

A CRICKET COUNTY CHRISTMAS FEUD

by Eddie McPherson



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Cricket County vs. Chigger County in a One Act Comedy

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SYNOPSIS: Cousins from the city show up in Cricket County this Christmas to find a feud in progress. Their Cricket County kinfolk are feuding with the neighboring Chigger County clan. Why are they feuding? One of Fester Taylor's oil fields (left to him by his late Uncle Zeke) is right on the Chigger County/Cricket County line, and the Chigger County clan claims it's *their* oil field. After years of attempting to get their hands on some of their Cricket County cousins' millions, the City Bunch decides to befriend the Chigger County folk in hopes of gaining a little of the oil field revenue. This act doesn't help the feud one bit. It takes humble Donna Jo and the City Slickers' chauffeur to set everyone straight by reminding them of some important spiritual truths during this holy time of year.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(9 female, 8 male)

CRICKET COUNTY BUNCH:

ELKIN (m).....	Oldest of the Cricket County bunch, but still has his "hillbilly" moments. <i>(39 lines)</i>
GRANDMA (f).....	The matriarch of the family. She don't take nothin' off nobody. <i>(48 lines)</i>
FESTER (m)	Simple and naïve. The highlight of his year is playing the shepherd in the Christmas program. <i>(24 lines)</i>
GLENDIA MAE (f)	Identical twins who look nothing alike. Feisty and tomboyish. <i>(36 lines)</i>
BRENDA MAE (f)	Identical twins who look nothing alike. Feisty and tomboyish. <i>(36 lines)</i>

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DONNA JO (f).....Humble and gentle. The wisest
of this family. *(19 lines)*

ELMER (m).....Glenda Mae's husband and
Fester's best friend. He makes
Fester look like Einstein.
(18 lines)

CHIGGER COUNTY BUNCH:

AUNT POLLY (f).....Matriarch of this family. The
"Grandma Taylor" of Chigger
County. *(34 lines)*

URSKIN (m).....Aunt Polly's right-hand-man.
The "Elkin" of Chigger County.
(44 lines)

FESTUS (m)Simple and naïve. The "Fester"
of Chigger County. *(23 lines)*

BERTHA MAE (f).....Identical twins who look
nothing alike. The Glenda Mae
and Brenda Mae of Chigger
County. *(17 lines)*

GERTHA MAE (f).....Identical twins who look
nothing alike. The Glenda Mae
and Brenda Mae of Chigger
County. *(18 lines)*

CITY BUNCH:

OSWALD (m).....Leader of the city bunch.
Greedy and somewhat arrogant.
(73 lines)

PETE (m)Oswald's brother and sidekick.
(27 lines)

MIMI (f).....Only comes to Cricket County if
she thinks she can get some
money. Mimi's favorite person
is Mimi. *(40 lines)*

PETUNIA (f) More level-headed than Mimi,
but still spoiled. She has a
bigger heart. *(44 lines)*

NILES (m) The city bunch's stereotypical
chauffer. *(13 lines)*

(ALL LINE COUNTS ARE APPROXIMATE)

DURATION: 45 minutes

PRODUCTION NOTES

SETTING: The play takes place in Grandma Taylor's diner in Cricket County. Though t's an old diner, it has been kept up nicely. It has various small non-matching tables set about, covered in red checkered tablecloths. A counter is against the Upstage wall with enough room to walk behind it. The door that leads to the kitchen is behind the counter. The front door that leads to outside is Stage Right next to a large window. A coat tree is by the front door. The door that leads to the back room of the diner is Stage Left. (This door leads to the back room which leads to the back door of the diner.)

MUSIC: The following carols/songs usually make good background for a Nativity pantomime, or you may choose to do a medley of carols. In addition, you will need to play Christmas music over the PA system as the play begins and a dramatic chord near the end.

"What Child Is This?"

"Away in a Manger"

"Mary, Did You Know?" (By Mark Lowry and Buddy Greene, © 1991 Word Music and Rufus Music (Admin. Gaither Copyright Management).

"O, Little Town of Bethlehem"

"Silent Night"

"Good King Wenceslas" *(I included this one because the carol is all about serving others.)*

COSTUMES: The hillbilly characters wear stereotypical attire, such as overalls, gingham/plain cotton dresses, etc. If you choose, you may want the two sets of twins (Cricket County and Chigger County) to dress alike, especially for the “mirror” scene. Other ideas are straw hats, camouflage shirts/pants, boots, etc.

The city bunch dresses very preppy, with nice collared shirts and khaki pants for the guys and nice dresses or blouses/slacks for the girls, with fur wraps for their first entrance. Niles the chauffer should wear black slacks, a white shirt, a black tie, and a black jacket, complete with black chauffeur’s cap.

