATCHED COTTAGE AGAIN,
THE BIRDS SINGING GAILY THAT COME AT MY CALL,
GIVE ME THEM WITH THAT PEACE OF MIND, DEARER THAN ALL.

HOME! HOME! SWEET, SWEET HOME
BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE
THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME!
THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME SWEET HOME!

Bowregard Hiss writhes in pain pawing at his ears while they sing.

BOWREGARD HISS: Owwww!!! Ouch!!

At the end all take bows.

Sign Holders: YAY! BRAVO! SO VERY TOUCHING! BOO-HOO!

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: *(to Bowregard)* Vat in der voerllld iz wrung vif ewww? [Translation: What in the world is wrong with you?]

BOWREGARD HISS: She hit the high C note and you know how that always makes my ears clog and hurt so darned bad. Ouch!!!! The most painful part of it is knowing I'll have to hear another high C for my ears to unclog.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Eewww r show shtupit! Ewww juice shtarted dat bat habt to geet moi to fel bat ven I vase tacking meh sinkink lesions. Efffrie shingle tim ahh heet deer Hay C nut, eww clug eeerrs so eww donut heeer moi. Suuch encurrachemunt eww gif moi. [Translation: You are so stupid. You just started that bad habit to get me to feel bad when I was taking my singing lessons. Every single time I hit the High C note, you clog your ears so you don't hear me. Such encouragement you give me.]

BOWREGARD HISS: What? No...nevermind! Ears clogged, ya know?!

ISWORTHAMILLION: Come on over here, Katy. I've got some news for you. I've just changed my will. I have, indeed. You are now the one and only heir to my fortune.

KATY: Oh my goodness. How can I ever thank you, Ms. Million?

(off Iswortha's shrug)

I know how. I'll show you the new tricks I taught the bugs that I caught yesterday.

ISWORTHAMILLION: Another time, thank you, Dear. Right now, I'm on my way to Mr. Getcha's office to make this legal with his stamps and what not.

Iswortha and Willy EXIT.

Sign Holder: Yay! Hooray!

SCENE 5: THE PLOT THICKENS – *Katy and company mime their joy at Katy's good fortune while the villain villifies.*

BOWREGARD HISS: *(to Cologne)* We've got to stop Iswortha Million and her two bit lawyer.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Eww gut enny goot idaa's luck who dis ez goink du hupin, Shmarty?

Translation: You got any good ideas like how this is going to happen, smarty?

BOWREGARD HISS: Give me a minute.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Hockey- ducky. Translation: Okey-dokey.

Cologne looks at her watch as if timing a minute.

A dog is heard howling at the back door to the general store.

General Store picks up a boot to throw at the howling dog; and, as Katy screams her high bloody scream, Bowregard's ears unclog and he can hear.

BOWREGARD HISS: Ah ha! I can hear again.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Uff curse eww khan. Dat stinkink moot unt heez gerl booth heet der High C knot beater Dan effer I dood. [Translation: Of course you can. That stinking mut and his girl both hit the High C note better than ever I did.]

BOWREGARD HISS: Most tea kettles hit the high C note better than you, Dear.

KATY: Oh my! That's my doggy, Fluffy! Please don't hurt him, General Store!

It might be a nice touch if Katy, while running to let her dog in, karate chops the boot out of General Store's hand.

During the following few speeches and ditties, General Store writes a note out on a chalkboard.

WUNSA PONATIME: In case you were wondering: General Store is not really at a loss for words. He's just too shy to speak and rarely knows what to say.

Wunsa gives this a momentary thought, shrugs.

RIM-SHOT!

GREEK CHORUS: General Store was a Navy Captain at sea, you see. But he suffered from seasickness as well as shyness. He couldn't give orders and he couldn't hold onto his lunch and so...

TATTERED KNUCKLES CHOIR: *(singing to tune "Mary Had a Little Lamb")*

HE WENT ASHORE AND HEADED WEST, HEADED WEST, HEADED WEST!

HE WENT ASHORE AND HEADED WEST AND STOPPED AT LOST MIND GULCH!

Sign Holders: Yay! Bravo!

Bowregard yawns as does Cologne.

BOWREGARD HISS: Wasn't that interesting?!

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Nuut eenn der leascht. Translation: Not in the least.

General Store hands the chalkboard to Katy who keeps turning it around trying to read

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it. Finally:

KATY: *(reading)* I hate your dog's bark. In fact I don't like your dog much. Period. But I do like you, Katy. You're a sweet child.

