

Fun Skits  
From Other  
Plays

By  
**Daris Howard**

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**Drama Source**

# A segment from the musical, **Lilacs in the Valley**

by  
**Daris Howard**  
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## **Cast**

**Alma Hale** - A young man, late teens. He begins the musical at a supposed age of 14 and is about 24 at the end. With this in mind, he will need to be a young man who can look both ages. He is also a quite a prankster, but has a loving heart.

**Aroet (ah-ROW-it) Hale** - Alma's brother and slightly older. He will need to look from 16 to 26. He is a lot more serious than his younger brother.

**Henry Hale** - Jonathan's brother. He is a man of about 35. He has to be someone who can ham up his part and have a lot of fun.

**Bishop William Hoagland** - A man of 40-50 years. He is the leader of the group from Winter Quarters to the Salt Lake Valley.

**Frank Walker, Tom , Andrew** - These are young men of about 18 or 19.

**Jim** - A very old man in the company. Walks with a cane, but is very feisty. He is almost deaf and speaks in a loud voice.

**\*Bron Schultz** - Gertrude's cousin. He is a foreigner and speaks with an accent, possibly German. Any age from about 20-50.

**Gertrude Schultz** - A big (or at least forceful) woman with a strong foreign (possibly German) accent. She is tough and bossy, but likes to think she is weak and feminine.

**Agnes Walker** - Miles's wife. A no-nonsense kind of woman. About 40 -50 years old.

**Narrator:** This is a segment from the musical, "Lilacs in the Valley". "Lilacs in the Valley" is set in the American West. The scene is a wagon train heading west in 1849 led by a man named Bishop Hoagland (Bishop Hoagland steps out and bows). A group of boys, the Buffalo Chip Gang, (Frank, Tom, and Andrew step out and take a bow) headed by Alma Hale (Alma steps out and takes a bow) are always playing pranks on everyone, especially Alma's Uncle Henry. (Henry steps out and takes a bow.) Henry is a determined old bachelor who's main goal in life is to avoid getting married, especially to the bossy, immigrant, Gertrude (Gertrude steps out and takes a bow), who is always after him.

**Bishop Hoagland:***{Calling offstage after those leaving.}* We need to gather the wagons a little early tonight to prepare for the Sabbath. *{Turning to the young men, Alma, Tom, Frank, and Andrew who are attempting to escape offstage right.}* Buffalo chip-detail, gather the material for the fire.

*{Bishop Hoagland then exits stage left.}*

**Alma:** I hate gathering buffalo chips! Aroet got called to be a buffalo hunter and I get to be a buffalo **chip** hunter.

**Frank:** I know what you mean. Someday our children will ask us what we did crossing the plains and we will have to say we were on buffalo chip detail.

**Tom:** Makes you want to stay single, don't it?

**Andrew:** I think if they ask me I'm going to lie.

**Alma:** Maybe we could come up with some fancy name for it.

**Frank:** Like what?

**Alma:** I don't know.

**Andrew:** We also keep the water buckets with the dipper full. How about "chip-n-dip detail"?

**Alma:** *{And everyone else groaning.}* That's horrible.

**Andrew:** Well, it's kind o' catchy.

**Frank:** Sure, catchy like a disease.

**Andrew:** You got any bright ideas?

**Frank:** How about "Prairie Cleanup Detail"?

**Andrew:** Sure - where's your mop and bucket?

**Frank:** Well it beats "Chip-n-dip detail".

**Andrew:** Yeah, it beats it for bad.

**Tom:** Hey guys! I got it! I got it! We can just tell them that when the chips were down they counted on us.

**Frank, Alma, and Andrew (together):** *{groaning}* Bad.

**Alma:** I think no matter what you call it, it will still be bad. *{Music starts here.}* Oh, how I hate those buffalo chips.

*{Normally there is a real fun song here. It can be put in depending on the time length allowed for the skit.}*

**Bishop Hoagland:***{faking sternness}* All right guys, break it up! Break it up! We would like to eat sometime tonight. Let's get those buffalo chips gathered. *{As the group starts off stage right he calls out after them.}* And remember, it's not what you do, but how you do it that matters.

**Frank:** *{sarcastically}* Oh, right.

*{Bishop Hoagland exits stage left. From offstage right Aroet comes in carrying his rifle, sore from hunting. Henry comes from stage left.}*

**Henry:** Oh, Aroet, how goes the buffalo hunt?

**Aroet:** Not a sign of 'em.

**Henry:** That's a tough break. Our camp is getting a bit low, too.

**Aroet:** It is hard for me to see this group not eat as well as they should, especially the women and the children.

**Henry:** Speaking of the women, that young lady from the other company was over asking about you.

**Aroet:** Oh, you mean Olive Whittle. She's a fine lady. She has the same name as Mother and she's a real hardy woman.

**Henry:** A person has to be hardy out here. By the way, Alma hasn't been himself lately.

**Aroet:** You mean he hasn't played any jokes on you?

**Henry:** Not a one. Not since your mother, father, and sisters died.

**Aroet:** I bet you're glad of that.

**Henry:** Well, I think he needs a bit of spice put back in his life.

**Aroet:** So what do you plan to do about it?

**Henry:** Not plan to do, but done did already. *{Bringing him close like he is sharing a secret.}* I got a bunch of the little boys in camp to hunt me down some water snakes, lizards and the like. Paid 'em a penny a dozen. I stuck 'em all in Alma's bedroll. *{He busts into laughter.}*

**Aroet:** I think you're askin' for trouble.

**Henry:** Ah, I can handle Alma.

**Aroet:** Well, that's good, 'cause nobody else can.

*{Alma and the buffalo chip detail come in stage right complaining about buffalo chips and buffalo in general.}*

**Alma:** Aroet, any luck on the hunt?

**Aroet:** Not a sign of 'em.

**Alma:** What do you mean not a sign of 'em? The whole prairie's full of signs of em!  
*{Shakes his foot as if he stepped in something.}*

**Aroet:** Well you can't eat buffalo chips.

**Alma:** You wouldn't be gettin' tired of huntin' would ya? I'd be very willing to switch ya jobs.

**Aroet:** Nice try, brother.

**Henry:** Uh, hey, why don't you boys get your bedrolls laid out.

**Alma:** It's a bit early don't ya think?

**Henry:** Best to be ready early for the Sabbath.

**Alma:** Might as well. *{To the other young men.}* Come on guys.

*{Alma and the other young men head off stage left leaving Aroet and Henry alone.}*

**Henry:** *{Watching offstage with great anticipation.}* Any time now. Any time now.

*{Suddenly you hear Alma scream offstage. Henry falls down in an uncontrollable fit of laughter. A moment later Alma and the young men come back on stage carrying their bedrolls, acting as if nothing happened. They start rolling out their bedrolls where they will be barely on stage but out of the way.}*

**Henry:** What happened, Alma? I thought I heard you scream.

**Alma:** Me scream? You must have been dreamin'.

**Henry:** What's the matter? 'fraid of a few lizards in your bedroll?

**Alma:** Nah, I just dumped them into your flour sack.

**Henry:** You did what?

**Alma:** *{Now very suspicious}* So, how did you know there was some lizards in my bedroll, huh, Uncle Henry?

**Henry:** *{suddenly flustered}* That reminds me, I was supposed to help with the ox teams. Comin' Aroet?

**Aroet:** Yeah, I'll give ya a hand.

*{Aroet and Henry exit stage left.}*

**Alma:** *{To Frank}* Uncle Henry has never played a joke on me before. There's got to be some way I can get him back. It's got to be good, real good, I mean...

*{Gertrude enters with Bron from up stage left .}*

**Gertrude:** 'enry, Oh 'enry! Oh, Alma, have you seen your uncle?

**Alma:** Just a minute ago. He was headin' back to camp. What do you want with him?

**Gertrude:** De best of news. My cousin Bron is headed to the Rocky Mountains too. He was in de last company. We 'aven't seen each other in years. I wanted 'im to meet 'enry.

**Alma:** Well, I think Uncle Henry went down by the ox teams. *{Gertrude and Bron start to head off up stage left.}* Now as I was saying we need to get ... Wait a minute. I got it! I got it! Gertrude! Gertrude! Can I speak with you a moment?

*{Gertrude and Bron, who are just about offstage, turn around and come back.}*

**Gertrude:** Vat is it?

**Alma:** This is kind of a private thing. *{Alma motions to Bron.}*

**Gertrude:** Would you excuse us, Bron?

*{Bron wanders a short distance off, but not offstage, while Gertrude and Alma come downstage.}*

**Alma:** Gertrude, you want to marry Uncle Henry, don't you?

**Gertrude:** Vy, yes. He is de most vonderful man.

**Alma:** You know, it might be that Uncle Henry just doesn't know how to ask. Maybe he just needs someone to show him how to treat you like a lady.

**Gertrude:** You're not being mean about your uncle are you, or trying to play a trick on 'im?

**Alma:** *{laughing}* Would I do a thing like that? *{The young men behind Gertrude, now interested in what Alma is doing, nod.}* I mean he probably just hasn't had an example of a man taking you by the arm, walkin' with you under the stars, you know, that kind of stuff.

**Gertrude:** You tink dis is maybe so?

**Alma:** I'm sure of it. You know, I bet your cousin would be the perfect one to show him. Why don't you get him to walk with you out by the wagons, treating you like a gentleman would and we'll go get Henry to come see it.