Other items needed are gloves, scarves, hats, etc., a camouflage hooded jacket, and various Nativity costume pieces (robes, towels for shepherd headpieces, angel wings, etc.)

PROPS

- ☐ Flyers
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ Quilt
- ☐ Garden Rake
- ☐ Paper Map
- ☐ Axe
- ☐ Magnifying Glass
- ☐ Homemade Bow and Arrow
- ☐ Power Drill
- ☐ Slingshot
- ☐ Pitchfork (or other farm-type tool)
- ☐ White Bed Sheet (with the following message written on: "Come worship with us. The Chigger County Café. Christmas Eve. Eight o'clock")
- ☐ Homemade Doll
- ☐ Large Cardboard Box
- ☐ Yardstick
- ☐ Package of Bologna
- ☐ Shepherd Headpiece
- ☐ Large Net (perhaps volleyball net)
- ☐ Handkerchief
- ☐ Old Wooden Frame
- ☐ Picture of a Bulldog
- ☐ Eyeglasses
- ☐ Newspaper

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AT START: *GRANDMA TAYLOR's diner is devoid of people. A happy Christmas tune is playing on the jukebox. NILES, the CITY GROUP's chauffeur, enters dressed in full uniform and stands near the door at attention. MIMI and PETUNIA enter decked out in their finest attire. They walk past NILES and look around as they remove their gloves, scarves, and coats. Music out.*

MIMI: *(Sings out sarcastically.)* Hel-lo, beautiful Cricket County, we're back! *(Disgusted.)* Yuck.

PETUNIA: *(Sighs.)* Alas, we're back. Yuck, yuck, yuck.

MIMI: They should put a billboard up next to the dirt road: "Welcome to Hillbilly Heaven, the only place on earth where they think fast food is running over a possum at seventy-five miles per hour."

PETUNIA: *(Giggles.)* Oh, Mimi, you made a funny! *(Points.)* Look, they have their Christmas tree up.

MIMI: *(Crosses to the tree and gives it a good looking over.)* How many times have I told those cousins of ours to put up an artificial tree? These real ones are for the birds.

PETUNIA: Ha, for the birds. Mimi, you made another funny!

MIMI: Every time we come out here, I feel as though I have stepped into an episode of *Little House on the Prairie* Dog, or whatever that show was called.

PETUNIA: At least our trip will be short this year. *(Looks around.)* Where are the boys?

MIMI: *(Crossing to and shouting through the front door.)* Oswald? Pete? What are you doing out there? *(To NILES, as she removes her coat.)* Make yourself useful, Niles, and hang the coats.

NILES: Yes, ma'am.

He hangs MIMI and PETUNIA's coats on a coat rack. PETE AND OSWALD enter, also wearing coats. OSWALD holds a flyer.

PETE: *(To OSWALD.)* What does it say?

OSWALD: Give me time to read it, will you?

MIMI and PETUNIA surround them.

- 1
2 **PETUNIA:** What does *what* say?
3 **OSWALD:** This flyer we found nailed to a tree. (*Stands in the center*
4 *of the room and reads the flyer.*) You is invited to a Christmas
5 Eve service complete with a live Nativity scene at Aunt Polly's
6 Diner in Chigger County.
7 **MIMI:** I don't remember an Aunt Polly living in Cricket County.
8 **OSWALD:** I didn't say Cricket County, I said Chigger County.
9 **PETUNIA:** Chigger County? (*Begins to scratch her arm.*) Why does
10 that name make me itch?
11 **PETE:** (*Grabs the flyer and looks at it.*) No one names a place
12 Chigger County.
13 **OSWALD:** I remember our country cousins talking about it last
14 year. Chigger County and Cricket County are right next to each
15 other.
16 **MIMI:** Why is everything named after insects around here? (*In her*
17 *best hillbilly accent.*) Hey y'all, let's run over to Ladybug-ville for
18 some beans and cornbread.
19 **OSWALD:** Hang up our coats please, Niles.
20 **NILES:** (*Looking straight out with no expression.*) Yes, sir. (*NILES*
21 *hangs their coats.*)
22 **PETE:** You know, Niles, it is OK to smile every now and then.
23 **NILES:** (*Still no expression.*) Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.
24 **PETUNIA:** I don't think Niles finds us to be very funny, Mimi. Watch.
25 Hey, Niles, what do you call a boomerang that doesn't work?
26 **NILES:** I don't know, ma'am. What do you call a boomerang that
27 doesn't work?
28 **PETUNIA:** A stick.
29 **NILES:** (*Almost robotic, no smile.*) Yes ma'am, that was quite
30 humorous. Ha. Ha.
31 **MIMI:** Forget it, Mimi. Chauffeurs don't have a sense of humor.
32 **OSWALD:** (*To NILES.*) This is your first time to drive us out to the
33 boonies, Niles. What do you think of Cricket County so far?
34 **NILES:** (*Looking straight out, no expression.*) I believe Cricket
35 County is very quaint, sir.
36 **MIMI:** Give up, Oswald. A chauffeur with no personality drives me
37 crazy.

