

Sellout

by Ruth Vaughn

Characters

Jacob: a clean cut young man who enjoys cooking

Esau: Jacob's brother

Rebecca: the mother of Jacob and Esau

Isaac: their father

Setting

If backdrops are available, a wooded area should be used. In Scene I there should be a tent at the side of the stage. Scene II is presented in the woods and there should be as much wooded scenery placed about the stage as possible. Large branches of trees may be placed upright to resemble trees by placing them in a Christmas tree stand and covering up that portion with grass and artificial flowers. In the center of the stage there should be a place for cooking.

Costuming

Jacob is dressed neatly in a tunic and belt. His hair is neatly arranged and in place. Esau is carelessly dressed with his tunic tied over only one shoulder. He wears a water pouch tied about his waist. Rebecca is dressed in Biblical style and wears her hair in braids.



Properties

A "fire" will be necessary for the should be arranged as for a fireplace. fire can be imitated by placing red cel-about the cooking vessel. A light bulb cellophane makes this more realistic. ioned black washpot or it may be ar-and a large cooking vessel hanging bowl, a wooden spoon, a twig on the vessel should be available. Esau should have a bow and arrows slung over his shoulder.



center of the stage. Chopped wood It should be blacked and smoked. The lophane "flames" over the wood and placed in the wood to shine through the The cooking vessel can be an old fash-ranged with a frame made over the fire by a wire over the fire. A large spoon, a ground and "pottage" for the cooking

SCENE I

(Jacob is sitting cross-legged by the fire, looking dreamily into space. Esau enters, looks at him askance.)

Esau: What are you doing?

Jacob (jumps a little): Oh — just thinking, Esau.

Esau: Thinking! About what?

Jacob (shrugs): Things! Going hunting?

Esau: Yeah, I'm going to see what I can find. (He pats his bow gently.) Me and this little item are the terror of the forest! (He laughs.)



Jacob: Esau! I don't see how you stand it!

Esau: You ought to try it sometime. You might discover what a wonderful sport it is — as well as mighty fine tasting when the catch has been cooked!



Jacob: I'll let you do the hunting; I'll do the cooking, thank you.

Esau: You don't know what you're missing!

Jacob: Then, please allow me to remain in my ignorance!

Esau: Have it your way! (He gestures toward the fire.) Cooking?

Jacob (laughs ruefully): I'm trying. It's beginning to bubble! I thought it would never get hot. That fire was stubborn to get started. How long will you be gone?

Esau: Oh, three or four days, I guess. And I'd better get started! So long, brother!

Jacob: Good-by, Esau!

(Esau exits. Jacob watches him go, then leans forward, picks up the spoon and stirs the "pottage." He picks up a spoonful and smells it. He wrinkles his nose.)

Jacob: It hasn't even started!

(Rebecca enters.)

Rebecca: Good morning, Jacob. Are you alone? I thought I heard voices.

Jacob: Yes, my dear brother, Esau, was here a minute ago giving me a running commentary on the thrills of hunting! I was quite relieved when he decided to go prove those thrills to himself.

Rebecca: For shame, Jacob. You shouldn't talk that way about your brother.

Jacob: Oh, Mother! You know the depth of brotherly love that exists between Esau and me!

Rebecca: Well, I don't like to be reminded!

Jacob (hesitates): Mother! I want to ask you something! What, exactly, is this birthright that is to be given to Esau because he is the oldest child?

Rebecca (sits): Jacob, I've explained that to you before. The firstborn son has a great responsibility in the family. He is entitled to what we call the "birthright." He will serve as the priest and the judge of our family.

Jacob: At the same time?

Rebecca: Yes. As the firstborn, Esau will become the chief of the Hebrew tribe after the death of your father, and in this manner he will be the heir to the covenant which was made by God with Abraham.

Jacob: I see. It's pretty important, isn't it? Heir to a covenant with God!

Rebecca: Yes, it is important, Jacob. Most important!

Jacob: And it goes to Esau!

(Rebecca sighs and arises.)

Rebecca: Yes, Jacob, it goes to Esau.

Isaac (offstage): Rebecca! Rebecca! Where are you?

Rebecca: Oh, that is your father. I must go to him. Take good care of your pottage, Jacob!

(She pauses, picks up the spoon, and stirs.)

Isaac (offstage): Rebecca! Rebecca!

Rebecca: I'm coming, dear!

(She smells of a spoonful of the soup. She lays the spoon down.)

Rebecca: It has hopes, Jacob. Yes, it smells delicious. You are becoming quite good at this, you know!

Jacob (sourly): It's nice to know that I'm good at something!



Rebecca: Jacob, don't be like that!

Jacob: And how should I be? Excited and exuberant because my older brother will inherit the birthright? He will receive the covenant of God!

Rebecca: Jacob, don't worry about it, dear.

Isaac (offstage): Rebecca!

Rebecca: Oh, I must go! Jacob, promise me that you won't worry about it. All will be well!

Jacob (sarcastically): I'm sure that it will!

Rebecca: Now promise me that you won't worry! Promise!

Jacob: All right, I promise that I won't worry!

Rebecca (pats his head): That's a good boy!

Isaac (offstage): Rebecca! Where are you?

Rebecca: I'm coming! I'm coming!

(Rebecca exits.)

Jacob: I won't worry! What good does that do? For that matter, what good does anything do?

(He rolls over on his stomach and picks up a twig from the stage.

He chews on it thoughtfully for a moment.)

Jacob: I wonder — I just wonder — if I could, somehow, take that birthright away from him! I just wonder!

(He is silent a moment, chewing on the twig.)

Jacob: But how? That is the question now — how?

(He chews on the twig thoughtfully and then, still thinking, he sits up, picks up the spoon and stirs the "pottage.")

Jacob: The covenant of God! I want that for my own! I want it at any cost! I must find a way! I simply must find a way!

(He picks up a spoonful of the soup, wiggles his nose appreciatively, and tastes it. A crafty gleam comes into his eyes.)

Jacob: Say — this might be it! It just might be —
(Curtain)

SCENE II

(Jacob is sitting by the fire with a big spoon in his hand.)

Jacob: Esau has been gone four days now on his hunting expedition and so I came out here to welcome him back to civilization. (He laughs and stirs the "pottage.") He always comes home this way and he should be along any moment. I should imagine that he will be happy about getting out of the forest — and having the opportunity to eat some good hot pottage from my most experienced hand! (He tastes a spoonful of the "pottage.") Umm! Mighty good! Even if I do say so myself, it is mighty, mighty good pottage!

(There is the sound of heavy footsteps offstage. Esau enters.)

Esau: Jacob! What are you doing out here?

Jacob: You seemed to think I might enjoy life in the woods, brother. I thought that I should see for myself!

Esau (sniffing the air hungrily): I smell something — and it smells terrific!

Jacob: Any success with your hunting?



Esau: No — some messenger had been out in the forest to warn all of the animals of the coming of the great hunter! There was nary a living form in sight! Honest! (He laughs ruefully.)

(Esau pulls off his bow and arrow and flings them to the ground. He unties the water pouch from around his waist and drops it to the ground. Jacob stirs the pottage.)

Esau (looking into the cooking vessel): Brother, your cooking is becoming quite a skill!

Jacob: Thank you, Esau. I was just complimenting myself upon my ability!

Esau (drops wearily to the ground): Well now, brother, aren't you going to offer me some of that pottage? I can hardly wait!

Jacob: And just why should I offer you some pottage? I am the one who cooked it while you have been off gallivanting around!

Esau: Come now, Jacob! You know you enjoy this kind of thing! Man, I'm starved — positively famished! Serve me quickly else I die!

(Jacob looks at Esau craftily.)

Jacob: Are you really hungry, Esau?

Esau: Really hungry? I am famished! I am not teasing you when I say that I must eat immediately or I will die of starvation! Come now, brother, don't tease with me! Give me food!

(Jacob holds up a spoonful of the "pottage" and waves it under Esau's nose. Esau sniffs hungrily.)

Esau: Cut it out now! Give me a bowl full — not a spoonful — what are you trying to do — kill me with temptation?

(Jacob stirs the pottage thoughtfully.)

Esau (impatiently): Jacob, give me some pottage! I'm famished!

Jacob: I will sell you a bowl of pottage.

Esau: Sell me a bowl? For what?

Jacob: I will sell you a bowl of this pottage — for your birthright!