**Gertrude:** Dis is a good idea, no? *{Those where Gertrude can't see shake their heads no.}*

**Alma:** Oh, it is a good idea!*{Gertrude goes back and talks to her cousin.}* It's a **great** idea!  
*{The young men watch. Soon Gertrude almost forcibly takes her cousin's arm and they go offstage right arm in arm.}*

**Frank:** Alma, what have you got up your sleeve?

**Alma:** The greatest plan I have ever had, but I will need your help.

*{Alma gathers the young men into a circle and they start to discuss in a huddle.}*

**Tom:** *{Jumping up}* You want us to do what?

*{ They pull him back down. After a few more seconds of discussion they break apart.}*

**Andrew:** Do you think it will work?

**Alma:** If it does, we'll have pulled off the greatest boondoggle ever.

**Frank:** And if it doesn't?

**Alma:** Gertrude will probably kill all of us.

**Tom:** Oh, just a minor detail you forgot to mention.

**Alma:** All right, everyone. You know what you've got to do?

**Tom:** I'll get Henry.

*{Tom heads off upstage left. Everyone acts as if they are busy working on something. Henry enters, followed by Tom.}*

**Henry:** Tom says you needed to see me about something important.

*{All the young men start to gather around.}*

**Alma:** Oh, not that important. I just wanted you to know that your prayers have been answered.

**Henry:** *{Suspiciously}* What prayers?

**Alma:** Oh, your prayers about Gertrude.

**Henry:** *{Still suspicious}* What about Gertrude?

**Alma:** Oh, she's got another man.

**Henry:** *{laughing}* I don't believe you.

**Alma:** *{Pointing off up stage right.}* Look for yourself.

*{Everyone looks.}*

**Henry:** Well I'll be a horny toad! Glory be, it's true!

**Alma:** Yeah. I told the boys, here, you didn't stand a chance against a **real gentleman**, so your days with Gertrude are over.

**Henry:** *{laughing}* That's the most interestin' .. *{Turning to face Alma realizing what he said.}* What do you mean a **real gentleman**?

**Alma:** Yep, that's what I told Frank here. I bet him a day of pickin' up his buffalo chips that you wouldn't even have the guts to go tell that guy she was your girl.

**Henry:** What do you mean, my girl? Who said she's my girl?

**Alma:** All right Frank. You got to pay up. I told you he would be so afraid of a **real gentleman** that he wouldn't even admit she is his girl.

**Frank:** I reckon I owe you. I did think Henry had more in him than that.

**Alma:** Well, you can't pick up chips for me tomorrow 'cause it's the Sabbath, so I suppose on Monday you...

**Henry:** Now wait a doggone minute here! Nobody says Henry Hale can't stand up for his

girl. I could go over there right now and tell that guy, whatever his name is, that she's my girl!

**Alma:** Then why don't you do it?

**Henry:** I never said she was my girl!

**Alma:** Frank, Monday be alright?

**Frank:** I guess that would be fine.

**Henry:** You think I don't have it in me. Well, I'll show you. I'll go over there and tell this feller to beat it and you'll see him hightail it right out of here.

**Alma:** Sure, you'll go over there and scare him off, because you smell like you've been drug through an ox corral. I mean, she'd never want to marry the likes of you now she's met a **real gentleman**.

**Henry:** Oh, you think you're so smart, Alma Hale. I'll have you know that Gertrude has often wanted me to marry her.

**Alma:** That was before she met a **real gentleman**. I mean, look at them.

*{Everyone looks offstage right again. Some of the young men whistle.}*

**Henry:** I could bet you a day of workin' with the oxen against a day of pickin' up your stinkin' buffalo chips that if I went over there right now she would tell that other feller to skedaddle and take me.

**Alma:** You're on, since I know you're gonna' lose. Safest bet of my life, don't you think, guys?

*{They all nod.}*

**Frank:** Yea, Henry is gettin' a bit old. I really don't think you ought to be takin' advantage of him like this.

**Henry:** *{Really getting steamed}* Old! Takin' advantage, my foot! What are you talkin' about?

**Andrew:** *{Patting Henry's hair}* You do have to admit, Henry, you're losin' a bit of hair.

**Henry:** *{Really getting worked up now}* I am not losin' any hair. 'sides, a little less hair looks distinguished.

**Tom:** You mean extinguished.

*{They all laugh.}*

**Frank:** *{Mocking Gertrude}* You stay out of dis.

*{They laugh again.}*

**Henry:** Laugh all you want, but I always said the busy path don't grow no grass.

**Frank:** Yeah, well, I always said there ain't no reason to cover an empty shed.

*{They all laugh again.}*

**Henry:** You think you're really funny. Well, I'm twice the man of any of you young hooligans.

**Frank:** *{Patting Henry's stomach.}* We ain't talkin' weight or age now, Henry.

*{They all laugh again.}*

**Alma:** Sure, you may go out with a lady once, but once she found a **real gentleman** she wouldn't go out twice.

**Tom:** *{Running his fingers through Henry's hair}* Especially since she had already run her fingers through **both** your hairs.

*{Everyone laughs again.}*

**Henry:** *{Now worked into a total frenzy.}* All right that does it! Alma Hale, I can show you I can win a woman just as well as the next guy. I will bet you not one day, not one week, but one full month of picking up your stinkin' buffalo chips, against your taking care of the oxen for me, that I can get Gertrude to marry me!

**Frank:** *{Whistles.}* Why, Alma, I think Henry really feels he can win her.

**Alma:** Nah, he's just full of wind.

**Henry:** You just wait and see.

**Alma:** Well it looks like Gertrude and this man are coming over so you are going to get your chance.

*{They all look offstage right and Alma grabs Tom while Henry isn't looking and signals for him to go get everyone from camp. Tom runs off upstage left. Gertrude and Bron enter from stage right still arm in arm.}*

**Gertrude:** 'enry I want you to meet my...

**Alma:** *{Hurriedly interrupting.}* Uh, Gertrude, before you say anything Henry has something he wants to say, *{then sarcastically}* that is, if he's got it in him.

*{Henry steps up and fiercely separates them, turns and faces Bron.}*

**Henry:** First I want to say this is my girl and you better stay away!

**Bron:** But I'm ...

*{Andrew, quickly puts his hand over Bron's mouth from behind.}*

**Andrew:** *{To Bron}* You heard the man - this is his girl.

*{The rest of the camp comes on from up stage left led by Bishop Hoagland, Tom, Aroet, and Rachel just in time to hear Henry.}*

**Henry:** Gertrude, will you marry me? You don't need to go traipsing off with any other man. *{with this he points to Bron}*

**Bron:** But she's my...

*{Alma puts his hand over Bron's mouth before he can say more.}*

**Gertrude:** *{Finally grasping some of the situation whacks Bron.}* You 'eard the man. Stay

out of dis. *{Bron falls silent.}* Oh, 'Enry, I thought you'd never ask.

**Alma:** *{Turning to face the crowd.}* Let's hear three cheers for Henry. Hip, hip-

**Crowd:** Hooray!

**Alma:** Hip, hip-

**Crowd:** Hooray!

**Alma:** Hip, hip-

**Crowd:** Hooray!

*{Henry smiling, waves to the crowd. Alma signals to Frank.}*

**Frank:** Let's have the weddin' tonight. Right now. We're all here.

**Henry:** But, I don't ...

**Andrew:** Yeah, a wedding tonight.

**Crowd:** *{Chant led by Tom, Frank, and Andrew. Henry starts to get nervous.}* A wedding, a wedding, a wedding, a wedding..

**Alma:** Yea, the bishop's here. What do ya say, Bishop?

**Bishop Hoagland:** Well, it's a bit unusual, but it's not like they haven't known each other for a long time.

**Gertrude:** Yes, tonight.

**Henry:** But, I think we should stop and think for a moment.

**Old Jim:** Did he say there's another woman?

**Gertrude:** *{In a mad tone looking at Henry}* Another voman?

**Henry:** *{Remembering the other episode, so somewhat in a panic.}* No, no there's no other woman.

**Frank:** *{To Henry}* Then, there's no time like the present, I mean, considering your age and all. Pretty soon you won't be capable of doing anything.

**Henry:** *{indignant}* I'm as capable as anyone.

**Alma:** Well, then it's settled. A wedding tonight.

*{Everyone cheers. Tom runs offstage left and runs back on carrying a stool for Bishop Hoagland to stand on. Bishop Hoagland steps up on it.}*

**Bishop Hoagland:** All right. Everyone gather 'round. Let's get the couple up here in front. *{After Henry and Gertrude are arranged in front, Bishop Hoagland starts.}* Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to join this couple in ...

**Gertrude:** 'old it! 'old it! *{There is a long pause as everyone stares at her in disbelief. The woman grab the children to protect them.}* I don't 'ave any flowers. A girl 'as got to 'ave flowers for 'er vedding.

*{Henry is relieved. Everyone relaxes. They look at one another and shrug.}*

**Agnes:** But Gertrude, dear, there are no flowers here.

**Henry:** Nope, no flowers. *{Henry acts like he is ready to sneak off, but Gertrude jerks him back.}*

**Alma:** *{Almost in panic.}* I know. *{He runs offstage right with everyone staring after him and comes back on carrying a large, ugly sage brush. Then he hands it to Gertrude.}* Uh, it's not flowers, but it smells kind of, um, "sagey".

**Bishop Hoagland:** Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to witness the marriage of this couple. If there are any who would say otherwise, let them speak now or forever hold their peace. *{The young men all grab Bron covering his mouth and threatening him.}* Do you, Henry Hale, take Gertrude Schultz to be your lawfully wedded wife as long as you both shall live?

**Henry:** *{Hesitantly.}* Well, I ...

*{The young men all start to sing a capella:}*

**Buffalo chips, buffalo chips, how I hate those buffalo chips,  
In my mouth and hair and everything I wear...**

**Henry:** *{In a loud, mad tone}* I do!

**Bishop Hoagland:** Do you, Gertrude Schultz, take Henry Hale to be your lawfully wedded husband for as long as you both shall live?