1 **PETUNIA:** *(Laughs.)* “Chauffeur drives me crazy.” Mimi, you made
2 another funny.

3 **MIMI:** *(Pleased with herself.)* Well, what do you know? I’m clever
4 when I’m not trying to be.

5 **OSWALD:** *(Looks around.)* Where is everyone? *(Calling.)* Hello?
6 Is anyone home?

7
8 *As they talk, FESTUS sneaks through the front door holding a flyer.*
9 *He creeps around NILES, who pays FESTUS no mind. FESTUS*
10 *tapes the flyer on the wall closest to the front door. He keeps his*
11 *eyes on the CITY BUNCH to make sure they’re not looking at him.*
12 *Once he tapes it up, he starts to slip out again, but first stops and*
13 *looks back at NILES, curious about the city slicker who is acting like*
14 *a statue. He gets a close look at NILES, from shoulders to top of*
15 *head. FESTUS shrugs and sneaks out the front door.*

16
17 **PETUNIA:** The sign out front says “Open.”

18 **PETE:** Maybe they were abducted by aliens.

19 **MIMI:** We wouldn’t be *that* lucky.

20 **PETUNIA:** *(Picks up a quilt.)* Look at this old quilt. Mimi, grab the
21 other end of it.

22
23 *MIMI takes one end of the quilt and PETUNIA the other as they*
24 *stretch it out. When they do, DONNA JO enters and stands behind*
25 *it, unseen by the audience.*

26
27 **MIMI:** *(Sarcastic.)* Oh boy, a homemade quilt. Just what I always
28 wanted. Pleeeease let me have it for Christmas.

29 **OSWALD:** *(Has crossed to the Christmas tree.)* Their tree looks a
30 little wobbly. *(He touches it and it falls over.)*

31 **PETUNIA:** Oswald, would you stop destroying the place?

32 **OSWALD:** I barely touched it!

33
34 *MIMI and PETUNIA drop the quilt, and there stands DONNA JO.*

35
36 **DONNA JO:** *(To OSWALD.)* That’s OK, I can fix the tree.

37
38 *Everyone is startled.*

1

2 **MIMI:** Good heavens! You scared me to death!3 **PETUNIA:** Where in the world did you come from?

4

5 *DONNA JO shrugs.*

6

7 **OSWALD:** *(Crossing to her.)* Wait a minute, aren't you one of our
8 country cousins?9 **PETE:** Now I remember. You're Donna Jean.10 **PETUNIA:** No, not Donna Jean. *(Snaps her fingers.)* Donna June.11 **DONNA JO:** My *name* is Donna Jo.12 **PETE:** Donna Jo, *that's* it!13 **OSWALD:** *(Standing the tree back up.)* Donna Jo, I'm really sorry
14 about the tree.15 **DONNA JO:** That's OK. We all make dumb mistakes.16 **PETUNIA:** Where is everyone, Donna Jo?17 **DONNA JO:** I ain't sure. One minute they was here, and the next
18 minute they was gone. *(DONNA JO sees NILES standing at*
19 *attention.)* How did y'all get a statue in Grandma's diner?20 **OSWALD:** That's a chauffeur.21 **DONNA JO:** Sorry, I thought it was pronounced statue.22 **PETE:** He's our driver.23 **DONNA JO:** He looks a little like a scarecrow we propped up in our
24 garden one time.25 **PETUNIA:** He's real. Say hello, Niles.26 **DONNA JO:** Hello, Niles.27 **NILES:** *(Still looking straight out.)* Hello.28 **DONNA JO:** *(Jumps back.)* The scarecrow talks! *(She stands right*
29 *beside him and looks straight out, trying to see what he sees.)*
30 What's he lookin' at?31 **OSWALD:** He's at attention.32 **DONNA JO:** No sir, he's at Grandma's diner.33 **MIMI:** *(Sarcastically to herself.)* And the hillbilly fun begins.34 **PETUNIA:** *(Returning to the quilt.)* Mimi, help me fold this quilt back
35 up before it gets wrinkled.