Esau (incredulously): My birthright?

Jacob: That's right! Those are my terms!

Esau: Don't be ridiculous! Jacob, give me something to eat!

Jacob: You heard my proposition. You sell me your birthright for a bowl of pottage. You keep your birthright—I keep my pottage!

Esau: Jacob, really!

Jacob: Really! Which will it be? Your birthright? Or some of this delicious pottage?

(Jacob holds up a spoonful under Esau's nose.)

Esau: Oh, all right! I'm about to die of starvation! What good would the birthright be to me if I were dead?

Jacob: Good thinking, brother! Will you sell me your birthright?

Esau: Yes, all right, I said that I would. Now give me some of that pottage!

(Again Jacob holds up a spoonful of pottage under Esau's nose.)

Jacob: Swear that you will give me your birthright for a bowl of pottage!

Esau: I swear! Jacob — please!

Jacob: Then it's a deal! Pottage coming up, dear brother. Pottage coming right up!

(Jacob spoons up a bowl of pottage and hands it to Esau. Esau grabs the bowl and begins hungrily to eat the pottage. After a few moments, he pauses and looks at Jacob.)

Esau: Jacob, you didn't really mean that, did you? About the birthright, I mean! I really couldn't sell my birthright — just for a measly bowl of pottage!

Jacob: You just did!



Esau: No, Jacob, you don't mean it! Just for a bowl of pottage!

Jacob: A mighty cheap price, I must admit. But it was a deal!

Esau: But Jacob, I can't sell something eternal merely for a passing whim!

Jacob: You did!

(Esau sets the bowl down and arises in obvious agitation.)

Esau: Jacob, you can't do this!

Jacob: You just did! You sold your birthright, brother dear, for a bowl of pottage!

Esau (pacing the stage): But I didn't mean to! I didn't mean to! I just didn't think! I didn't think! Yes, that was my downfall! I just didn't think! I didn't intend to lose my covenant with the Lord. I— I was simply carried away with the desire of the moment! Now it's done! And it can't be undone!

(Esau goes to Jacob.)

Esau: Please, Jacob. I didn't really mean it!

Jacob (laughs): I am so sorry, brother dear, so sorry! But a deal is a deal! You sold your covenant with God for a bowl of pottage!

(Esau turns away.)

Esau: For such a paltry sum, for such a cheap, fleeting desire, I gave up the most important thing in my life. I sold out! And now the decision cannot be revoked. It's too late to think clearly now! It's too late! I sold my covenant with God for a bowl of pottage! I sold out, and now it can never be undone! Sold out!

(Curtain)

Narrator: Esau lived only for the present; he did not look beyond his own immediate desires. Esau was completely taken up in the pleasures of satisfying his senses; he cared only for fun on a day-to-day basis. Esau was a foolish spendthrift of the most valuable things in his life. He sold out his covenant with God for a mere bowl of pottage. Sin would have *you* live only for the present, not look beyond your immediate desires, become absorbed in the pleasures of your senses, care only for fun for the present — and in this way, you, too, will be a spendthrift of the most valuable things in your life! You will sell out your manhood and your womanhood for things as trivial and fleeting as a bowl of pottage. You will sell out your character and your dreams for a flimsy thrill and then you will find yourself a broken, mangled bit of humanity with no hope, no dreams, no relationship with God.



Courtesy of: Skits That Win
Zondervan Publishing, 1986



Christmas Around the World

Use the suggested ornaments to decorate an international Christmas tree in your classroom. Provide the materials and have the students create an original design for a special country.

Australia: cookies in the shape of koalas and kangaroos

Brazil: parrots, chocolate kisses

Germany: stockings and candy canes

Israel: menorah

Kenya: African masks, feathers

Mexico: poinsettias

Nigeria: fish and netting

Spain: hand fans

Sweden: straw goats, flags on a string

Switzerland: cross country skis

Taiwan: hand fans, flowers

Turkey: stars, flags

Yugoslavia: flowers, flags



A VERY SPECIAL BEAR

Who would ever have thought that a small black bear cub, orphaned and badly burned in a forest fire, would grow up to be one of the nation's most beloved heroes? Smokey Bear's story may have had an unhappy beginning, but through the years it has become a familiar and heartwarming inspiration to millions of Americans.

The original Smokey Bear was found in 1950 in Lincoln National Forest, on Capitan Mountain in New Mexico. The four-month-old cub, his hair singed and his claws burnt, was one of the few survivors of the Capital Gap Fire, which had devastated his forest home. Rangers found Smokey clinging to a charred tree. They took him to a veterinarian, then to a home in Santa Fe where he could recuperate. When he was well again he was flown to Washington, D. C. to serve as the living symbol of the U.S. Forest Service's fire prevention campaign.

For the next twenty-five years, Smokey's stern but friendly face, topped by a Ranger's hat, looked out at his fellow citizens from billboards, posters, stamps, advertisements, and television commercials. His warnings against the careless use of matches, cigarettes, and campfires were so effective that he was credited with sav-

ing sixteen billion dollars worth of timber during his career. He was such a popular figure, especially among children, that he was assigned his own zip code to handle all his mail. His name was synonymous with his most famous message—"Only YOU can prevent forest fires!"

During his long and successful career Smokey lived at the National Zoo in Washington with his mate, Goldie. It was there that he retired in 1975, to be succeeded by another black bear cub from New Mexico. Smokey spent the next year being cared for by Goldie and his keepers, who made life for the old bear as happy and comfortable as possible. He died of old age, in his den, on November 9, 1976. He was twenty-six years old, almost seventy in human terms.

In accordance with a congressional resolution, Smokey's body was flown back to New Mexico, where the Smokey Bear Historical State Park had been dedicated in his honor. Smokey was buried there, close to his birthplace. A bronze plaque marks the grave of that very special bear, telling his story to the friends and admirers who visit him still.

Courtesy of: Ideals Magazine



THE FARM HORSE THAT BECAME A CHAMPION

By Philip B. Kundardt, Jr.

If you had been one of the thirteen thousand spectators at the National Horse Show in New York's Madison Square Garden in November 1959, you would have experienced an unexpectedly moving moment. In the middle of the evening, the arena was cleared, the lights were dimmed and the band struck up a triumphal march. All eyes followed a spotlight toward the entrance gate at the west end of the ring.

There a big gray horse—obviously not a Thoroughbred—appeared, preceded by five small children. As a blond young man and his wife led the horse to the center of the huge arena, the audience rose and began clapping. The applause was deafening. The young couple and their children beamed and bowed their thanks, the horse stomped his feet, and the thunderous clapping went on and on.

The horse was Snow Man, and he was being declared the Professional Horsemen's Association champion in open jumping—one of the highest honors the horseshow world has to bestow. That he and his owners, the handsome de Leyer family, were receiving such wild cheering was enough to make even the coldest cynic believe in fairy tales.

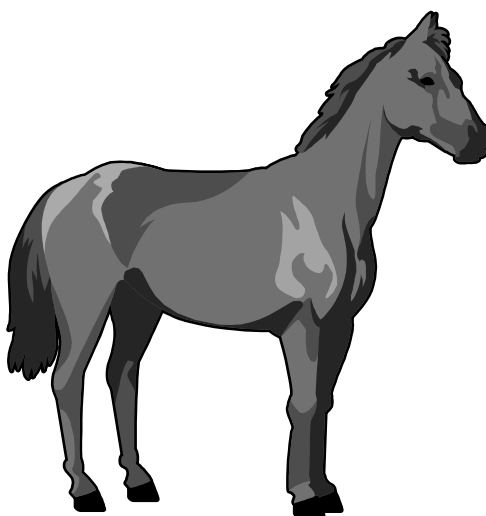
Less than four years before, Snow Man had been on his way to the slaughterhouse, a tired farm horse that nobody seemed to want or care about. Fortunately, somebody did care—and this is the story of that caring.

One wintry Monday in Febru-

ary 1956, twenty-eight-year-old Harry de Leyer set out from his small riding stable at St. James, Long Island, for the weekly horse auction in New Holland, Pennsylvania. Harry had been brought up on a farm in the Netherlands and had always loved horses. In 1950, he married his childhood sweetheart, Joanna Vermelfort, and they came to the United States. With only a smattering of English, and \$160 in capital, Harry and Joanna first tried tobacco farming in North Carolina, then worked on a horse farm in Pennsylvania. Soon the two young Dutch immigrants had a few horses of their own, and within five years Harry was offered the job of riding master at the Knox School for Girls on Long Island. Now the father of three children, he was interested, of course, in doing anything he could to build security for his family.