**Gertrude:** *{In a sweet lovey voice}* I do.

**Bishop Hoagland:** I now pronounce you man and wife. You may now kiss the bride.

**Old Jim:** But what about this other woman?

*{Gertrude throws the sagebrush toward the crowd. Instead of trying to catch it the women scream and everyone tries to move out of the way to let it fall to the ground. Gertrude prepares for a kiss by closing her eyes and putting her arms out but Henry turns instead to face Alma who can hardly control his laughter.}*

**Henry:** You think you're so smart. Well, I guess I showed you. Now about those oxen for a month. Why, I'm going to tell the men to specifically let you have Widow Johnson's ox, and you can... *{At this point, Gertrude, since Henry hasn't kissed her yet, grabs Henry and sweeps him into a kiss so her back is to the audience and all the audience can see is Henry's arms flailing about. Two of the young men might hold Henry for her. When she lets Henry up he just turns to Alma again. Alma again can hardly hold his laughter.}* And furthermore, I'm going to tell them ... *{Gertrude again grabs him and takes him down. When he comes up again he looks at Gertrude}* Enough already. *{Then he turns to Alma}* You'll be one sorry feller for tanglin' with me. You didn't think I could do it, but oh, little did you know how smart your uncle is. You're messin' with superior intelligence, boy, did you hear, sup...

**Gertrude:** Oh, 'enry. 'usband and wife. And to think that my cousin Bron got to be 'ere for our vidding.

**Henry:** *{Whirling around to face Gertrude.}* Your cousin, Bron?

**Gertrude:** Oh, yes. Meet my cousin Bron.

**Bron:** *{Shaking Henry's hand vigorously.}* Glad to meet you cousin 'enry. *{He grabs Henry and gives him a big hug and a kiss on each cheek, European style.}*

**Gertrude:** Oh, you know what I'm going to do. I'm going to bake us a wedding cake. 'Enry, I got the sugar, but I need some flour. I guess I can use some of yours since it's ours now.

**Henry:** *{Totally shaken.}* Sure, sure, whatever.

*{Gertrude heads off upstage left.}*

**Agnes:** Come on, ladies. Let's give her a hand.

*{All of the ladies and girls head off upstage left leaving the men and boys on stage.}*

**Alma:** *{panicked}* But Gertrude, that flour, the flour, it has... Oh, never mind. *{Alma shakes his head.}*

**Henry:** *{Walking up and yelling in Alma's face.}* Cousin! He's her cousin! You **knew** he was her cousin!

**Alma:** Well, Uncle Henry, you know how I am. Sometime I forget the insignificant details.

**Henry:** *{Still almost screaming.}* Insignificant details! I am now a married man. And to Gertrude. *{Henry lunges for Alma but is intercepted by Tom and Andrew who grab his arms and sit him down on a stump.}* And she is off to bake me a cake. You know what happened last time she baked me a cake? I couldn't cut it. I threw it to my dog. Had to hold a gun on him to get him to eat it. He got his teeth so stuck in it he couldn't get loose. I had to use a pry bar to get it out. Nearly kilt him. Lost half his teeth. He would have been better off if I'd shot him. *{putting his hand to his head}* Oh, woe is me. Woe is me.

**Alma:** But Uncle Henry, you won the bet.

{\*Normally there is a song here, and it is much better with the song. I don't know if you can do music or not in the festival, but I left it out assuming you can't}

*{Henry goes for Alma again and chases him to stage left, but before he can catch him he is met by Gertrude.}*

**Gertrude:** 'enry 'ale, dere are lizards in your flour sack. You come get them out this instant. *{Henry looks up at her, then up at the young men (who are choking on their laughter) then slowly stands and starts offstage. Gertrude pushes Henry offstage while speaking.}* It is obvious you need a wife to take care of tings for you.

**Alma:** *{Calling after them as they leave the stage}* But Aunt Gertrude, they're all edible.

**Gertrude:** *{Turning to face Alma.}* You stay out of dis!

*{Gertrude exits.}*

*All the Men:* Poor Henry.

*{Lights Fade.}*



# A segment from the musical, **Coming Home**

by

**Daris Howard**

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## **Dramatists personae**

### **Smith Family**

**Richard (Ben) Smith** - This has got to be a person that is about 40-50 but can be made to look about 80 with makeup.

**Shauna Smith** - A sophisticated lady who is about 40-50.

**Susan Smith** - A young lady of about 22-24 years of age.

**Sally Smith** - A young lady of about 14-16 years of age.

**Tom** - Susan's fiancé. He is a young man of about 22-24 years of age.

### **Community People**

#### **Men**

**Mayor (Ray Perky)** - A sarcastic man of late 30's to 50 years old.

**Bob Hansen** - City councilman. Older man made to be in his eighties.

**Fred Jensen** - A man of about 30-60 years of age.

**Jed Coppinger** - A man probably at least in late forties. Leader of VFW post.

**John Jones** - A man of any age from twenties older.

**Jim Stout** - A man in age of about forty.

## Women

**Virginia Olsen** - Young lady newspaper reporter of about 20-25 years of age.

**Mary James** - Lady that can be in age from about 25-40 years old.

**Jenny Hampton** - Lady probably in her forties or fifties. Leads women's choir.

**Mrs. Brown** - Lady in her mid forties. Old enough to have ten children, but young enough to have a three year old.

## Children and Youth

**Billy Stout** - A scout of about 12 or 13.

**Cindy Stout** - Billy's little sister. Probably about six. She has no lines.

*{The setup is a city council room in a small town. It could be no more than an old table and some chairs.}*

**Mayor:** *{Striking a claw hammer or fence hammer on the table.}* The meeting will now come to order. I am Mayor Ray Perky. I welcome you all to Smithville, Wyoming City Council meeting. We have a lot to cover tonight. We will start off by letting everyone know that we have a new reporter from the regional newspaper, based over in Cow Pie, Wyoming. Miss Olsen, will you stand and introduce yourself?

**Virginia:** Hi. I'm Virginia Olsen, just new on the Examiner staff from New York City, and I just wanted to say ...

**Mayor:** Ok, thank you. Your ten seconds are up. We want to keep these meetings less than a half hour. It's not like I get paid executive wages for this job. Before we have all of our guests introduce themselves and any concerns they have I would like to introduce the council members and staff. First we have our secretary, Mrs. Mary James. Mrs. James please stand. Next is council member Bob Hansen. Mr. Hansen will you please stand and be recognized. *{He's asleep, snoring.}* Mrs. James will you please wake Mr. Hansen.  
*{She nudges him.}*

**Bob:** *{Instantly alert.}* I vote no. Absolutely not. We like things just the way they are.

**Mayor:** Councilman Hansen, I just wanted you to stand and be recognized.

**Bob:** Everyone here recognizes me. I've lived here all of my life. Wait a minute, I see some new people with Ben and *{pointing at Virginia}* who's this new lady?

**Virginia:** I'm Virginia Olsen, a new reporter for the Cow Pie Examiner, and I would just like

to say ...

**Mayor:** Hold it. Your ten seconds were up.

**Bob:** What happened to Jim?

**Virginia:** He retired.

**Bob:** Retired! Why that lazy old ink blot. He couldn't be more than 81 or 82.

**Mayor:** Are you two quite finished? I would like to wrap up this meeting before the snow flies. Now we would like to go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves and what issue they are bringing to the council meeting tonight. Let's start with you Mr. Jensen.

**Fred:** I am Fred Jensen and I have come because I understand you plan to tear down a historic landmark.

**Mayor:** Historic landmark. What are you talking about? *{Mrs. James whispers in his ear.}* Are you talking about that old rat trap outhouse down by city center?

**Fred:** There happens to have been more concentrated thinking done in that building than will ever be done in this room.

**Mayor:** It's full of holes and the roof leaks. It can't even be used any more because it provides a clear view to the outside.

**Fred:** It should be designated a historic landmark.

**Mayor:** Why? Because the first natural gas in Wyoming was discovered there?

**Fred:** No, because more education occurred there than in the school house.

**Mayor:** Was that before or after the holes were drilled in it?

**Fred:** You ought to be ashamed of yourself. Speaking that way in front of women and children.

**Mayor:** You're the one who said it.

**Fred:** You know very well that is not what I meant. If I were your mother I would wash your mouth out with soap.

**Mayor:** Well, your not my mother. *{Fred sits down very insulted.}* Next, Mr. Coppinger.

**Jed:** Yes, I am Jed Coppinger representing the Veterans Of Foreign Wars post 32. We have outgrown our present building and we are looking for a new one we can fix up to house our increased membership.

**Mayor:** Increased membership?

**Jed:** Yes. Ralph Hampton has just returned from overseas.

**Mayor:** Ralph? Old Farmer Hampton's son?

**Jed:** The same.

**Mayor:** The one who lit the pig building on fire at the county fair two years ago claiming he was trying to smoke pork?

**Jed:** The same.

**Mayor:** *{As if talking to Mrs. James.}* Well at least it wasn't a total loss. The fried ham dinner we gave for the unsuspecting tourists almost paid for the cost of replacing the building. *{Then acting more serious.}* Mrs. James, make a note for me to tell my daughter her curfew has been moved up to 9:00.

**Mrs James:** Got it.

**Jed:** Mayor, about our building.

**Mayor:** Now how many members are in your post?

**Jed:** Three.

**Mayor:** Now, let's see the building you are currently using is a, a... what is that building you are using?

**Jed:** It's Jack Brown's chicken building.

**Mayor:** That's it. *{Again talking as if to Mrs. James.}* I always did think it was ironic that the veterans met in a chicken building.

**Jed:** I beg your pardon.

**Mayor:** Oh, Mr. Coppinger, please don't beg. It is so unlike you. Well, let's go on to the next guest. *{Turning to Billy Stout.}* Young man, you are Jim Stout's boy aren't you?