36

37 *They stretch the quilt out, again hiding DONNA JO, who then*
38 *secretly exits. They fold the quilt in half.*

1
2 **PETE:** I hope we find the country bunch soon. I'm getting hungry.
3 **MIMI:** (*Noticing DONNA JO is gone.*) Petunia, she did it again.
4 **OSWALD:** What?
5 **MIMI:** Donna Jean. She disappeared into thin air.
6 **PETUNIA:** This is getting a little spooky. (*Looks around.*) Donna
7 Jo? Where did you go?
8
9 *They all start looking around for her and calling her name as they*
10 *turn their backs to the audience. GRANDMA rushes in holding a*
11 *garden rake and points at them.*
12
13 **GRANDMA:** Y'all stop right there! (*EVERYONE freezes in their*
14 *tracks.*) Don't move a muscle. (*Shouts through the front door.*)
15 Elkin, I found 'em! (*Turns back and speaks to the group.*) If
16 anybody moves, you're gonna get it with my garden rake.
17
18 *ELKIN rushes in.*
19
20 **ELKIN:** Where are they, Grandma?
21 **GRANDMA:** Right there! I got 'em cornered!
22 **ELKIN:** (*Shouting back through the front door.*) Fester, bring the
23 shotgun!
24
25 *The CITY BUNCH unfreeze and turn to face GRANDMA as they*
26 *huddle together, holding their hands up in the air. NILES doesn't*
27 *move, however.*
28
29 **OSWALD:** Don't shoot! It's just us!
30 **GRANDMA:** What in Sam hill?
31 **ELKIN:** Why, it's just our cousins from the city. (*Excited.*) Howdy,
32 cousins from the city! Good to see y'all.
33 **GRANDMA:** Yeah, yeah, whatever. We ain't got time to chew the
34 fat right now.
35 **ELKIN:** We're on a mission.
36 **GRANDMA:** More like a man hunt.
37 **MIMI:** Ooooo, *man* hunt. That sounds like *my* kind of game.
38 **GRANDMA:** It ain't no game a-tall, Moo Moo –

- 1 **MIMI:** Mimi.
- 2 **GRANDMA:** Whatever. This is serious business. (*Sees NILES,*
3 *who is still staring out.*) What's this?
- 4 **PETE:** A chauffeur.
- 5 **ELKIN:** A gopher?
- 6 **OSWALD:** Chauffeur.
- 7 **ELKIN:** Go-pher?
- 8 **OSWALD:** Chau-ffeur.
- 9 **ELKIN:** Go-pher.
- 10 **MIMI:** How can anyone be so doltish?
- 11 **ELKIN:** It takes lots of practice.
- 12 **OSWALD:** Niles, I order you to sit.
- 13 **NILES:** Yes, sir. (*He sits very stiffly.*)
- 14 **OSWALD:** Grandma Taylor, you said you're hunting someone?
- 15 **GRANDMA:** Them rascals who's puttin' up these here flyers all
16 over Cricket County! (*She holds up the same type of flyer*
17 *OSWALD entered with.*)
- 18 **PETE:** Look – it's the flyer about the Christmas Eve service over in
19 Chigger County.
- 20 **ELKIN:** Right.
- 21 **GRANDMA:** Them varmints is sneakin' around invitin' ever'body to
22 their Christmas Eve service so that nobody will come to mine.
- 23 **ELKIN:** Them's the kind of no-good rascals that go to church on
24 Sunday, but steal chickens on Monday.
- 25 **GRANDMA:** We are officially feudin' with 'em, and we ain't fixin' to
26 back down.
- 27 **PETUNIA:** Feuding?
- 28 **OSWALD:** Why?
- 29 **GRANDMA:** We ain't got time to explain right now.
- 30
- 31 *GLEND MAE rushes in with BRENDA MAE as they pull FESTER*
32 *along in a headlock.*
- 33
- 34 **GLEND MAE:** Grandma, Grandma, I got one of 'em!
- 35 **GRANDMA:** (*Rushing to her.*) Bring him right over here, girls.
- 36 **BRENDA MAE:** You sit yourself down right there in that chair, you
37 Chigger County rascal you!
- 38