When Harry headed for the Pennsylvania horse auction that February day, he was aiming to buy several horses for the school to use. He arrived late, however; most of the horses had been sold. Wandering outside, he saw several sorry-looking animals being loaded into a butcher's van. These were the "killers"—worn-out work horses that nobody wanted, except the meat dealer. The sight made Harry sad. He felt pity for any horse, however useless, that could not live out its last years in a green pasture.

Suddenly, Harry spotted a big gray gelding plodding up the ramp. The horse was chunky, but lighter than the others, and there was a spirited pitch to



his ears, a brightness in his eyes. Unaccountably, on instinct alone, de Leyer called to the loader to bring the horse back down.

"You crazy?" said the meat dealer. "He's just an old farm horse."

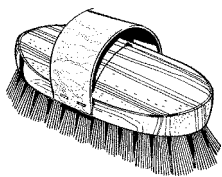
Probably, Harry thought. The animal's ribs showed, his coat was matted with dirt and manure, there were sores on his legs. Still, there was something about him....

"How much do you want for him?" de Leyer asked.

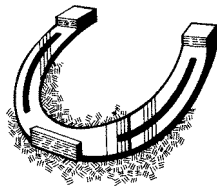
That's how it all started. Harry de Leyer redeemed an old plug for eighty dollars.

The whole de Leyer family was out to greet the horse the next day. Down the ramp of the van he came, stumbling over his big feet. He looked

slowly about, blinking in the bright winter sun. Then, ankle-deep in snow, covered with shaggy white hair, he stood still as a statue. One of the children said, "He looks just like a snow man."



They all set about turning Snow Man into a horse again. First they clipped him lightly, and then they washed him—three times. In a while, the horseshoer came. Finally, cleaned and curried and shod, Snow Man was ready for his training sessions as a riding horse.



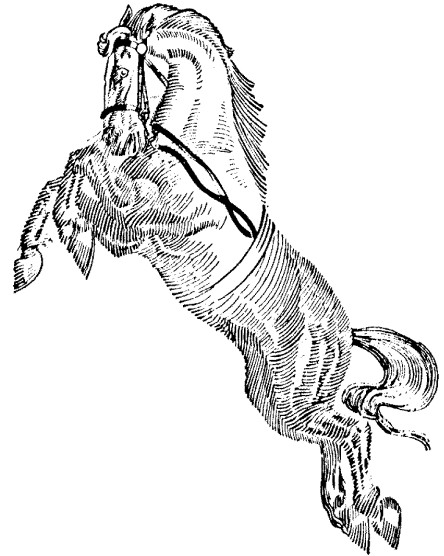
Harry laid a dozen thick wooden poles on the ground, spacing them a few feet apart. To walk across the network of poles, a horse had to lift its feet high and space its steps. When Snow Man tried it, poles flew every which way, and he stumbled and wove.

But Snow Man learned fast. By spring, he was carrying the novice riders at Knox, and some

of the girls even began asking for him in preference to the better-looking horses.

When school closed that summer, Harry de Leyer made what might have been the biggest mistake of his life: he sold Snow Man to a neighborhood

doctor for double his money, with the understanding that the doctor would not sell Snow Man, except back to him. After all, Harry told himself, he was in the horse business.

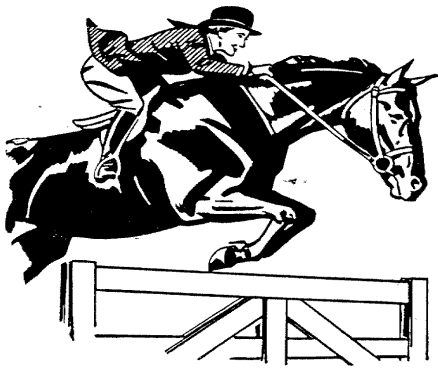


Now Snow Man began showing a side that hadn't previously come to light. He insisted on jumping the doctor's fences, no matter how high they were raised, and coming home—cross-country over fields and lawns, through backyards and gardens.irate citizens called the police. The doctor was glad to let de Leyer have Snow Man back.

The feeling was mutual. For in some strange way, de Leyer had come to believe that he and Snow Man shared a common destiny. Solemnly he promised himself never again to part with the horse.

Now, with indication that Snow Man liked to jump, de Leyer began giving him special schooling as a jumper. With kindness and hard work, he helped Snow Man over tougher and tougher obstacles. Finally, in the spring of 1958, de Leyer decided to put the big gray to his first real test—at the Sands Point Horse Show on Long Island, where he would compete





with some of the top open jumpers in the land.

Incredibly, out on the Sands Point jump course,

Snow Man could do no wrong. Again and again, spectators held their breath, expecting the ungainly looking animal to come crashing down on the bars—but he never did. By nightfall of the second day of the three-day show, he had achieved the seemingly impossible: He was tied for the lead in the open jumper division with the great old campaigner, Andante.

Then, with success so close, on his final jump of the day, Snow Man landed with his feet too close together, and a back hoof slashed his right foreleg. By the following day, it would be swollen and stiff. But de Leyer wasn't one to give up easily. He cut a section out of a tire tube, slipped it over Snow Man's injured leg like a sock, tied up the bottom and filled the tube with ice. All night long, he kept the improvised sock full of fresh ice, telling Snow Man over and over how they would win the next day.

When morning came, the leg was neither stiff nor swollen. And on the final round of the day

Snow Man beat the mighty Andante!

Harry de Leyer now saw that he had a potential champion—possibly even a national champion. However, giving Snow Man a chance to prove it meant hitting the horse-show circuit in earnest, vanning to a new show each weekend, putting up big entry fees, riding his heart out—a long, tiring summer and autumn that could end in little reward. Moreover, a spot on Harry's tongue had started hurting, and that worried him. It would be easier to forget about championships. Still, after talking it over, Harry and Joanna decided that Snow Man deserved a try.

So, to Connecticut they went. Snow Man won at the Fairfield Horse Show and at Lakeville. Then to Branchville, New Jersey, but Harry was in no condition to ride a winner. His tongue was bothering him badly, and he had scarcely eaten for a week. Consequently, Snow Man had a bad day. Blaming himself for the big jumper's first loss, Harry de Leyer drove home that Sunday night gritting his teeth against his pain.

On Monday, he went to a doctor. On Tuesday, he entered a Long Island hospital to have a tumor removed from his tongue. On Saturday, he got the laboratory report: The tumor was malignant. It was the end of the life he had known, the end of Snow Man's quest for glory.

Harry drove to the Smithtown Horse Show, a few miles from his home, making plans to sell his horses. But somehow he would keep Snow Man. The horse would be turned out to pasture.

Sitting at the show, de Leyer heard his name announced over the loud-speaker. He needed to go home immediately. Harry's first thought was his children! His second—a fire! He sped home, wondering how much more a man could



take. But when he turned into the driveway, the children were playing in the yard and there stood the house. Joanna was close to hysteria, however. A message had come from the hospital that Harry's laboratory report had mixed up with another. The tumor was not malignant!

"All of a sudden," Harry says, "my life was handed back to me."

From then on, the summer and early fall became one happy rush toward more and more championships at important shows. And finally it was November, time for the biggest show of all—the National at Madison Square Garden.

The National Horse Show lasts eight days. Horses that lack either consistency or stamina are weeded out long before the final night. After seven days Snow Man was tied in the Open Jumper Division with a chestnut mare, First Chance. For their jump-off on the eighth day, the course was long and intricate. It wove around the Garden oval in four overlapping loops; it included quick turns and changes of direction—combinations that call for perfect timing and coordination.

First Chance went first. Whether it was the tenseness of the moment, the wear and tear from so many days of jumping or the difficulties of the course, no one can be sure. At any rate, First Chance "knocked" several barriers.