**Billy:** Yes, my name is Billy Stout.

**Mayor:** And what brings you to our meeting tonight?

**Billy:** I needed to go to a civil meeting for my scout merit badge.

**Mayor:** *{Laughing.}* Oh. The word is civic. You need to go to a **civic** meeting.

**Billy:** Oh, I'm glad of that. My dad said as long as you're mayor the meetings aren't civil.

*{Everyone laughs. The mayor pounds his hammer.}*

**Mayor:** We will have order. Order, I say! Young man, your dad must be a Democrat.

**Billy:** No. He said he's just anti-Mayor Perky.

**Mayor:** I'll have you know that of the ten votes cast in the last election I received nine.

**Jed:** You **were** the only one on the ballot.

**Billy:** The tenth one was my dad. He said he wrote in yeller dog and voted for it because he'd rather vote for a yeller dog than vote for you.

*{Everyone laughs. The mayor pounds his hammer.}*

**Mayor:** Is there anything else your dad says?

**Billy:** Yes. I think he blames you for the poor phone service.

**Mayor:** Why is that?

**Billy:** Because he hardly mentions your name without saying the same word.

**Mayor:** And what word would that be?

**Billy:** Recall.

*{Everyone laughs. The mayor pounds his hammer.}*

**Mayor:** We will have order. And who is this with you?

**Billy:** She's my little sister.

**Mayor:** *{Laughing and mocking.}* Has she come to earn her merit badge, too?

**Billy:** Oh, no. She came to see you. Dad always says you're a yeller belly sap sucker and she's never seen one before.

*{Everyone laughs. The mayor pounds his hammer.}*

**Mayor:** Mrs. James, would you make a note that Mr. Stout needs a new tax appraisal on his house?

**Fred:** Kind of tough getting blasted out of the saddle by a popgun, huh, Mayor?  
*{Everyone laughs. The mayor pounds his hammer.}*

**Mayor:** Maybe we need to have Mr. Jensen's taxes reevaluated too. Next, Mrs. Hampton.

**Jenny:** I am Jenny Hampton. I am here representing the Women's Choir. We would like to seek the support of the city for our choir performance at the Fisherman's Breakfast tomorrow.

**Mayor:** Oh no. Do you have to do that again? Can't you at least sing before we eat? The indigestion last year after hearing you sing gave me heart burn for a week.

**Jenny:** You just don't appreciate good music.

**Mayor:** On the contrary. I do appreciate good music. That's why I don't appreciate you.

**Jenny:** I take offense to that. Our choir has a motto that is: "There is nothing like a good choir."

**Mayor:** Well, that is the first thing we agree on. Your's is nothing like a good choir. *{She sits down totally offended.}* Now for our last guest. John.

**John:** I am John Jones. I have come at the request of my wife. As you all know we live next to Farmer Brown. He has a goat that has gotten into my wife's garden almost on a daily basis. I have come to request that the next time he is in my garden the city impound him.

**Mayor:** Farmer Brown?

**John:** The old goat.

**Mayor:** Farmer Brown's old, but I wouldn't call him a goat!

**John:** No, Farmer Brown has an old goat that keeps getting in our garden.

**Mayor:** And you want us to do what with Farmer Brown?

**John:** I want you to impound his goat if he gets in our garden again.

**Mayor:** Why would we want to impound the goat if Farmer Brown gets in your garden?

**John:** No! I want you to impound the goat if the goat gets in the garden.

**Mayor:** Why didn't you just say that in the first place. The answer is no. Absolutely not. The city dog pound was made for dogs. We already have a pig, two sheep, and a horse in there.

**Mrs. James:** Correction sir. The horse has been released.

**Mayor:** By who's authority?

**Mrs. James:** By order of the judge.

**Mayor:** And what reason did he give for the release?

**Mrs. James:** He agreed with the plaintiff that impounding one's car was one thing but impounding his horse was another.

**Mayor:** But he was caught drunk riding with an open case of beer.

**Mrs. James:** The judge said that the law clearly states no open containers of alcohol in **automobiles** and says nothing about a horse.

**Mayor:** The judge has a very narrow view of an automobile.

**Mrs. James:** Furthermore the defendant claimed he was not driving since the horse was the designated driver.

**Mayor:** And the judge bought it?

**Mrs. James:** The judge agreed it was impossible to drive with a bottle of beer in each hand.

**Mayor:** But he was dragging main on his horse at 2:00 in the morning. And he was singing at the top of his lungs every single verse of "100 Bottles of Beer" near my bedroom window. And to top it off his singing was almost as bad as the women's choir.

**Jenny:** That's not true.

**Mayor:** You're right. That's not true. Nothing's that bad.

**Mrs. James:** There is no law against bad singing.

**Mayor:** There ought to be! Then we could legally jail the whole women's choir.

**Mrs. James:** I am only telling you what the judge said.

**Mayor:** Make a note, Mrs. James, that I need to file a complaint since Judge Arnold is the uncle of the defendant.

**Mrs. James:** The judge is the uncle of almost everyone in the county.

**John:** Excuse me, Mayor. About the goat?

**Mayor:** Did the goat eat all of your wife's squash?

**John:** Every last plant.

**Mayor:** Mrs. James, remind me to award that goat a community service award at the Fisherman's Breakfast.

**John:** And just what is that supposed to mean?

**Mayor:** *{Acting like Perry Mason.}* Was it or was it not your wife that filled our unlocked car full of squash last year while we were at church?

**John:** Yes it was.

**Mayor:** Ah, ha. Was it or was it not your wife that gave my wife the "A 101 Squash Recipes" book.

**John:** Yes it was.

**Mayor:** *{Now coming out of the Perry Mason act.}* Uh, huh. My wife tried every one and still had squash left over. Why John, I nearly had your wife picked up for attempted poisoning of a government official.

**John:** See if we ever give you anything again.

**Mayor:** Promises, promises, promises. I've heard it all before. Then leave your car unlocked one Sunday and find it vandalized by the masked squash avenger. Well, I can fight back. I bought you a book on "A Hundred and One Ways to Prepare Spinach" and have planted a full acre of spinach, so just you watch your car.

**John:** Squash is good for you.

**Mayor:** *{In a mocking tone.}* So is spinach, Popeye. I may give someone a drink of prune juice but I wouldn't expect them to drink a whole car full or they would have to live in the outhouse. *{Banging his hammer as there is murmuring.}* Now, before we take up the issues you all have brought to our council meeting we must handle the city issues. Mrs. James, will you please read the council agenda.

**Mrs. James:** First there is the change in the Welcome To Smithville, Wyoming sign. With the arrival of Miss Olsen we now have a population of 1058.

**Mayor:** There are 1058 people within the city limits?

**Mrs. James:** According to the census taker.

**Mayor:** Are you sure he didn't count the goat in Mrs. Jones's garden?

**Mrs. James:** I'm not even sure it took into account Brown's tenth child and she's almost three.

**Mayor:** Brown's have a tenth child? Let's hope they never move or our town will be reduced to a stage stop. Councilman Hansen, you are in charge of the welcome sign. How easy would it be to change the sign? *{He is snoring again.}* Councilman Hansen. Councilman... Mrs. James, would you please wake Councilman Hansen?

**Bob:** *{Becoming instantly alert.}* I vote no. Absolutely not. We like things just the way they are.

**Mayor:** Councilman Hansen, we just need you to increase the population sign by one person.

**Bob:** I don't make changes in the sign unless there is a change of at least five.

**Mayor:** We haven't had a change of five in population since Jones's cat had kittens.

**Bob:** I don't have time to go changing that sign every time someone moves in or out.

**Mayor:** No one has moved in or out for ten years. Besides, maybe it will make up for getting paid to sleep in city council meeting.

**Bob:** I don't sleep in city council meetings. I am only concentrating hard on the issues.

**Mayor:** Actually it's not the sleeping I mind. It's the snoring and the talking in your sleep. Why don't you just change it by five and that should last us for the next 50 years.

**Bob:** I can't make a change of five if there aren't that many.

**Mayor:** Ok, I'll see if we can't lock up four tourists until you get the sign finished.

**Ben:** Here's four tourists.

**Mayor:** Can we lock them up?

**Ben:** No, but their car won't be fixed for a few days.

**Mayor:** There's the answer. Bob, hurry up and get the sign changed before they leave town.

**Mrs. James:** Our next item is ...

**Mayor:** *{Looking at his watch.}* Wait a minute. I think our time is about up. You know what I always say. Who cares if you start on time as long as you end on time. We better clear up some of these citizen concerns. Fred, we won't tear down the old out house. We will give it to the Veterans to remodel for a VFW building.

**Jed:** We don't need your old outhouse.

**Mayor:** I've heard some of the stories you guys tell and that's exactly what you need.

**Jed:** I take offense to that.

**Mayor:** Well, it could use a fence, but you might want to take a hammer and some boards to it as well, plus it needs a new roof. Now about your goat problem, Mr. Jones. If you catch that goat in your garden again, and it's eating anything but the squash, you let me know and we'll have it picked up. We don't want it in our pound so we will show our support of the women's choir by forcing the goat to perform 100 hours of community service by singing in the choir.

**Jenny:** We don't want any old goat in our choir.

**Mayor:** You be the one to tell all those old ladies that. Besides, the way they sing he might become a soloist. Mrs. James, is everything ready for the Fisherman's breakfast on Friday.

**Mrs. James:** Yes.

**Mayor:** Councilman Hansen has kindly donated some pigs for the greased pig chase, but before we get to that...

**Fred:** Anyone that would grow pigs ought to have his brain examined.

**Bob:** You don't have to milk pigs twice a day, Mr. Cow Farmer.

**Fred:** True, but the only good pig is a slab of bacon hangin' in the smoke house.

**Bob:** That's what you can expect from someone who drives a Ford.

**Fred:** Friends don't let friends drive Chevies.

**Bob:** And Fords don't drive anywhere.

**Fred:** That's because there are too many dead Chevies on the road for them to get around.

**Mayor:** Would you two knock it off? I drive a Toyota pickup, you know.

**Fred:** How dare you say that T word at a Patriotic rally. And with women and children present. You should have your mouth washed out with soap you, you, unAmerican.