(giggling)

Oh General Store. You are so kind. And I know you really do like Fluffy. She's only torn up your back yard burying her dog chews, treasures, toys, and the town's garbage because she knows you think it's cute.

Katy scribbles something on the chalkboard and hands it to General Store and reads it to him.

I forgive you, General. Signed, Katy Did.

(looking at her mangey doggy)

You gotta admit, she's just so darned beautiful.

SONG: "OH YOU BEAUTIFUL DOLL/DOG!"

During the number, Cologne sneaks out of hiding and grabs the chalkboard and studies it.

COMPANY:

HONEY DEAR, WANT YOU NEAR, JUST WAG YOUR TAIL AND THEN COME OVER HERE
NESTLE CLOSE UP TO MY SIDE; MY HEART'S AFIRE WITH LOVE'S SMILE.
IN MY ARMS REST COMPLETE,
I NEVER THOUGHT THAT LIFE COULD EVER BE SO SWEET
TILL I MET YOU, SOMETIME AGO,
BUT NOW YOU KNOW I LOVE YOU SO.

OH! YOU BEAUTIFUL DOG, YOU GREAT BIG BEAUTIFUL DOG!
LET ME PUT MY ARMS ABOUT YOU, I COULD NEVER LIVE WITHOUT YOU.
OH! YOU BEAUTIFUL DOG, YOU GREAT BIG BEAUTIFUL DOG!
IF YOU EVER LEAVE ME HOW MY HEART WILL ACHE,
I WANT TO HUG YOU, BUT I FEAR YOU'D BREAK OH. OH. OH. OH.
OH, YOU BEAUTIFUL DOG!

PRECIOUS PRIZE, CLOSE YOUR EYES, NOW WE'LL GO TO THE PARK AWHILE;
LICK MY CHEEK AND DON'T YOU WHINE, FOR LOVE IS KING OF EV'RYTHING.
SQUEEZE ME, DEAR, I DON'T CARE!
HUG ME JUST AS IF YOU WERE A GRIZZLY BEAR.
THIS IS HOW I'LL GO THROUGH LIFE, NO CARE OR STRIFE 'CAUSE YOU'RE MY LIFE.

OH! YOU BEAUTIFUL DOG, YOU GREAT BIG BEAUTIFUL DOG!
LET ME PUT MY ARMS ABOUT YOU, I COULD NEVER LIVE WITHOUT YOU.
OH! YOU BEAUTIFUL DOG, YOU GREAT BIG BEAUTIFUL DOG!
IF YOU EVER LEAVE ME HOW MY HEART WILL ACHE,

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE RANSOM NOTE -- by Sheila Rinear

I WANT TO HUG YOU, BUT I FEAR YOU'D BREAK OH. OH. OH. OH.
OH, YOU BEAUTIFUL DOG!

Sign Holders: *Bravo! Encore!*

SCENE 6: HERE COMES THE HERO – *As the number winds down, our Hero...SHERIFF EARNEST YOUNGMAN strolls onto the stage looking for the trouble he senses lurks on the premises.*

Music for Hero comes up.

Sign Holders: *Hooray! Our Hero!*

EARNEST: Howdy, Miss Did! General Store. I heard some wild and unsavory commotion coming from these parts. Is everything alright? Because if it's not...I am here to quell the disturbance and malevolence. To restore peace and good will to the hearts of all the men and women...

the pets and kids do something to get his attention

...and, umm, to the children and pets of the land.

KATY: *(sighing)* Oh Sheriff Earnest Youngman you have the most noble sentiments and say the most respectable things.

Bowregard, responding to the heavy-duty goodness and sweetness in the air, stands and poses as though he's going to punch Earnest.

Cologne pulls him back out of sight.

EARNEST: All in a day's work, Miss Did. I would never want you to be put out or into any kind of danger.

KATY: *(aside to audience)* Oh me, I do get a bit weak in the knees whenever Sheriff Earnest Youngman speaks so chivalrously.

BOWREGARD HISS: *(also to audience)* Weak knees to match her sweet but weak mind.

KATY: You needn't worry, Sheriff. There's no trouble here. But I am always glad to see you. Ahmm...see you looking out for the townspeople, like myself.

EARNEST: *(looking out into backyard)* What I see is the dog's ruined your backyard again, General Store. Looks like a gofer convention's going on out there.