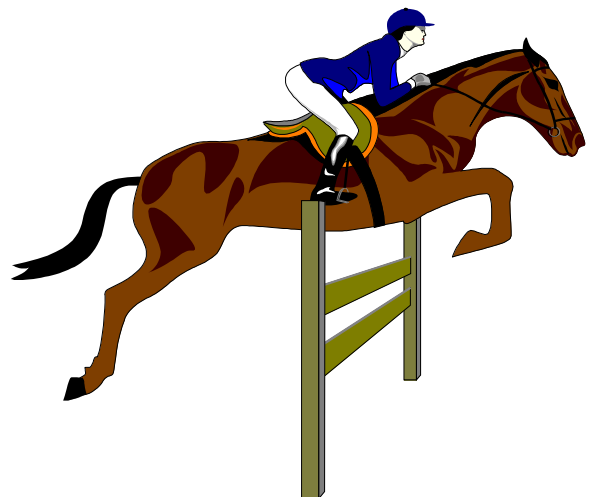
Now it was up to Snow Man to run a cleaner course. Slowly he headed for the first jump. De Leyer nudged him with his knees, and the big gray exploded over it. Now up and over Snow Man went, and up and over again. Over the brush jump, over the chicken coop, the hog's-back, the bull's-eye, the striped panel. There were a few touches, but far fewer than First Chance had made. Finally Snow Man approached the last jump.

Now Harry de Leyer sat up in the saddle and threw the reins across the horse's back. He

was showing, for everyone to see, that it was not he who was responsible for this great performance, it was the horse. Snow Man rumbled up to that final jump, and he thrust and he sailed and it was done! An old and unpedigreed farm horse had won it all—the National Horse Show Open Jumper Championship, the Professional Horsemen's Association Trophy and the American Horse Shows Association High Score Award. He was declared "Horse of the Year" in open jumping.

Then, in 1960, Snow Man was "Horse of the Year" once more. And if you had been one of the vast crowd that filled Madison Square Garden that November evening to watch the de Leyer family and their big gray receive the ovation, you, too, would have stood...and clapped...and perhaps even cried—for the victory of a horse and a man who cared.

Courtesy of: Chicken Soup for the Country Soul
Health Communications, Inc.
Deerfield Beach, FL 33442



NATURE'S MIRACLE FLASHLIGHTS

By A. A. Howe

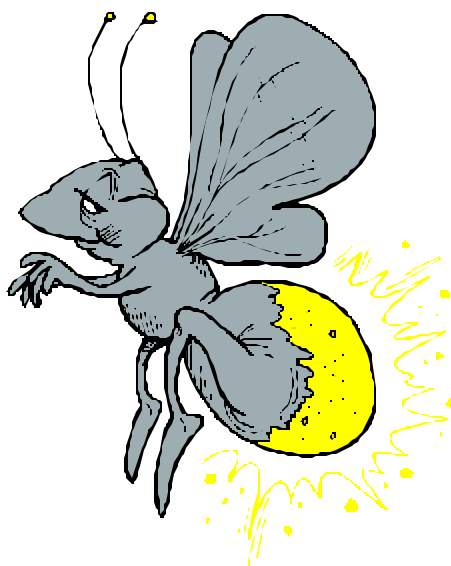
If you were walking through the woods on a dark summer night and suddenly your flashlight batteries went dead, what would you do for a light to guide your way? Well, if you had a bottle, and filled it with fireflies, these mysterious insects would generate enough light to allow you to find your way.

Long before Thomas Edison invented the electric light bulb, and even before man used oil lamps to guide him through the darkness of night, Nature had already created her own lighting system—the firefly.

From the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from southern Canada to deep into the tropics, these tiny magicians flicker, lighting up the black velvet of night. But conditions must be just right for this to occur. Only when the natural light is exactly dim enough, and the temperature precisely high enough, will the fireflies light their lanterns.

Girls of Brazil tie fireflies in their hair. Ladies put them on their evening dresses to make them sparkle.

In Japan there is a Firefly Festival. Thousands of these insects, which have been raised in cages, are carried by boat out to the middle of a lake near Kyoto. There they are released in a festive ceremony. The light which is generated by the



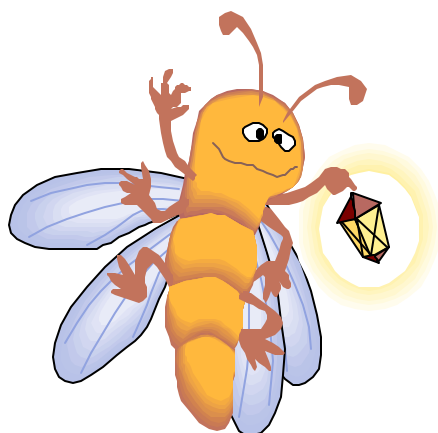
fireflies is brighter than the stars in the sky.

Firefly light is a perfect miracle of nature, because it is a light without heat, thus giving perfect illumination. Only recently have scientists been able to invent a light which gives off very little heat.

The firefly itself is cooler than the air of the summer night which it lights up.

Actually fireflies are not flies at all—they are beetles. These magicians are gray, brown, and black, and look very ordinary when seen in the daytime.

When you hold a firefly in your cupped hand it will glow—then suddenly like a beacon, the light leaps up very brightly, but only for a second or so. If the insect is hurt, the flashes become almost continuous, just as our hearts beat faster when we are excited.



The luminous organs consist of two layers of tissues. Near the surface is a layer of granules (which are like tiny grains of sand), and back of these is a layer of crystal cells which act as reflectors. The granules are the source of light. Through these two layers runs a network of air tubes and nerves.

Scientists are not certain, but they believe when the firefly



flashes, the air tubes probably open, oxygen rushes over the granules, and they flare up—just like an ember brightens when you blow on it.

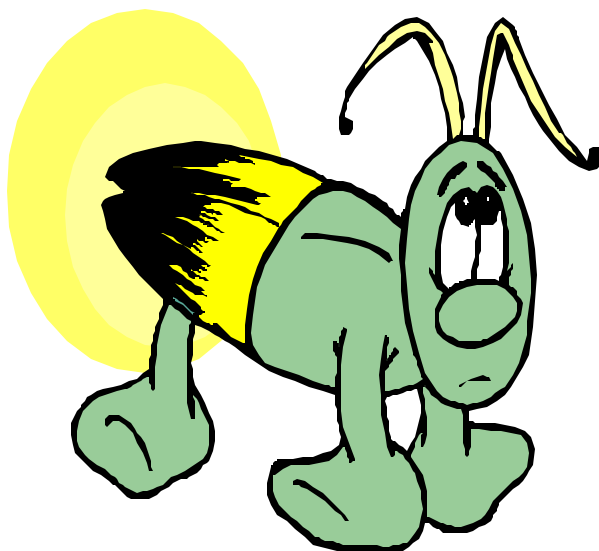
If these granules are taken out of the insect and dropped into pure oxygen they will glow continuously until something, it seems, is used up. That something must contain the secret of the light, and so far scientists have been unable to discover just what it is.

What is the light for? In the North American firefly, called *pyralis*, the little wink of light seems to be a signal between the males and females. The female sends signals from the grass. Her light is much weaker, but the male is always guided to the female by her signal.

Perhaps the light is a signal, but we cannot be sure, because certain kinds of these insects do not flash when grown. They glow only in the larval stage, when they are called glowworms. Some fireflies even lay luminous eggs. And the little lantern cannot be used to guide the way because the light is located in the tail of the insect.

There are over 2,000 species of fireflies. Most of them give off flashes of greenish white light, but in South America there is a remarkable insect which gives off a red light at each end of its body and a green light along the sides of its body.

Some fireflies give off a very bright light. In the West Indies there is a beetle called *cucuyo* which gives off a very brilliant light. When American soldiers were fighting in Cuba in 1898 the great surgeon, Dr. William C. Gorgas, was operating on a soldier when his lamp went



out. By the light of a bottle full of *cucuyos* he successfully finished the operation.

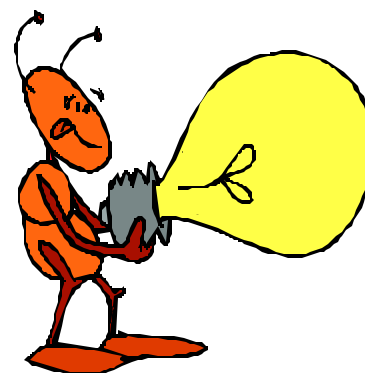
The fireflies of Jamaica give off so much light that, when they settle in the palm trees, it appears as if the trees are bathed in sheets of flame, the glow of which can be seen half a mile away.