**Mayor:** *{Pausing with a disgusted look.}* Are you quite through? Now, before I was saying before I was rudely interrupted, let's plan the award ceremony for Friday. We are going to give out community service awards. Mrs. James will you give me the list. *{She hands it to him.}* Thank you. Our first award will go to Fred Jensen and the Elk's Club for their renovation of the high school football field. They planted new grass and kept it mowed.

**Jed:** *{He has been in the back but pushes his way forward.}* What do you mean they kept it mowed? He turned his cows in on it whenever it needed mowing.

**Mayor:** For your information the cows kept the grass short and fertilized at the same time.

**Fred:** True, but the teams had to dodge the cow pies and when they didn't they'd slip and slide all over until both teams were a slimy green mess. The other teams don't call us the Smithville Indians but the Smithville Cow Splats. It's embarrassing, if you ask me.

**Mayor:** Nobody asked you. Besides our team won the district championship didn't they?

**Jim:** That's because after the first home game no other team could stay far enough away from our front line.

**Mayor:** When you become mayor you choose the awards. Our next award goes to Mrs. Jenny Hampton, director of the community women's choir. She is the one who brought the potato salad to the women's choir's July 3<sup>rd</sup> picnic.

**Jed:** But Mayor, that potato salad made the whole choir too sick to sing at the fourth of July picnic.

**Mayor:** Exactly! Our next award will go to Farmer Brown who donated a sheep for the Harvest Carnival Barbecue. He offered his goat, but the goat is doing such a good job eliminating noxious squash plants from our community we hated to roast him. Farmer Brown also donated the use of the sheep to mow the city lawns all summer.

**Fred:** Why don't you just invest in a lawnmower like other towns? I get tired of having to walk through lamb dropping going into the city building.

**Mayor:** It keeps the rabble out. Besides once they dry we cans use them for the annual Children's Marble Shoot. Where is Farmer Brown?

**Fred:** He's still milking his cows.

**Mayor:** We'll give it to him later. We now have the award for the entrepreneurs of the year. The award this year goes to the McDaniel Brothers for realizing they could make money pulling tourists cars out of the mud hole up on Taylor's flat. *{Looking around.}* Aren't the McDaniel brothers here today?

**Mrs. James:** I'm afraid they're still in jail for putting that detour directing traffic from the interstate up through Taylor's flat.

**Mayor:** That's too bad. Maybe we'll have to make sure they get an extra special breakfast. Before we get to the greased pig chase we have one award for merit of great courage to award. Jeffery Hanch saved some unsuspecting tourist last night when Farmer Brown's bull got loose and came into town. I've got to admit that seeing the bull chase the tourists up and down the street was the funniest thing I've seen since the children's Christmas pageant. I don't think some of those old tourists from down south have run so fast in all their life.

**Jenny:** *{Indignant.}* What was so funny about the children's Christmas pageant?

**Mayor:** The five year old narrator missing her front teeth was a new approach. *{He whistles this like he is missing teeth.}* "They saw a star shining in the East." Now, on to the next award . . .

**Jed:** Hold on. I want to hear how Jeffery saved the tourists from the bull.

*{Everyone really gets into the story.}*

**Mayor:** Well, Jeffery walked out of the hardware store just as the bull was bearing down on a poor old geezer and his geezerette. Seeings as the old couple were close to setting a new olympic 100 yard dash record, and seeing Jeffery had nothing better to do, the bull suddenly decided for a new chase. Bolts and nuts flew everywhere as Jeffery , to save the seniors of course, had the good sense to run for all he was worth right into the Hampton's electric fence. By the time we got them untangled it had blown the circuits in the whole town and that bull ran for home with his tail between his legs. Since Jeffery is still in the hospital recovering from his first degree burns, we will give this award to him later.

**Mayor:** For the rest of you we have a young man here who has some ideas on how we can revitalize our town. Tom?

**Tom:** *{Stepping forward with his papers.}* Ben asked me to look at the buildings here. I am an architect and I noticed that they are a unique style designed after a Western Baroque that

....

From The Play  
**The Mail-Order Bride**  
by  
Daris Howard  
copyright 2000

**Eli:** A good-looking young man in his early-to-mid twenties. Slight English accent.

**Jim:** An older man who walks with a cane but is feisty.

**Whitman Harris:** A middle-aged man. He is the mayor, customs officer, etc.

**Victor:** The ship captain. Has a strong accent.

**Anya:** Beautiful young lady. She is the mail-order bride.

**Agnes Harris:** Whitman's wife. Pretty well in charge of women's activities in town.  
Middle-aged.

**Mabel:** Lady friend of Agnes.

**Elizabeth:** Another friend of Agnes.

*{The curtains open to a setting that would indicate we are on a wharf, or for easier scene changes there could simply be a wharf type of setting in front on stage right. The traveler curtains could be used to set off the areas where scenes change. Eli comes in from stage right.}*

**Eli:** Come on, Jim. Hurry.

**Jim:** *{Coming in from stage right. He is old and walks with a cane.}* I'm a-comin'. I'm a-comin'. I'm not as young as I once was, you know.

**Eli:** This is the big day. I don't want to be late.

**Jim:** Late? Ha! You're about two years late, if you ask me.

**Eli:** Nobody asked you. You know I didn't have a choice.

**Jim:** You always have a choice. It's just the consequences you don't get to choose once you make the choice.

**Eli:** You know I would have brought her with me if I had had the money.

**Jim:** And **I know** that anyone who would leave his fiancée to go to another country and work is ...

**Eli:** Here comes Whitman now. I want to ask him about the boat's arrival.

*{Whitman Harris comes on from stage left carrying a book that is the boat schedule. Eli runs up to him. He is very excited.}*

**Eli:** Mr. Harris. I was wondering if you could boat me what tell the time is coming in?

**Whitman:** Slow down, boy. You're making no sense at all.

**Jim:** The lad's just a tad bit excited.

**Whitman:** Now start over and tell me what all this excitement is about.

**Eli:** This is the big day.

**Whitman:** What big day?

**Eli:** *{A bit embarrassed.}* You know.

**Whitman:** *{Looking a bit perplexed. Then suddenly brightening up.}* Oh, is the bell for the church supposed to arrive today?

**Eli:** No. Something more important than that.

**Whitman:** More important than the church bell. *{Snapping his fingers.}* Oh! Oh! I've got it. That shipment of toilet paper is arriving. It's been a pretty rough road since the town ran out.

**Jim:** That ain't all that's been rough.

**Whitman:** Pretty much defoliated the town too.

**Jim:** A person uses what's available.

**Whitman:** Yea, things have been pretty bad around here since that last shipment got caught in the storm and sank.

**Jim:** You think that's bad. What's bad is the time we had that big snow storm.

**Whitman:** The one where we all ended up having to gather in the town hall to stay warm?

**Jim:** That's the one. All we had to eat is chili day after day. Why, no one dared light a match for fear they would blow us all to Halifax...

*{Eli breaks in as Jim is saying the last word, not quite sure what Jim will say.}*

**Eli:** Gentlemen! Gentlemen! We didn't gather here to talk about toilet paper or chili or any other matter of a worldly nature.

**Whitman:** Then what other exciting news **did** we gather to talk about out here on the dock at such an early hour in the morning?

**Eli:** My future wife! My fiancée is coming today!

**Whitman:** Your fiancée?

**Jim:** The young lady he put on hold to come to America.

**Eli:** I didn't put her on hold. We just didn't have enough money for both of us to come.

**Jim and Eli together:** *{Jim mocking him as if he has heard it a thousand times.}* We just decided I would go ahead and earn the money to bring her over.

**Jim:** Yeah, yeah. But it's just like I always said: Absence makes the heart go yonder.

**Whitman:** I think the statement is, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder."

**Jim:** You think of it your way and I'll think of it mine.

**Eli:** But you're wrong, Jim. I have written her every week, and today she is going to step off of that boat and ...

**Jim:** *{Sarcastically.}* And into your arms to dance off through the sunset to live happily ever after.

**Eli:** I didn't say it was going to be perfect. I was just saying we will be together again.

**Jim:** What if this here Milly...

**Eli:** Molly.

**Jim:** What if this here **Molly** don't like it here?

**Eli:** I'm sure she'll love it. I've been telling her all about it and she is really excited to meet everyone.

**Whitman:** Did you tell her you became the town preacher?

**Eli:** Well, no.

**Jim:** Did you tell her we were nothin' but a low-down bunch of lumberjacks and sailin' swine 'til you came and decided the town ought to have a church?

**Eli:** Not exactly.

**Whitman:** Did you tell her we don't even have a proper church but had to rig part of the old town hall with a steeple?

**Eli:** I'm not like a real trained minister neither.

**Whitman:** Closest we ever had, what with your Lutheran father.

**Eli:** Methodist.

**Jim:** And your quakie mother.

**Eli:** Quaker.

**Jim:** Whatever. It just wasn't that too many people ever got religious in these parts.

**Whitman:** Except, of course, when some natural disaster came into town.

**Jim:** Then you come along advocating book learnin' and bible preachin' and get all the women folk stirred up about school and Sunday meetings and all.

**Eli:** It's hard to be religious and learn the Bible if you can't read and write.

**Whitman:** Yeah, I heard tell some of the men are a bit sore at you seein' as how their wives won't let them fish on Sunday anymore.

**Eli:** I just thought I would try and do my part to give God a hand.

**Whitman:** So that's what brought you to Newfoundland?

**Eli:** Actually, I didn't start out for here.

**Whitman:** No?

**Eli:** No. I planned to end up in the United States. Join the Quakers somewhere around Pennsylvania like my mother wanted.