KATY: Please do not lock me up, Sheriff. In order to repay General Store for not pressing charges against me for my doggy's misbehavior, I will once again plow, fertilize, and seed the General's back yard at no charge and with no thought of the damage it will surely bring to my hands and to my back. No. I insist. That's the kind of girl I am.

Sign Holders: *Oh My! Good Grief!*

General Store looks pleased as he gathers a rake, shovel, bag of fertilizer, etc. to give to Katy.

EARNEST: You're a hard worker, Miss Did. I admire that in a gal.

KATY: You do?

EARNEST: I do.

KATY: *(to audience)* Just hearing him say "I do" gives me chills and thrills. This is my big chance.
to Earnest

Sheriff Youngman, have you noticed that we're not getting any younger?

EARNEST: If that's one of those trick questions, I do not know the answer. All I know is that I'm a "Youngman." Runs in the family.

KATY: What I mean is...you are an earnest young man and I've heard you say, more than a few times, that you admire things about me. And...you've also told me, more than a few times, that you hope to someday find someone you can call "Sweetheart."

Sign Holders: Gasp! Oh My!

Audience really gets into it.

(to audience) Oh grow up! What's this, the dark ages? A girl can't speak up for herself?

to Earnest

Anyway, Ms. Million is changing her will to name me as her one and only heir. You know you've been heard to say that you could never marry anyone on your poor, pathetic Sheriff's salary. I thought that we might now be able to look forward to someday...ummm...need I say more?

EARNEST: *(stupidly)* About what?

BOWREGARD HISS: Egads! I'd like her to say more. And wouldn't I just be able to call her sweetheart!

Cologne hits/punches him

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Yeeww idjut. Yeeww neffer cuul me "sveathert" undd Eemm der vun shtandink Herr comink uup viss pluun do geet der uld lee- dees muuneeey by foorgink noot vid tricksey EE learnt vwhile on facashun in pennytenshurry. [Translation: You idiot. You never call me sweetheart and I'm the one standing here coming up with a plan to get the old lady's money by forging a note with a trick I learned while I was on vacation in the penitentiary.]

BOWREGARD HISS: Forgery? I like it. Say more, my dear, beautiful Cologne.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Mooch beater. Der sheeroff's clueless unt ve kane nuut leet hymn maarry her becuuzz heez vaary goot lukink unt aye vant two merry hymn. [Translation: Much better. The sheriff's clueless and we can not let him marry her because he's very good looking and I want to marry him.]

She forgets herself for a moment and stares at Earnest until Bowregard snaps his finger in front of her face to bring her out of her trance.

Ee meene...yeeww vil teak Meese Deed ownn feeeldd troop. [Translation: I mean...you will take Miss Did on a fieldtrip.]

BOWREGARD HISS: Field Trip? Do I look like a teacher? Fine. Where to?

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Whoo about un elt abundid mean? Unt I rittte der nut an hurr hendretting sense I heave dease shalkburd conetinning hurr hendretting still. [Translation: How about an old abandoned mine? And I write the note in her handwriting since I have this chalkboard containing her handwriting style.]

BOWREGARD HISS: Still? Ya know, Cologne, Sweetheart, you're exhausting me here with your diction.

off Cologne's rolled eyes

Fine. You're going to write a note in her handwriting. What's it going to say?

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Eet vill exschplun vhy shee lift tune und duz nut vant Meese Mealyun's furtoon. [Translation: It will explain why she left town and does not want Ms. Million's fortune.]

BOWREGARD HISS: I think I understand what you're saying and follow your dastardly plan, you sassy gal, you. But what would make Miss Million believe Katy doesn't want her money?

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: A murr refronce to sumtink shadey frumm hurr pasht. [Translation: A mere

reference to something bad she did in her past.]

BOWREGARD HISS: I think I follow. Why not say Katy Did did something dastardly with money that was given to her to take her singing lessons? Everyone would believe it.

RIM-SHOT!

Then you offer your services to Miss Million to take Katy's place. You'll win the old gal over with your charms... Wait!

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Vutt? [Translation: What?]

BOWREGARD HISS: Do you even have any charming qualities with which to win her over?

off Cologne's scream

Right. There was that time you said 'thank you.' To that sheriff when he locked me up. BTW, I've been meaning to--

Cologne karate stomps on Bowregard's foot. He winces.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Con ve juice geet on vit dis, plus? [Translation: Can we just get on with this, please?]

BOWREGARD HISS: Yes, how could I have doubted Miss Million might not notice your charming ways?