But the greatest firefly show in the world is in Thailand. There, clustered in the trees lining the rivers, they flash their

lights—120 times a minute at regular intervals. This causes one instant of complete blackness, and in the next instant every tree and every boat on the river is revealed in the sudden brightness as if by lightning from the sky.

In the United States the firefly season lasts from about the middle of June to the middle of August. But what happens to the fireflies after that? No one is quite sure. They just vanish, but not before having laid their eggs in decaying logs. Thus we can be sure that in the following summer we will again have the pleasure of enjoying their mysterious, flashing beauty.

Courtesy of: Ideals Magazine



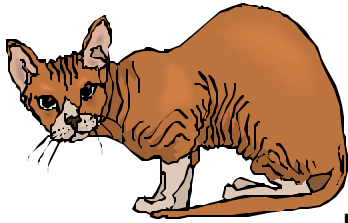
MY KITTEN

By Myrtle Vogelsong

A soft ball of fluff, so cuddly and cute,
With bright, curious eyes and warm little snoot,
He jumps in my lap, curls up in a heap,
Winks a few times, then drops off to sleep.
I lift a small paw and stroke the soft fur,



Then smile as I hear the gentle purr-rr, purr-rr,
Completely relaxed, entirely content,
So tired from playing, utterly spent,
Hours of laughter and pleasure untold



Are found in this dear little creature so bold.
His antics are frantic at times, and he prances,
Then gives me some of those bright, impish glances.

So gentle, so trusting, so busy is he,
And a wealth of affection he showers on me.
He opens his eyes and stretches, then rises,
All lively again and full of surprises.



My kitten's so playful, bewitching and bright,
So tiny a creature to bring such delight.

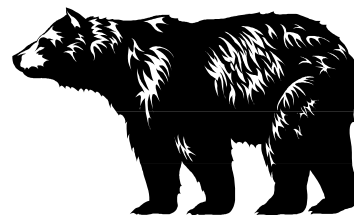


SEE THE ZOO

By Mary Shirley Krouse



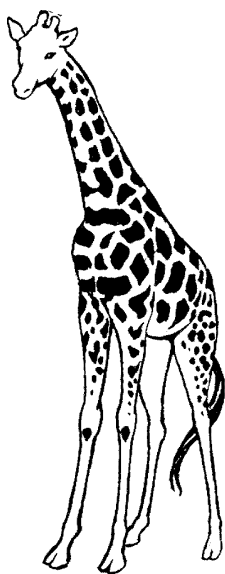
Isn't it fun to go out to the zoo,
And see all the animals there?
The hoppety-skippety kangaroo
And the furry, fat, grizzly bear?



The monkeys who swing by their broomstick tails,
The peacocks with feathers so fine,
Great freckled tigers with scissor-sharp nails,
And the prickly old porcupine.

The candy-striped zebra and small gray mule,
The seal with his shiny black coat
Who splashes about in his swimming pool
And makes a wild noise in his throat.

We look at the possum who sleeps and sighs
And wiggles his long, funny snout,
And the fat-bellied owls with their big bright eyes
Who sit on their haunches and hoot.



The elephant's there and we always laugh
When his pretzel-shaped trunk untwirls
At the rubber neck of the tall giraffe
Who is nice to the boys and girls.



We speak to the birds and dear little fawns,
The bunnies and prairie dogs, too,
And down by the lake feed the pretty white swans
Each time that we go to the zoo.



The Circuit Riding Judge

A Readers' Theater
Adapted by Bonnie Walker

The mighty work of Calvary should not become an old forgotten story. Let us worship our majestic God. This reading is designed to remind us that God is our Father, our Judge and our Advocate.

Participants: Readers 1, 2, 3; Seekers 1, 2, 3

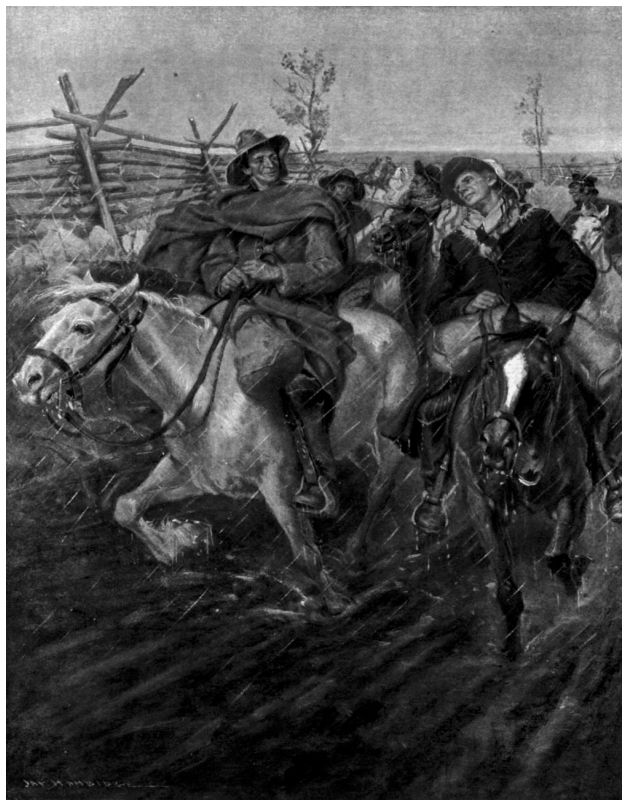
Staging: Readers 1, 2, and 3 stand together in front to the side, facing the audience. Seekers 1, 2, and 3 stand together in front on the other side, facing the audience. Groups should be turned slightly towards each other.

Reader 1 The circuit riding judges
Reader 2 used to ride across the land
Reader 3 with a rifle on their saddle
Reader 2 and a lawyer right
Reader 1 on hand.

Seeker 1 Just a minute now,
Seeker 2 to have a trial
Seeker 3 there must be
Seeker 2 an accusation
Seeker 1 and . . .
Seeker 3 announcement
Seeker 1 that the court will convene.
Seeker 2 Right! They must have
Seeker 3 a hearing
Seeker 2 with evidence and then
Seeker 1 the judge and jury decide.

Seekers 1, 2, 3 GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY!

Reader 1 Morris Venden tells a story
Reader 2 many stories . . .
Reader 1 This one has an Old West Flavor
Reader 3 There are two parts . . .



Seekers 1, 2, 3 THE WAY IT WAS, PART 1

Reader 1 The circuit riding judges
Reader 2 used to ride across the land
Reader 3 with a rifle on their saddles
Reader 2 and a lawyer right
Reader 1 on hand
Reader 3 David Davis
Reader 2 of Bloomington . . .
Reader 3 eighth Illinois circuit judge
Reader 1 was about to arrive in Mill Creek
Reader 2 in the spring of 1845.



Seeker 1 Who was that long legged lawyer
Seeker 2 Is it Abe Lincoln?
Seeker 1 Davis and Abe!
Seeker 3 Justice will be dealt . . .
Seeker 1 and stories, too.

Reader 1 This will be exciting . . .
Reader 2 it has been six months
Reader 3 since last court session
Reader 2 at old Mill Creek.

Seeker 1 Old Thomas Jacobs
Seeker 2 is said to have
Seeker 3 set fire to the blacksmith's shop.



Seeker 2 Henry Whitney shot
Seeker 1 Ebenezer Bates
Seeker 3 in cold blood!
Seeker 2 They'll be SURE
Seeker 1 to look after Jessie Adams.
Seeker 3 Glad he didn't get away
Seeker 2 with poling a gun
Seeker 1 in that teller's face!
Seeker 3 Yes!
Seeker 1 And Silas Foster's been accused
Seeker 2 of stealing pigs . . .

Seekers 1, 2, 3 JUSTICE WILL BE DONE!

Reader 1 The court convenes
Reader 2 The whole town is out.
Reader 3 The books are open
Reader 2 Abe just has a way
Reader 1 of bringing truth
Reader 3 to light.



Seeker 1 The court has heard
Seeker 2 the evidence is given
Seeker 3 the judge and jury decide
Seeker 2 Judge Davis finds some
Seeker 3 guilty
Seeker 1 and some innocent.

Reader 1 The last day there was
Reader 2 a hanging . . .
Reader 3 Henry Whitney
Reader 1 was found guilty of murder
Reader 2 and the company moved on
Reader 3 another town . . . another case.