**Whitman:** What changed your mind?

**Eli:** I really didn't change my mind. The boat I was on got off course.

**Whitman:** Off course? Why, I'd have to say your captain had a major malfunction. You missed your target by 1200 miles.

**Eli:** The problem was due to a storm. I've always believed the Lord has a purpose for each of us. He wanted me here in Newfoundland, so He brought me here.

**Whitman:** I still think your captain had a loose rigging.

**Jim:** And what **I think** is that you ain't told that Dolly...

**Eli:** Molly.

**Jim:** You ain't told that Molly everything about this place. She might step off of that boat, take one look around, and get herself right back on it.

**Eli:** I told her the people are different than back home, but that she will learn to love them like I have.

**Jim:** So what have you told her about me?

**Eli:** I told her that I live with an old lumberjack that acts ornery to cover his big heart.

**Jim:** Well, you ain't so easy to live with yourself, you know.

**Eli:** *{Turning to Whitman.}* Anyway, Mr. Harris, I was wondering if you could tell me when her boat would get here?

**Whitman:** I thought you said it was today?

**Eli:** Yes. Yes. It is supposed to come in today. But what time?

**Whitman:** Hard to tell exactly. What's the name of the ship?

**Eli:** It's right here in this letter. *{Eli pulls a letter from his pocket and starts to read.}* It's kind of a strange name. Nacs, I guess.

**Whitman:** Nacs.

Eli: Yes. N-A-C-S.

**Whitman:** I haven't ever heard of such a ship. Well, let me check the log. *{He starts to scan the book.}* Nope. The only ship I show scheduled for today is one called the "North Atlantic Cattle Ship." I don't see any passenger boats coming until a week from tomorrow.

**Eli:** But the letter said she would be in today.

**Whitman:** I don't know about that. All I know is what my book says.

**Jim:** Are you sure she meant this week?

**Eli:** Here. Read it. *{Jim clears his throat. He can't read.}* Oh. Sorry. Let me read that part to you. "Dear Eli. Have booked passage on a ship called NACS. Watch for your bride on June 15. Molly."

**Whitman:** Kind of a strange letter?

**Eli:** I'm sure she was just in a hurry.

**Whitman:** Well, no matter. I can see the cattle boat coming in now. I'll be needed to help it dock and check passports and such.

*{Whitman goes off stage left.}*

**Jim:** Son, you know, it's none of my business and all, but do you think there is anyway that Lolly...

**Eli:** Molly.

**Jim:** Is there anyway that Molly would let you down?

**Eli:** Oh no. I remember the night I left. *{In a romantic, dreamy tone.}* It was a clear evening in late May. The geese were returning from the south. The stars shone overhead. In the moonlight I took her in my arms and she promised to wait for me until I could send for her.

**Jim:** Well, I know I've been a bit ornery about it all. But you just can't trust life, that's all. You see...

*{Whitman and Victor come in from stage left.}*

**Whitman:** *{Pointing at Eli}* This is the man you're looking for.

**Victor:** *{In a strong Russian accent as if disgusted.}* So you the man who ordered package. You look like decent enough fellow. Just as I figured.

**Eli:** What are you talking about? I didn't order a package.

**Victor:** Oh, don't try play innocent with me. Me know your type. Outside you look like good man. Inside you sneaking devil.

**Eli:** What are you talking about? Whitman, what is this man talking about?

**Whitman:** I can't say I have the slightest idea.

**Victor:** Me told to deliver package to you safely, unharmed. Me not like, but do as told.

**Eli:** What package?

**Victor:** As if you didn't know? *{Shouting off stage left.}* Hokay! Send her down.

*{A young lady, dressed in dingy, drab clothes, with a head covering, enters stage left and stands at the edge of the stage, scared, and silent.}*

**Eli:** Well, where's the package?

**Victor:** *{Pointing to the girl.}* This is package.

**Eli:** *{Going up to the girl.}* Okay. Give me the package.

**Jim:** *{Putting his arm around Eli and bringing him back over.}* No, Eli, he is saying the girl is the package.

**Eli:** *{As if a light comes on.}* Molly! Molly! *{He runs over to the girl again.}* Why Molly, in all those old clothes I didn't recognize you. And I didn't expect you to come in on a cattle

boat. It's been so many years. Let me look at you.

*{The girl removes her head covering and finally looks at Eli. Eli gets a bewildered look on his face. He glance at her then at the others and back at her.}*

**Eli:** There's got to be some mistake. This isn't Molly!

**Whitman:** What do you mean this isn't Molly? The captain said she was sent to you.

**Eli:** Don't you think I would know my own fiancée when I see her?

**Jim:** It has been two years.

**Eli:** This isn't Molly!

**Whitman:** Then who is it?

**Eli:** Miss, would you come here? *{She carefully comes over to center stage.}* What is your name?

**Victor:** Her name is...

**Eli:** I think she can speak for herself. *{Turning back to her.}* Miss?

**Anya:** Is permitted for woman to speak in presence of men?

**Eli:** Of course it is. Now what's your name?

**Anya:** Anya.

*{She then quickly tries to withdraw, but the men have her somewhat surrounded.}*

**Eli:** Don't be nervous. We won't hurt you. Can you tell us why you were sent here?

**Anya:** Have letter.

*{She holds a letter out to him. Eli takes the letter and opens it and moves off a bit. The others, except for Anya, follow him trying to read over his shoulder. Eli clears his throat and they all move off. Anya moves off a bit by herself. He reads for a brief instant then looks up.}*

**Eli:** This is impossible!

**Jim:** Are you going to let us in on all of this or are we gonna sit around gawking all day?

**Eli:** *{Somewhat in shock.}* Here, read it yourself.

**Jim:** *{Taking the letter and passing it to Whitman.}* Would you read the durned thing?

**Whitman:** *{Starting to read it to himself and laughing. He says the next lines as he reads.}*  
Well I'll be. The nerve of...

**Jim:** I meant out loud, you lowlife sea serpent.

**Whitman:** *{Glaring at Jim and clearing his throat.}* "Dear Eli. I'm sorry I didn't have the courage to tell this to you before. I could not come to you since, you see, I am married to Jack Taylor."

**Jim:** Who's Jack Taylor?

**Eli:** He is the postman back in the town I came from.

**Jim:** *{laughing}* You mailed her a letter every week and she ended up marrying the postman who delivered 'em! *{laughing again}* How fitting.

**Eli:** I don't see the humor in this.

**Whitman:** May I continue? *{Jim and Victor nod.}* Thank you. "We have been married most of a year now and have a little boy. We named him Eli after you. You will be his Godfather."

**Jim:** *{sarcastically}* Oh, that should make you feel better.

**Whitman:** Would you let me finish? "I've heard how in the West there aren't many women."

**Jim:** Not the marrying type anyway.

**Whitman and Victor together:** Shush.

**Whitman:** "I found an ad for a young lady. I am sending her to you. I'm sure she will be a good wife. Your friend, Molly"

**Jim:** *{In shock and somewhat laughing.}* A mail order-bride! Your friend Molly sent you a mail-order bride!

**Victor:** You mean you never order young lady?

**Eli:** No. Human beings are not property to be ordered through some magazine.

**Victor:** That's not what her father say. He say she good girl and bring good price.

**Whitman:** You mean she was sold by her own father?

**Victor:** Yes. He told me he get twenty-five dollar for her because she know English and is good cook.

**Eli:** Wait a minute. You mean that money I sent to Molly was used to **buy** a bride for me.

**Victor:** And pay passage on boat.

**Jim:** How much did she have to pay for a **cattle boat** ticket?

**Victor:** Boat ticket cost fifty dollar.

**Eli:** Fifty dollars. Why did Molly book her passage on a cattle boat? I sent her over two hundred dollars.

**Victor:** Two hundred dollar! Me think she must keep most of it. Me think you lucky not have such a girl.

**Eli:** But I can't believe Molly would pay money for someone as if she were a package that could be bought and sold. And where did she stay on such a boat among all of the men?

**Victor:** She sleep with cows.

**Eli:** You made her sleep with the cows?

**Victor:** *{Indignant.}* No other bed. We not a passenger boat. And she not like to be around people.

**Whitman:** We could just sit around jabbering all day about things we can't change, but we have a bigger question now. What do we do with her?

**Eli:** What do you mean what do we do with her, the captain can take her back and tell her father there was a big mistake.

**Victor:** I no want to take back. I charge **hundred dollar** boat ticket to take back.

**Eli:** I don't have a hundred dollars. I sent every last cent I had to Molly.

**Victor:** No boat ticket, no take back.

**Eli:** Now be reasonable. I didn't ask for her and...

**Jim:** You're forgetting something else Eli. You were just saying how bad it was for Lolly ...

**Eli:** Molly.

**Jim:** You were saying how bad it was for Molly to send her on a cattle boat and you are about to do the same thing.

**Eli:** *{Thinking fast and hard.}* Well, well, maybe...

**Jim:** Yes?

**Eli:** Whitman, you're the mayor here. Maybe you can help find her a place to stay and a job.

**Whitman:** Now hold on here just a minute. I may be mayor, but I am also the customs officer. The law has changed since you came over here, Eli. No one comes in unless they meet the new legal standards.

**Eli:** What new legal standards?

**Whitman:** In order to be a citizen she must have a relative here.

**Eli:** But, there is no way she could have a relative here.

**Jim:** A husband would count as a relative, isn't that right Whitman?

**Whitman:** Yes, a husband would work nicely.

*{They all look at Eli. He looks at them and suddenly realizes what they are saying.}*

**Eli:** Oh, no. If you think I'm going to just up and marry someone I don't even know, you are dead wrong.

**Whitman:** Well as I see it you have one of two choices. You can send her back or you can marry her. Either way, she's **your** responsibility.