RIM-SHOT!

So I was thinking, if only we could make Katy Did think the Sheriff didn't want anything to do with her...

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Eee leak dish plun. [Translation: I like this plan.]

BOWREGARD HISS: Of course you do. So, after Katy feels rejected, she'll leave town, the old gal names you as her heir, I toss her down the same mine as I will toss Katy down. And you...we...inherit her million. Or, over a million as the case may be.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Juice dunt foregut whooo kim oop vid dis breenschterm. [Translation: Just don't forget who came up with this brainstorm.]

Sign Holders: Boo! Hiss! Get Outa Town!

BOWREGARD HISS: You know, Cologne, for that kind of brainstorm I COULD call you "Sweetheart!"

SONG: "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."

BOWREGARD HISS:

LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART
I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU
LET ME HEAR YOU WHISPER
THAT YOU LOVE ME TOO
KEEP THE LOVE LIGHT GLOWING
IN YOUR EYES SO TRUE
LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART
I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU
KEEP THE LOVE LIGHT GLOWING
IN YOUR EYES SO TRUE
LET ME CALL YOU SWEETHEART

I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU

Sign Holders: Yay! Bravo!

SCENE 7: SHOW ME THE MONEY – *As the action between Katy and Earnest now unfolds, Iswortha Million re-enters with Willy Getcha who carries the new will. Meanwhile, Cologne feverishly writes a note in forged handwriting which she keeps checking against the handwriting on the chalkboard.*

KATY: *(still dancing around singing "Let Me Call You Sweetheart")* Don't you have anything you want to say to me, Earnest?

EARNEST: Miss Did, I just am not good at expressing myself verbally on a personal level.

KATY: Would you like to try communicating with me in charades? In a written note??

Cologne tiptoes up behind Earnest and hands him a note.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: *(whispering)* Geeve dies tooo hurr! [Translation: Give this to her.]

EARNEST: A note? I just happen to have a note here. Here.

He hands Katy the note.

ISWORTHA MILLION: Oh Sheriff Youngman, there seems to be a scuffle down the street. Some of our spirited housewives are so bored that they are jousting with their clothes poles again. Could you--

EARNEST: I'd best be on my way to save the day!

He EXITS as Katy eagerly opens and reads the note.

KATY: Funny I never realized how similar the Sheriff's and my handwriting are.

shrugs, reads

“Der Catty Deed.” Well, the Sheriff can't spell to save his life. Anyway... “Eye do not vish...” Vish?

Oh well... “I do not vish to ever see you again so don't go treeing--” Now what the heck is treeing?

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: *(calling out from behind something that's hiding her)* Try-inngg.

KATY: So don't go treeing to Mack me merry yeeww. Goot bee, Earnist.

Katy processes the message, throws herself into a pathetic tantrum of sorrow, self-pity, crying, tossing herself around the stage dejectedly while music for a sad heroine in distress plays. The children and animals all react in a sort of chain reaction to their dear Katy's having a bad time of it. Mostly everyone on stage is confused by Katy's actions wondering if she's been stung by bees, bitten by snakes?? Wha...???

Sign Holders: Oww! How Sad! Oh Dear Me! Etc...

ISWORTHA MILLION: Katy, is there something wrong?

KATY: You could say that. But I can't say what.

Cologne tiptoes up behind Katy and hands her a note

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: *(whispering)* Shur yeeww can see eet. Wheat dies nut! [Translation: Sure you can say it. With this note.]

Katy holds the note out to Iswortha Million who struggles to open it.

Bowregard grabs Katy. Cologne puts a gift bag over her head and runs her outside where they happen to notice a boarded up entrance to an old mine. They pull the boards off the entry way to the mine and enter with the gift-bagged Katy.

SCENE 8: WHAT'S IN A NOTE? – Iswortha reads note from Katy.

ISWORTHAMILLION: "Der Meese Mealyun." My goodness. I thought Katy was literate. "Eye huv bin rejected bee ur Sheeriff. And so I leaf town butt I isk yew to sighn yer wheel offer to next pearson who takes my platz as yer friend und air. Buy new, Katy."

begins to fall

Just when I thought I had finally found someone who wasn't as odd as everyone else in this silly town. Willy. General. I feel faint. Please get me a glass of water.

While Willy and General scurry around to get her a glass of water, all of Katy's followers are mourning/crying/sighing in one section of the general store.