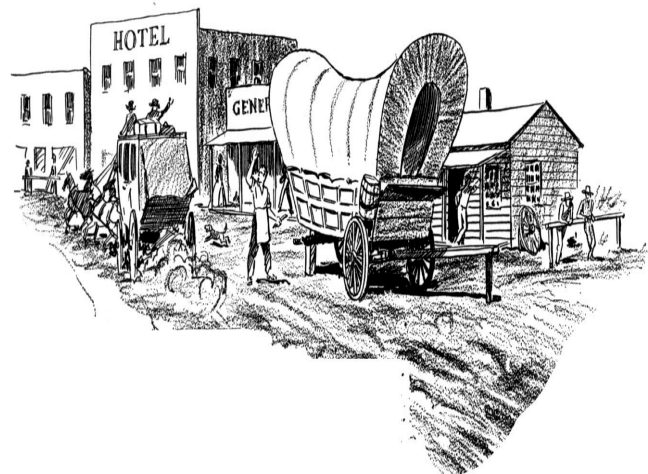
Seeker 1 Back up
Seeker 2 start over, please!
Seeker 3 Are you with me?
Seeker 2 This time, the story is

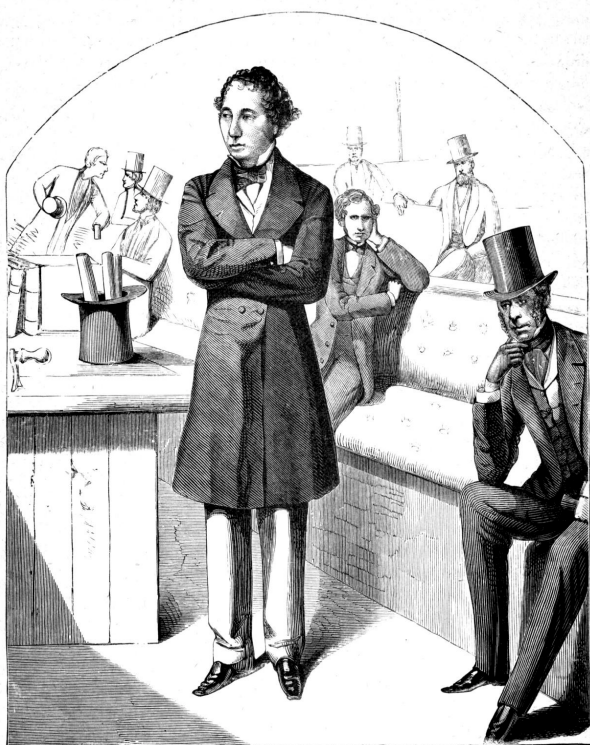
Seeker 1, 2, 3 THE WAY IT WASN'T

Reader 1 The circuit riding judges
Reader 2 used to ride across the land
Reader 3 with a rifle on their saddles
Reader 2 and lawyer right
Reader 1 on hand.
Reader 3 David Davis
Reader 2 of Bloomington . . .
Reader 3 eighth Illinois circuit judge
Reader 1 was about to arrive in Mill Creek
Reader 2 It was the spring of 1845.
Reader 3 Six months since the last court . . .

Seeker 1 There was Abe Lincoln, too. . .
Seeker 2 best lawyer
Seeker 3 and story teller.
Seeker 2 Good combination.

Reader 1 Old Thomas Jacobs
Reader 2 suspected of setting fire
Reader 3 to the blacksmith's shop.
Reader 2 A cold blooded shooting
Reader 1 of Ebenezer Bates
Reader 3 by Henry Whitney.
Reader 2 Jesse Adams in jail
Reader 1 for bank robbery.
Reader 3 Silas Foster . . . stealing pigs . . .





MR. DISRAELI CRITICISING MR. GLADSTONE'S WAR BUDGET.

Seekers 1, 2, 3 JUSTICE WILL BE DONE!

Reader 1 The court convenes!
Reader 2 Judge Davis bangs his gavel . . .

Seeker 1 Thomas Jacobs,
Seeker 3 not guilty!
Seeker 2 Silas Foster,
Seeker 3 not guilty!
Seeker 1 Henry Whitney
Seeker 3 guilty as charged!
Seeker 1 to be hung at sunrise.
Seeker 2 Jesse Adams
Seeker 3 not guilty.

Seekers 1, 2, 3 COURT IS CLOSED

Reader 1 You can't do that!
Reader 2 No fair trial
Reader 3 Not proven guilty!
Reader 2 How does the judge know
Reader 1 Who's guilty?

Seeker 1 Don't you people trust the judge?
Seeker 2 He has kept tabs . . .
Seeker 3 He has careful records . . .
Seeker 1 He doesn't make mistakes!

Reader 1, 2, 3 But WE don't have the evidence!

Seeker 1 The judge can be trusted.

Reader 1 We need to know
Reader 2 the REASONS for the judge's decisions!

Seeker 1 The last morning the judge was in town
Seeker 2 there was a hanging . . .
Seeker 3 It was the judge who was hung!

Seekers 1, 2, 3 SO MUCH FOR THE JUDGE!

Reader 1 So who needed that investigative judgment?
Reader 2 Those who were on trial needed it.
Reader 3 The prosecution needed it.
Reader 1 The whole town needed it.
Reader 2 And in the end
Reader 3 even the judge needed it!



Seekers 1, 2, 3 LET'S SEE - HOW DOES THIS ALL WORK?

Seeker 1 How does this fit the judgment?

Seeker 2 The cross justifies . . .

Reader 1 it justifies God for forgiving ANYONE!

Seeker 2 The investigative judgment justifies . . .

Reader 2 It justifies God for forgiving the ones who GET forgiven.

Seeker 3 The 1000 year judgement justifies . . .

Reader 3 It justifies God for NOT forgiving

Reader 1 the ones who DON'T get forgiven.

Seeker 1 Because iniquity shall abound

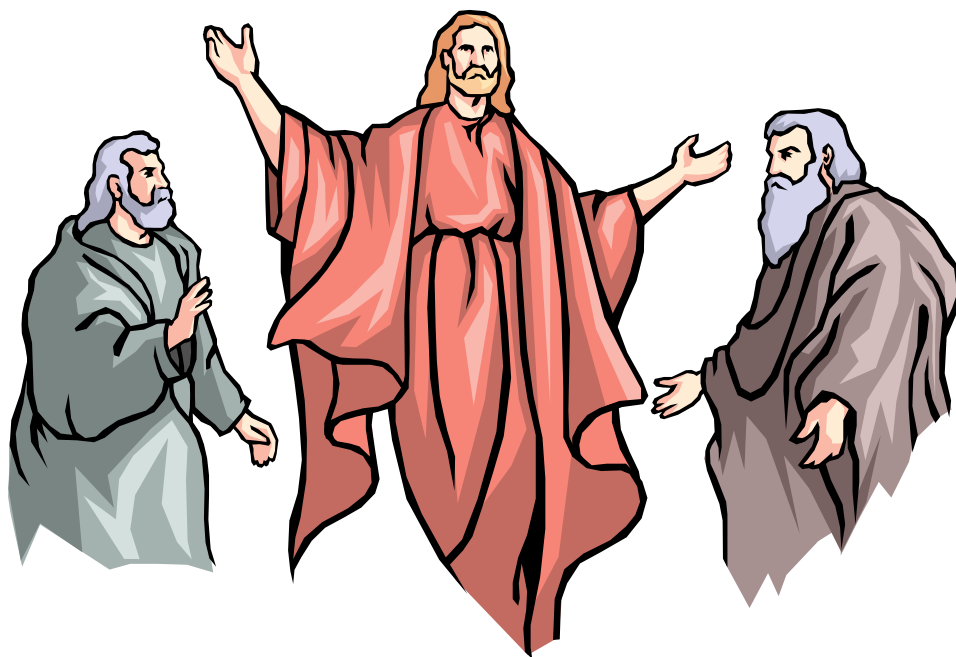
Seeker 2 the love of many shall wax cold.

Seeker 3 But

Seeker 1 he that shall endure unto the end

Seeker 2 the same shall be saved!

Reader 1, 2, 3 TO THE END! Amen.