**Eli:** Now wait a minute. I didn't order her and I...

**Victor:** Oh, one thing forgot. When keep must send father Gratitude Dowry.

**Eli:** Gratitude Dowry?

**Victor:** How you say, tip.

**Eli:** If she stays I'm supposed to send her father a tip?

**Victor:** Yes. Very important custom. It tell how much you think she worth.

**Jim:** And just how much is this “tip”?

**Victor:** It depend. If not think good, you send dollar. If good, two or three dollar. Extremely good, perhaps four or five.

**Whitman:** What if he doesn't send anything?

**Victor:** When send tip she considered acceptable to her village. If you no send tip, then she disowned in village.

**Eli:** You mean that we are supposed to send back money for what we think she's worth, and if we don't her village will disown her?

**Victor:** Yes.

**Eli:** I won't do it. Isaiah said, “I will make a man more precious than fine gold.” How then can I reduce a human to the worth of three or four dollars.

**Victor:** I beg you consider. If you not send, village think her worthless and she feel worthless. She actually very nice.

**Eli:** I won't do it!

**Whitman:** You may want to consider everything before making a decision, Eli.

**Eli:** Jim, what am I to do?

**Jim:** Isn't there something we can do while Eli considers the options?

**Whitman:** Well, she can either stay on the ship or I can lock her up.

**Victor:** She no stay on ship. Food not free.

**Eli:** You can't lock her up. It's not right. She hasn't done anything wrong.

**Whitman:** I'm just following the law.

**Jim:** It seems to me the law can be bent a little bit.

**Whitman:** I can't break the law.

**Jim:** We didn't say break it. We said bend it. Like you did when your nephew was caught stealing watermelon from the...

**Whitman:** Okay, okay! Maybe we can give a little. We could let her stay here as long as the captain is in port. That would give Eli a bit of time to make a rational decision.

**Victor:** But where she stay? She no stay on ship.

**Jim:** She can't stay with us. What would the town folk say?

**Eli:** Heaven knows what they'll say anyway?

**Jim:** But, that leaves only one place. *{He looks at Whitman.}*

**Whitman:** Now wait just a minute. I never volunteered to...

**Jim:** Oh, come on, Whitman. All your children are gone and you rumble around in that big house of yours like a musket ball in a cannon.

**Whitman:** What would my wife think?

**Jim:** If I know Agnes and you put anyone else in charge of this girl you're gonna be in big trouble.

**Whitman:** But she's so, so...

**Jim:** Dirty? So would you be if you had slept with cows for a month. I'm sure Agnes could even find a dress or something and make her look almost human.

**Whitman:** Oh, all right. But you better hurry up and make up your mind, Eli. I'm giving you until the captain leaves port which is, which is... *{Turning to the captain.}*

**Victor:** One week from tomorrow.

**Whitman:** Which is one week from tomorrow. That's all! Got it?

**Eli:** Yes. Yes.

**Whitman:** I'll go get Agnes and try to explain this to her. Heavens, I don't even understand it all myself.

*{Whitman leaves stage right.}*

**Victor:** I will go get her things.

*{Victor leaves stage left.}*

**Jim:** *{Looking at Anya and laughing.}* Mail-order bride. The preacher got a mail-order

bride. I thought I'd heard it all. *{Glancing at Eli then over at Anya.}* Perhaps I should leave you two alone.

*{He leaves stage right. As he is leaving Eli is trying to stop him.}*

**Eli:** *{A bit panicked.}* No, Jim, it's okay, I ...

*{Eli looks over at Anya who shyly lifts her eyes to meet his then quickly lowers them.}*

**Eli:** I, uh, I mean...

**Anya:** You send Anya home?

**Eli:** Well, I don't know if that's possible, but it would probably be best.

**Anya:** You no like Anya?

**Eli:** I can't say I don't like you. I don't even know you.

**Anya:** Anya good cook. Anya work hard, learn cook, sew, learn English. Anya speak good English?

**Eli:** Yes, you speak good English.

**Anya:** Anya try hard to make new owner happy.

**Eli:** My name is Eli and I'm not your owner. A person can't own another person.

**Anya:** But father own Anya. Father sell, Eli buy. Now Eli own.

**Eli:** No, Anya. God made man in his own image. No man can really be owned by another.

**Anya:** No man, but woman.

**Eli:** No! He did not make the woman to be owned any more than the man.

**Anya:** Anya not understand. If Eli think this, then why buy Anya?

**Eli:** I didn't buy anyone. I sent money to Molly so she could come over.

**Anya:** Mean buy Molly and get Anya by mistake and make Eli sad?

**Eli:** No. I did not send money to buy Molly. Molly was my fiancée. I sent money for her boat ticket.

**Anya:** Oh. You already own Molly and send for her.

**Eli:** No. I did not own Molly. She was my fiancée.

**Anya:** But if fiancée. You own.

**Eli:** No. I'm trying to tell you that I don't own anyone.

**Anya:** Then you send Anya back?

**Eli:** Wouldn't you be happier back home with your own family?

**Anya:** Father beat Anya since not please new owner. Sell 'nother owner.

*{She looks longingly at him. His eyes come to meet hers they look at each other for a brief time. Eli then lowers his eyes as the words Anya has just said sink in. Whitman enters with Agnes from stage right.}*

**Agnes:** *{Running up to Anya.}* This must be the poor dear. Don't worry now. Agnes will take care of you. You are off of that awful boat. We will keep you safe from men who treat woman like property.

*{With this she glares at Eli. Eli looks shocked and glances at Whitman. Whitman just shrugs.}*

**Eli:** But I...

*{Just then two more women enter. They run over to Anya.}*

**Mabel:** Oh, there she is.

**Elizabeth:** To think of the poor child riding all that way on a cattle boat.

**Agnes:** Come on, ladies. Let's get her cleaned up.

**Eli:** Now Mrs. Harris, I just wanted to explain that ...

**Agnes:** As for you sir, you will be expected at our house for dinner at precisely six o'clock.

**Eli:** But I ...

**Agnes:** You don't think we would let you marry her until you've gotten to know her, do you?

**Eli:** Well no, but I...

**Agnes:** Six o'clock sharp! And don't you dare be late!

**Eli:** But who said I was going to marry...

*{The ladies hurry off stage right with Anya. The ladies are saying things like: "Can you believe the nerve.... And him the town preacher besides.... I can't believe my eyes... And on a cattle boat, too."}*

**Eli:** What did you tell her?

**Whitman:** I just told her that your mail-order bride came in and she had to ride a cattle boat all the way here.

**Eli:** But I didn't order her!

**Whitman:** You wanted me to get Agnes to let her stay at our house didn't you.

**Eli:** I didn't want you to make her think I ordered a mail-order bride. And why did you have to go telling Mabel and Elizabeth?

**Whitman:** I didn't tell them. Agnes told Mabel on the way down here and I guess Mabel must have told Elizabeth.

**Eli:** Now it will be all over town.

**Whitman:** Did you think there would be anyway to stop that?

*{Just then Jim comes back in from stage right.}*

**Jim:** I just passed the ladies taking Anya over to your place, Whitman. I haven't seen that much excitement out of them since old Mabel found out it was Mr. Johnson and not a weasel who was stealing her chicken eggs.

**Eli:** Whitman didn't tell them the whole story. He just told them my mail-order bride came in and she had to ride a cattle boat.

**Jim:** Yea, I told some of the boys down at the pool hall that you had a mail-order bride come in.

**Eli:** Oh, and what did they have to say?

**Jim:** *{Elbowing Eli.}* "The sly devil him. I didn't think he had it in him."

**Eli:** *{Sarcastically.}* Oh you guys have been a whole lot of help. And just how am I suppose to get up and preach a sermon tomorrow and face everyone when they think I ordered a mail-

order bride?

**Jim:** Now calm yourself down. Maybe you can just preach about the evils of marriage.

*{Jim and Whitman bust out laughing.}*

**Eli:** I don't see the humor in this!

*{Just then Victor comes in from stage left. He is carrying a small ugly bag.}*

**Victor:** Here her things.

**Whitman:** That's all she's got? There couldn't be much more than one change of clothes in there.

**Victor:** I think she no have more clothes than what she wear. I think just things from home.

**Whitman:** Let me take them. She may be wanting whatever's in here. *{To Eli.}* As for you, Mr. Preacher, I would be at my house at six o'clock if you know what's good for you.

**Jim:** Be at your house?

**Eli:** Agnes told me to come to dinner tonight.

**Whitman:** And it wasn't a request. Oh, and Jim, you'd be invited too.

*{Whitman leaves stage right with the bag.}*

**Victor:** If you men will excuse, I have shipment to take care of.

*{Victor leaves stage left.}*

**Jim:** As for us, I think we better try to make sure the town folk are told the truth before the rumors get out of control.

*{They exit stage right. Lights fade.}*

From The Play  
**The Mail-Order Bride**  
by  
Daris Howard  
copyright 2000

**Whitman Harris:** A middle-aged man. He is the mayor, customs officer, etc.

**Anya:** Beautiful young lady. She is the mail-order bride.

**Agnes Harris:** Whitman's wife. Pretty well in charge of women's activities in town.  
Middle-aged.

**Mabel:** Lady friend of Agnes.

**Elizabeth:** Another friend of Agnes.

**Narrator:** In the play, "The Mail-Order Bride" Eli Whittier sends for his fiancée, whom he has been working to bring to Canada. Unknown to him she has married and sends in her place, a mail-order bride, Anya. They try to learn about each other's cultures.

*{When the lights come on it is the same scene. Anya comes out. Agnes is there visiting with her friends Mabel and Elizabeth. Anya can come in and cut this conversation at any time.}*

**Mabel:** Did you see that dress she was wearing to church. It was hideous. Why I wouldn't be caught dead wearing a dress like that.