Cologne and Bowregard emerge from the mine.

BOWREGARD HISS: Drat! My ears clogged on me again while down in the mine. Ouch! What am I to do? We've got to find someone who can sing a High C note since they don't have doctors who specialize in anything yet.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Eef day deed, ve would haf no shtory line, um Aye kerrect? Leaf id two mee. [Translation: If they did, we would have no story line, am I correct? Leave it to me.]

Cologne re-enters the general store and grabs candy and throws it at the children and pets, patting them on the head, doing her best "Disney" heroine imitation...but failing miserably. Then she approaches Iswortha.

SCENE 9: WHAT A SCHEME HERE UNFOLDS!

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Oh mey! A Laydee ene destreess. Yeww luck leak yew cold uusse paartie, noh? [Translation: Oh my! A Lady in distress. You look like you could use a party, no?]

She hands Iswortha her business card. Iswortha reads aloud.

ISWORTHAMILLION: "Cologne Déspoilée. Beautiful woman available as friend, companion and heir to old ladies in distress and needing to be cheered up."

WILLY GETCHA: Sounds like you arrived just in the nick of time, Miss Despoiled.

ISWORTHAMILLION: Yes. You're hired. How do you plan to cheer me up?

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Eet hoppins I nottished Big Broadway producher ootchide lookink fer plash to haf offishuns forre hees neww shoe. Ve coult aleert der toon und haf suum fuunn. [Translation: It happens that I noticed a big Broadway producer outside looking for a place to have auditions for his new show. We could alert the town and have some fun.]

ISWORTHAMILLION: By golly, if I understand her correctly--

WILLY GETCHA: Wait a minute! You could understand her?

ISWORTHAMILLION: Yes. And she's right. This town hasn't seen a good time since that juggler came through on his mule about 10 years ago. Willy, go get Gala Soirée. And Cologne, dear, go get this producer while I practice my song and dance. I feel some fun coming on.

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE RANSOM NOTE -- by Sheila Rinear

Cologne opens the door as Bowregard escorts Gala Soirée into the General Store.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: These iize Goola Sourey. [Translation: This is Gala Soirée.]

GALA SOIRÉE: Well, my my my! What is this I hear, Iswortha Million? You want me to alert the town about auditions?

ISWORTHA MILLION: How could you possibly have known that? There's no texting, tweeting, or cell phones yet.

GALA SOIRÉE: Good news travels fast.

Cologne leads Bowregard in.

COLOGNE DESPOILÉE: Meester Boowowwegard Bwiss. [Translation: Bowregard Bliss.]

Bowregard pushes Cologne to the side

BOWREGARD HISS: *(whispering)* "Hold your tongue, will you?"

he presents himself to Iswortha.

BOWREGARD HISS: Beauregard Bliss at your service, Miss Million. Broadway Producer and General Entrepreneur looking for talent. And I can tell you have lots of talent.

to audience

For collecting lots and lots of money.

Sign Holders: BOO! HISS!

(to audience) Zip it, why don'tcha?

to Iswortha

I am longing to find a talented singer who can hit High C.

GALA SOIRÉE: High C? I hit that the minute I was born. Wow! Is this my lucky day or what? I was just thinking this morning, when I realized I hadn't been asked to throw a party for almost 5 years now...I was thinking that it was time for me to get the heck out of Lost Mind Gulch. Out of this sorry excuse of a town and take my talent on the road. Now I know the road to take! The road to Broadway! And if any of you get there before me, why you can just give Broadway my very best regards!

SONG: "Give My Regards to Broadway."

GIVE MY REGARDS TO BROADWAY,
REMEMBER ME TO HERALD SQUARE;
TELL ALL THE GANG, AT FORTY SECOND STREET
THAT I WILL SOON BE THERE.

WHISPER OF HOPE I'M YEARNING
TO MINGLE WITH THE OLD TIME THROING;
GIVE MY REGARDS TO OLD BROADWAY AND SAY THAT
I'LL BE THERE E'RE LONG.

*repeat as needed -- maybe even a dance, with a little tap dancing, if someone(s)
can do it*

As the production ends and everyone is jubilant...

BOWREGARD HISS: Why there's more talent here than teeth in a newborn. We're headed for the Big bucks, Cologne! Just you wait!

PERUSAL SCRIPT -- THE RANSOM NOTE -- by Sheila Rinear

As there is sort of Talent Show indicated shortly here, this is the place for
INTERMISSION.

6 more pages to the end