Courtesy of: Morris Venden



A Tale of Two Families

A Dramatic Sermon in Two Acts

By Rondi Aastrup

Setting: Living Room/Dining Room Combination. There is a stereo, TV, a piano, couch, chair, and coffee table in the living room. The dining room has a table with six chairs. The tablecloth is on cock-eyed and it is piled with books and coats, etc. Both rooms are generally cluttered – stuff on the floor and on the chairs.

Characters:

Mother – mid 30's, frazzled housewife; taking classes at night to finish her college degree

Father – late 30's, hard-nosed businessan

Anne – oldest daughter, 14 years old; worries about her grades, studies hard

Bobby – oldest son, 12 years old; loves rock music

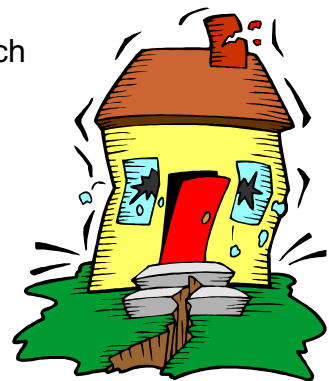
Susan – twin, 10 years old; doesn't get along with her twin

Jimmy – twin, 10 years old; doesn't get along with his twin

Brad – 7 years old; always in everyone's way; ignored; doesn't talk much

Act 1

Scene 1



(It is 5 p.m. The five children are in the living room. Jimmy and Susan are fighting over the remote control for the TV – which is blaring. Bobby is listening to the stereo with headphones on, head swaying, eating a candy bar and looking at a comic book. Anne is sitting with her feet hanging over the arm of the chair – trying to study. Brad is in a corner by himself. Suddenly, Mother rushes in.)

Mother: Come on kids! Clean this place up before your father gets home! You know how he takes a fit when he sees it looking like this!

(She rushes back out. Kids remain as they were before.)



Anne: Hey you guys! Can't you be a little quieter? Can't you see I'm trying to study? Brother! You'd think there was a war going on or something! *(This last line, she mutters to herself.)*

(The noise lessens only a little. Bobby gets more violent in his listening. Suddenly he goes over to the piano and tries to pick out the tune he has been listening to. He adds his "out of tune" voice to the din. Mother rushes in a second time.)

Mother: Kids! I SAID to clean this place up! Your father is going to be home any minute and I need the table set and THIS MESS CLEANED UP NOW! *(She goes over to the TV and shuts it off.)*

Susan and Jimmy: *(groaning loudly)* Aw, Mom! We're in the middle of our favorite cartoon!

Mother: I don't care. It's time for supper. Go wash your hands and set the table. Now, MARCH! *(The kids go – reluctantly – the twins mimicking a marching style walk. Mother swats the two as they go out, then she goes to the radio and shuts it off, removes the headphones and says to Bobby,) That goes for you, too.*

Bobby: Huh? *(He looks at her with a mixture of bewilderment and resentment.)*

Mother: Get your hands washed for dinner. And then peel some potatoes for me.

Bobby: *(In a whining voice)* Aw, Mom! That was my favorite song! I've been trying to hear it all day long! Wadja have to go and do that for!

Mother: I need some help finishing up supper before your father gets home!

Bobby: That's women's work! I don't want to help. Besides, I hate potatoes.

Mother: I SAID I want you to help me. Now get going!

Anne: What are we having for dinner anyway?

Mother: Mashed potatoes, lima beans, special K loaf and salad.

Anne: Yuk! I HATE lima beans! And if you put onions in the loaf, I won't eat it either. Oh – I wish I'd gone over to Sandy's for supper. Her mom makes the best food in the world.

Mother: *(sighs heavily)* Well, if you'd been in the kitchen helping me like a good daughter, you could have picked something you liked.

Anne: But I have this big hideous science test tomorrow. I HAVE to study!

Mother: Put that book away now and pick up all these papers. Your father is driving up the driveway. He's going to be upset . . . *(she rushes out and Anne lethargically picks up papers and books and shuffles out.)*



Scene 2

(All are at the dining room table. Susan and Jimmy are fighting each other continually – grabbing for the same saltshaker, tugging on the butter, etc. Brad still hasn't said anything. He just looks mournfully around and pushes the food around his plate. He doesn't eat much – if anything.)

Father: Bobby, would you say the blessing tonight?

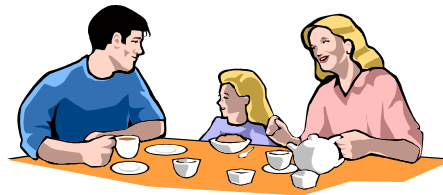
Bobby: Do I HAVE to? I said it last night. Why can't someone else do it for a change?

Father: Son, I asked you.

Bobby: No, Dad. Ask someone else.

Father: (perturbed) Jimmy, PRAY!

Jimmy: Thanks for the food. AMEN!



Mother: What kind of prayer is that? It's not even a complete sentence! What's happening in our schools these days? Kids don't even speak in complete sentences. Why, back when I was in school, we never would have gotten away with something like that. I'm going to have to give your teacher a call.

(Meanwhile, Susan and Jimmy are fighting over the potato dish. Mother suddenly realizes this and directs her attention to them.)

Mother: Hey! Cut that out! This isn't a free for all, you know! Pass the potatoes, Susan! You've more than enough food already.

(Throughout this discussing, Father is gobbling down his food. When he finishes, he grabs the nearby paper and begins to read – at the table. Anne, seeing this, gets up to get her science book.)

Mother: Where are you going?

Anne: To get my science book.

Mother: No you're not. No studying at the table.

Anne: Dad's reading the paper. What's the difference?

Mother: This is supposed to be family time! It's the only time we ever sit down together and look what happens. We might as well be strangers!

(No one has listened to her. Dad is still reading. Kids are hitting each other now. Anne is sulking. Brad is still pushing his food around.)



Mother: Now STOP that this minute! I'm talking to you! *(She stands up.)* I'm talking to all of you!

Father: *(Puts down paper first.)* Did you say something, dear?

(Mother shrugs helplessly. Kids get up from the table and go back to TV, stereo and book. Dad settles down to this paper. Mother wearily begins to stack the dishes.)

Mother: *(Muttering as she walks out of the room.)* Where did I go wrong?

Scene 3

(Kids are still in place. Father gets up and moves to the couch – still reading the paper. He stretches out. Mother drags into the room with a stack of books in her hands.)

Mother: Could I interrupt your important business a few minutes to have worship before I go off to class?

(No answer from anyone. She takes the paper out of her husband's hands as he flails for it.)

Father: What's the idea here?

Mother: I want to have worship before I go to class. Would you mind getting your children's attention? I'll get the book for you to read.

Father: *(Sighs heavily)* All right. Kids – we're going to have worship now. Pay attention.

(Of course they don't hear him. Now Father gets exasperated. He gets up and turns off the TV. The twins yell. He ignores them and goes to the stereo and turns it off. Bobby continues to weave his head until he realizes that there is no noise. He takes off the headphones and asks,)

Bobby: What happened?

(Father continues his rounds by taking the science book out of Anne's hands.)

Anne: Hey! Give that back! I have a science test tomorrow!

Father: ENOUGH! You ALL be quiet! Your mother asked to have worship, and by George, we're going to have it! Now sit down and LISTEN! Give me that book.



(Mother hands it to him as she sits beside him on the couch. Father begins to read from the devotional book. The twins begin to shove each other – softly and quietly at first, but as time goes on, more obviously. Anne puts her head in her hands and is soon nodding off. Bobby is fiddling with the headphones. Brad is sitting next to his mother, trying to listen. Father continues to read – without expression, and without paying attention to his children around. When he finishes reading, he tosses the book down, grabs his paper and begins to read it again. Anne is awake all of a sudden and is soon studying. Bobby puts the headphones back on and turns the radio up. Mother picks up her books and slowly walks off stage, shaking her head dejectedly.)

Mother: Where did I go wrong? Where did WE go wrong?

Act II

Scene 1



Setting: Living Room/Dining Room Combination. There is a stereo, no TV, piano, couch, chair, and coffee table. Dining Room has a table with seven chairs around it. The tablecloth is neatly placed. There is a bouquet of flowers in the center. Everything is neat and clean. There are several Bibles visible – either on the table or in a bookcase.

Characters: Same names and ages as in Act 1. Mother is still going to school in the evening. The children are well mannered and get along well with each other. There is a spirit of mutual respect among all.