**Elizabeth:** She must be trying to attract men, and at her age.

**Mabel:** All she'll attract is pneumonia.

**Elizabeth:** Why I think it would have looked better on Jim?

*{Anya comes in and Agnes notices her.}*

**Agnes:** Good morning, Anya. Did you sleep well?

**Anya:** No, Anya not sleep much.

**Mabel:** Are you feeling ill?

**Anya:** Anya feel fine, but worry upset Eli.

**Elizabeth:** What could you have done to upset Eli?

**Anya:** Anya pull from Eli.

**Mabel:** What?

**Agnes:** It was just a little thing. Eli went to put his arm around Anya last night and she pulled away from him. Then she left. But it isn't anything to worry about, Anya dear. Eli understands.

**Mabel:** I think it is the best thing she could have done. Why, she wouldn't want him to think he owns her.

**Anya:** But Eli does own Anya.

**Elizabeth:** Oh, no he doesn't! You are in Newfoundland now. You are a free woman.

**Mabel:** You can do as you please.

**Agnes:** May I remind you ladies that if she doesn't have a husband by Sunday when the ship pulls out, she will no longer be in Newfoundland. The law states that a person must be a relative of a citizen to stay.

**Mabel:** One of us could adopt her.

**Agnes:** Adoptions take over a year.

**Elizabeth:** There must be some way. We can't let a man go around thinking he owns someone.

**Agnes:** Now where did you get the idea that Eli thinks that?

**Mabel:** Oh, come, come, Agnes. His money was used to pay for her and send her over here.

**Anya:** That why he own Anya.

**Elizabeth:** No, no dear. That's what we are trying to tell you. In Newfoundland no one owns anybody.

**Anya:** But Anya want Eli own Anya. Eli nice Anya.

**Mabel:** That's alright for you to want him, but you can't let him know that.

**Anya:** Anya think Anya tell Eli, fine put arm around Anya.

**Elizabeth:** Oh no. You can't do that.

**Anya:** Why? Isn't that what supposed to do?

**Agnes:** Well, kind of. Do you want him to put his arm around you?

**Anya:** Yes, Anya decide Anya like that.

**Mabel:** But a girl is not supposed to come out and tell a man she wants him to put his arm around her.

**Anya:** Man not supposed to put arm around woman?

**Agnes:** Oh, yes. It is a wonderful thing to have a man you like put his arm around you.

**Elizabeth:** But you are not supposed to tell him, directly I mean.

**Anya:** Anya no understand. Anya want Eli put arm around Anya. Eli want put arm around Anya. Anya should tell Eli alright.

**Mabel:** No, no. You don't tell him. You are supposed to hint at it.

**Anya:** What mean hint?

**Elizabeth:** Well, it means...

**Agnes:** It means you should show him you want him to put his arm around you, but you don't really say it.

**Anya:** How show?

**Mabel:** You should bat your eyes at him.

**Elizabeth:** Yes, like this. *{She bats her eyes at Mabel.}*

**Anya:** This strange custom.

**Mabel:** And everywhere he goes you try to get close to him.

*{Mabel snuggles up close to Elizabeth.}*

**Elizabeth:** Then he would have to put his arm around you.

**Mabel:** But you can't make him think you are trying to do it deliberately.

**Elizabeth:** Oh no. You must make him think it is just part of what you do and it's just natural.

**Anya:** How Anya *{she bats her eyes}* bat eyes and get close *{she gets close to Elizabeth}* and make Eli think natural?

**Mabel:** You blink your eyes gently and stare at him like he is a happy dream.

**Elizabeth:** And when you get up close to him, you do it when he's not looking so you are just kind of there.

**Mabel:** And you make small talk.

**Anya:** Talk small?

**Elizabeth:** No. Small talk.

**Anya:** What small talk?

**Agnes:** That is when you talk about something that is not really important.

**Mabel:** Like "How's the weather?" and "What did you do today?"

**Elizabeth:** And "Do you come here often?" and "What do you do?"

**Mabel:** And don't forget to laugh at his jokes.

**Anya:** Laugh at his jokes?

**Elizabeth:** Yes, even if they're not funny.

**Anya:** How know is joke if not funny?

**Agnes:** It's how they say it and what they say.

**Anya:** Anya not understand.

**Elizabeth:** If they say something that is kind of half off the topic.

**Mabel:** Like you might say, "I went to get my hair fixed today." Then a man might say, "Why, was your rabbit having too many babies?"

*{The women all laugh but Anya looks confused.}*

**Elizabeth:** Or you might say, "I feel like fish tonight. What do you say?", and he would say, "Well, you don't look like a fish so maybe it's just your perfume."

*{The women all laugh again but Anya looks more confused.}*

**Anya:** So I laugh when man say something strange.

**Elizabeth:** No, or you would be laughing all of the time.

*{The women all laugh again and Anya is still confused.}*

**Mabel:** And don't laugh a deep laugh. *{She laughs a deep laugh.}*

**Elizabeth:** Just kind of a giggle. It's more feminine.

**Mabel:** Yes, like this. *{She does a bad type of giggle.}*

**Elizabeth:** Not like that. You sound like a cow that's got pneumonia. It's like this. *{She*

*does her version.}*

**Mabel:** You sound like a seal that swallowed too much sea water.

**Elizabeth:** Oh, yeah? Well you...

**Agnes:** Ladies. Ladies. Anyway, Anya, just enjoy being with him.

*{Whitman comes in and the ladies start acting like nothing is happening. Mabel and Elizabeth get up to leave.}*

**Mabel:** Now remember what we told you, Anya.

**Elizabeth:** And just act natural.

**Anya:** How act natural and do **those** things?

*{Mabel and Elizabeth leave.}*

**Whitman:** Weather's warming up just a bit.

**Anya:** Does Mr. Harris make talk small?

*{Whitman looks confused.}*

**Agnes:** No, he really is talking about the weather.

**Anya:** Eli come over this morning?

**Whitman:** I'm afraid not. He's got to work in the woods today. In the evening he usually teaches reading and writing classes.

**Anya:** When Anya see Eli again?

**Agnes:** Would you like to see him?

**Anya:** Yes. Anya want do something nice for Eli.

**Agnes:** That would be a good idea.

**Whitman:** What do you have in mind?

**Anya:** Anya not know.

**Whitman:** He was really impressed with your cooking the other night. Maybe you could

make him another dinner.

**Anya:** Anya not really cook. Mrs. Harris cook.

**Whitman:** But I thought you said...

**Agnes:** Just you never mind. Anya is a good cook. She just doesn't have all the things to cook with the way she did at home.

**Whitman:** That's it then. Let's get her the ingredients she needs and she can cook some exotic dish from her country.

**Anya:** Oh, yes. Anya know just what cook. Most special dinner.

**Agnes:** That a girl. I'll help you get what you need at the market. Tell me what it takes and we'll see what we can do.

*{Whitman and Agnes nod through all of these and say "uh huh"}*

**Anya:** Need pepper, salt, vegteebul.

**Agnes:** What kind of vegetable?

**Anya:** Green, long, fluffy top.

**Agnes:** Celery.

**Anya:** Yes, celery.

**Anya:** Also need potato.

**Agnes:** Alright.

**Anya:** And red, long fluffy top.

**Whitman:** Carrots.

**Anya:** Yes, carrots.

**Agnes:** Anything else.

**Anya:** Oh yes. Almost forgot most important. Need medium dog.

**Whitman and Agnes together:** Dog!

**Anya:** Yes. Best meat.

**Agnes:** Anya dear. I'm afraid it probably wouldn't be a good idea to serve dog.

**Whitman:** I don't know. I know one I have been wanting to get rid of.

**Agnes:** Whitman, just stop!

**Anya:** Dog cost much?

**Whitman:** No. In fact as mayor I can tell you where there is a whole kennel of...

**Agnes:** I thought I told you to stop. Don't you want a drink of water or something?

**Whitman:** Actually no. This was just getting interesting.

**Agnes:** Whitman!

**Whitman:** Come to think of it, I was rather thirsty.

*{Whitman leaves into the kitchen stage left.}*

**Agnes:** You see, Anya, there are some differences in our culture. Over here we don't eat dog meat.

**Anya:** You no eat dog meat? What then you eat?

**Agnes:** Well we eat, chicken and rabbit and beef...

**Anya:** Beef?

**Agnes:** Cow.

**Anya:** You eat cow?

**Agnes:** Yes.

**Anya:** You eat cow and no eat dog?

**Agnes:** Yes.

**Anya:** In my country, we eat dog and no eat cow.

**Agnes:** Let's compromise. We won't eat cow and you don't eat dog.

**Anya:** So what Anya make for Eli?

**Agnes:** How about a nice batch of cookies?

**Anya:** What cookies?

**Agnes:** You know. Little round things you make with flour and sugar.

**Anya:** What sugar?

*{Just then Whitman comes back out of the kitchen.}*

**Agnes:** Well it's sweet, and it's white or brown, and it's... *{Turning to Whitman.}* Whitman, will you get us a cup of sugar from the kitchen. *{To Anya.}* I'm sure you'll know it when you see it?

*{Whitman returns and hands it to Agnes. Agnes holds it out to Anya.}*

**Anya:** *{Taking the cup from Agnes.}* Oh. Salt.

**Agnes:** No. It's not salt. It's sweet.

**Anya:** Sweet?

**Whitman:** Yes. Like not sour, but sweet.

**Agnes:** Take a little taste.

**Anya:** *{Takes a little bit. Her eyes open wide with excitement.}* Anya like.

*{She then takes the cup and tips it up draining the whole thing before they can stop her. She has sugar all over her face. Whitman acts like he is going to gag.}*

**Agnes:** Haven't you ever had sugar before?

**Anya:** No! Anya like! Anya want make cookies for Eli!

*{Agnes and Whitman laugh.}*

**Agnes:** Then cookies it is.

*{They head off into the kitchen as the lights go out.}*