(It is 5 p.m. The five children are in the living room. Anne is helping the twins with their homework. They are reading out loud to her. She helps them periodically with a word. Bobby is practicing his scales on the piano – quietly. Brad is playing with some Lincoln Logs in a corner. Mother pokes her head in after a few minutes of this.)

Mother: Listen, children. It's almost time for your father to come home. Can you put your work away and come help me get things ready for dinner?

Anne: Sure, Mommy. What can we do?

(The twins shut their books and begin to stack them. Bobby finishes his scale and then gets off the bench and goes to help Brad but away the Lincoln Logs.)

Mother: Susan, you and Jimmy can set the table. Make sure to put out an extra fork. I have a treat for you tonight. You've all been working so hard lately on your schoolwork and with your music lessons. Your father has been working hard lately, too. I thought we all deserved something special to celebrate.



Susan: Oh goody, Mommy! Come on, Jimmy. Let's set the table. *(The two run off to get the silverware and plates and then return to the dining room to set the table.)*

Mother: Anne, I'd like for you to peel the carrots. Six or seven ought to do it. Then you, Bobby, can cut them up.

Anne and Bobby: Yes, Mommy. *(They exit for the kitchen.)*

Mother: Brad, why don't you run out and give the dogs their supper, too?

Brad: O.K. *(He, too, runs off.)*

(Mother goes into the Dining Room where the twins are setting the table.)

Mother: What did you two do in school today? Anything interesting?

Jimmy: Oh, Mommy! It was the neatest thing! Mrs. Ban's grandmother came and spent an hour with us, telling us the nicest story. Mrs. Ban says she is going to come every Friday till School's out. She said that when she was little she used to love to hear her Grandmother tell stories. We are so lucky!

Susan: Yes, Mommy! I am really looking forward to next week when she comes again.

Mother: That makes me think of when I was a little girl. I loved to have my grandmother tell me stories, too. I could listen for hours! Well, children, I am happy that you have someone nice to tell you stories. I wish your grandmother could be here to do it, though. She would have enjoyed spending time with you. You know, this is a good opportunity for you to really learn how to listen. That is one of the most important things you can learn. And too many people don't spend enough time doing it. We so rarely listen to others. Then, when it comes time where listening really counts, we're in trouble. Do you understand what I am saying?

Jimmy: A little, Mommy. You mean that by listening to Mrs. Ban's grandmother we are learning things that will help us later on, right?

Susan: And that knowing how to listen is one of the most important things to know?

Mother: Yes, children. That is what I was trying to say! Now, go wash your hands. Daddy will be here any minute and we can sit down to eat.

(She goes back to the kitchen. They run off to wash their hands.)



Scene 2

(All are at the Dining Room table.)



Father: Bobby, would you say the blessing tonight?

Bobby: Dear Jesus. Thank you for this day and for the good things we learned in school. Thank you for Mommy and Daddy. And thank you for our home and for our good food. Amen.

(The family proceeds in an orderly fashion to dish up the food. As they do so, quiet conversation is carried out.)

Mother: Well, dear, have you finished that project yet?

Father: Yes. Finally! It's taken me all these months, but I put the finished copy on the boss's desk this afternoon before I left. Now I can relax at last!

Brad: Daddy, is that the project that has kept you up late every night and working every Sunday?

Father: Yes, Brad. I'm really sorry I haven't had as much time to spend with you children lately, as I wanted. But if the boss likes my work, I will probably get a big raise. What should we do with the extra money?

Bobby: I would like to take longer piano lessons. I have been having such fun lately. And Miss Thompson said she had an extra fifteen minutes after my lesson. Could I, Daddy? Mommy?

(Mother and Father look at each other in wonder, but nod in agreement.)

Mother: I don't see why not. Another fifteen minutes might help you out with your scales!

Susan and Jimmy: *(laughing)* Mommy – you should have heard him before you came in tonight. He was really trying, but . . . *(they laugh again.)*

Bobby: You would struggle too, if you were playing in 6 flats!



(Everyone laughs and Dad gives Bobby a slap on the back.)

Mother: I think it would be nice if we could find a little extra money to give to the church. There is so much that is needed there. You know, we are a small congregation. And most of us don't have much to give anyway. But it will soon die out if we don't start paying it a bit of attention.

Anne: Daddy – maybe we could give more than money! Maybe we could give our time. You know, our teacher was talking today about how we may not have much money, but we all have time. Most of us waste a lot of time. If we could each give an hour each week – think what could be done!



Father: Mother, I don't know what we did to deserve such thoughtful children, but I say let's not discourage them. Maybe we could make a family project of spending some time each week at the church.

Mother: Yes. They are wonderful. Let's clear the table and talk about this more after worship. Come, boys. Help me with the dishes. Girls would you go get some more wood for the stove?

(They all get up to do their various tasks. Father goes to the living room to find an appropriate text for worship.)

Scene 3

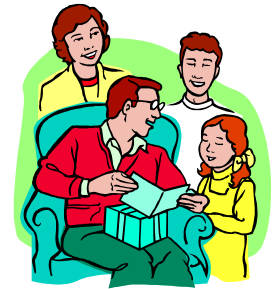
(Everyone is seated. Mother and the two girls are on the couch. Father is in the chair. The boys are seated on the floor. The twins have given each their Bibles and all are waiting quietly for Father to begin.)

Father: While you all were getting ready for worship, I thought we might do a little Bible reading tonight instead of our usual devotional. I thought we would read the Parable of the Talents – since we have been talking about what we can give to our church. It's found in Matthew 25 and begins with verse 14.

(Everyone looks the text up. Bobby helps Brad find the text.)

Mother: Why don't we all take turns reading a couple of texts each?

Anne: That sounds good, Mommy.



(They read the story – Father indicating who should read next. Bobby helping Brad with any hard words he might have.)

Father: *(when they finish)* Now, this story has many things to say to us. But what I want you to understand tonight is this. Jesus has given us each a special ability when we were born. Every single one of us. And we have an obligation to take care of that talent. That means there is something we can – and must – do for Him. It may not be something big or expensive. It may not mean that we donate a lot of money or give a lot of Bible studies. It may mean that we give just an hour of our time each week, as Anne suggested. But there IS something we ALL can do. Why don't we just go around the circle and share what we might have to offer to our church. Anne?

Anne: Well, I thought I would talk to the other kids in my class and see if we couldn't get together on Sundays maybe once a month and work on the church grounds. It wouldn't take long, and it would be fun, too. What about you, Bobby?



Bobby: Well, I thought maybe I could collect soda cans and bottles, take them to the Redemption Center, and give the money to my Sabbath School teacher to help fix up our room.

Susan: I don't know just what I can do. Mommy? Do you have any ideas?

Mother: Well, maybe you and Jimmy could work extra here around the house helping Daddy and me. Perhaps we could have time, then, to help the church janitors with the cleaning each week. Things always go easier when there are more people to help out.

Jimmy: That sounds good, Mommy!

Brad: I would like to do something, too. But I can't think. Daddy, can you help me think of something?

Father: How would you like to save pennies to give towards the church project? I'm sure your mother and I would be happy to help you in your collecting, wouldn't we?

Mother: I know I would. Pennies always seem to be in my way, and yet I'm sure they would add up quickly for you, Brad. Why don't we write these things down in our special book? That way we will have a record of the things we want to do for Jesus, and as time goes by, we can add to it. What do you think?

Father: I like that.

Susan: It's fun to help Jesus, isn't it?

Father: Susan, honey, not everyone thinks it's fun. Some people look at us and wonder how we can sacrifice so much to put you in a Christian school. They see how we go to church on Sabbath and don't do any work from sundown to sundown. They see all the things we don't do and they often don't understand. But when you love something so much – like Mommy and Daddy love you children, and like we all love Jesus, it isn't a sacrifice anymore. It's a part of our lives that we won't give up.

Susan: I wish everyone had a family like ours! And I wish everyone loved Jesus, too!

Father: Let's pray now. *(As the family kneels, they all hold hands.)* Our Heavenly Father. I thank you for this wonderful family. I thank you for the opportunities each of us have at work and at school to show others what you are like. I pray that as we are preparing ourselves for your soon coming that we will also be aware of the things that we need to be doing for others. Bless our school and our church. Each one plays an important part in our Spiritual growth and development. Help us each one to spend more time with you and help us to find more ways to share your love. Thank you for hearing and answering our prayers. Amen.