- 1 *Suddenly everyone sees that it's FESTER who plops down in the*
2 *seat.*
3
4 **ELKIN:** Fester? Glenda Mae, why did you catch Fester?
5 **FESTER:** I said "uncle" a hundred times.
6 **GLENDAMAE:** (*Surprised.*) But it wasn't Fester when we grabbed
7 him, Grandma.
8 **FESTER:** I was on the trail of one of them Chigger County
9 scalawags when all of a sudden, she grabbed me and brung me
10 in here.
11 **BRENDAMAE:** Can we help it if it's darker than the outside of a
12 cow out there?
13 **OSWALD:** What's going on?
14 **GLENDAMAE:** Tell 'em, Cousin Elkin.
15 **ELKIN:** (*To OSWALD.*) Well, you see –
16 **GLENDAMAE:** (*Interrupting.*) Them Chigger County rascals is
17 tryin' to steal from us. Go on and tell 'em, Cousin Elkin!
18 **ELKIN:** They're claimin' that –
19 **BRENDAMAE:** (*Interrupting.*) They're claimin' that Fester's oil well
20 is on Polly Ray's property. Tell 'em, Cousin Elkin.
21 **ELKIN:** They got real riled when we told 'em that the oil field –
22 **GLENDAMAE:** ...Was on our dear Uncle Zeke's property that he
23 give to Fester 'fore he passed on.
24 **BRENDAMAE:** Uncle Zeke passed on, not Fester.
25 **MIMI:** (*Short.*) Yes, we got that.
26 **ELKIN:** But they say the oil field is on *their* property, and that they
27 can prove it.
28 **GRANDMA:** They told us that if we didn't give up the oil field, they
29 would get us back real good.
30 **PETUNIA:** Get you back how?
31 **FESTER:** By doin' their own Christmas Eve service on the same
32 night that Grandma has done hers for the last eighty years.
33 **GRANDMA:** Fifty years, dummy.
34 **FESTER:** Sorry – fifty years, dummy.
35 **GRANDMA:** Polly Ray knows good and well folks from all over
36 have come to my Christmas Eve service ever' year.
37 **ELKIN:** And them rascals want to take that away from her.

1 **FESTER:** I always play the shepherd. (*Quickly jumps into character*
2 *and points to the ceiling.*) Hark! What-is-that-there-star-that-
3 burns-so-bright-over-that-there-stable...yonder?

4 **GLEND A MAE:** And me and Brenda Mae take turns playin' Mary,
5 mother of Jesus, and this year is *my* year. (*Pretends she is*
6 *holding a baby.*) Oh, look at this little baby Jesus that has been
7 sent to forgive us of our sins. I will now change his diaper.

8 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Sings off-key.*) Away in a manger, no corn in the
9 bread –

10 **GRANDMA:** Anyway, them Chigger County rascals want to sneak
11 in here and steal our spotlight.

12 **FESTER:** That oil well was gave to me by my Uncle Zeke, and I
13 won't give it up without a fight.

14 **OSWALD:** How do you know the oil field is *not* on their property?

15
16 *The CRICKET COUNTY BUNCH look at him in shock.*
17

18 **ELKIN:** Who side are you on anyhow?

19 **OSWALD:** Your side, of course.

20 **GRANDMA:** Show doubtin' dummy how we can be sure it's on our
21 land, Elkin.

22 **ELKIN:** (*Unrolls a big map.*) The map is right here. (*Points.*) See?
23 There's the oil field right there, and there's the Cricket County
24 and Chigger County line right there.

25 **OSWALD:** (*Getting a closer look.*) It is pretty close.

26
27 *ELMER runs in out of breath.*
28

29 **BRENDA MAE:** Elmer, did you see anything?

30 **ELMER:** Where?

31 **BRENDA MAE:** Outside!

32 **ELMER:** When?

33 **BRENDA MAE:** Just now.

34 **ELMER:** Duh! That's why I runned in just now. (*Pause.*)

35 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Impatiently.*) Well?

36 **ELMER:** Oh, you want me to tell you? I saw somebody runnin'
37 down the dirt road, and it looked like one of them Chigger County
38 varmints!

- 1 **GRANDMA:** Rest time is over. Let's go, gang!
- 2 **FESTUS:** *(Running out with his axe up in the air.)* We won't go
3 down without a fight!
- 4 **GRANDMA:** Look for Polly Ray first. She's the ringleader!
- 5 **ELKIN:** Like I always say about Polly Ray: *(Standing with a finger*
6 *in the air and saying it, not singing it.)* She'll be comin' round the
7 mountain when she comes. She'll be comin' 'round the mountain
8 when she comes. She'll be comin' 'round the mountain, she'll be
9 comin' 'round the mountain, she'll be comin' 'round the mountain
10 when she comes. *(Shouts.)* 'Bye!
- 11 **PETE:** See you later, alligator.
- 12 **ELKIN:** After 'while, red-butt'd baboon.
- 13
- 14 *They run out, leaving the CITY BUNCH behind. MIMI, PETUNIA,*
15 *and PETE join OSWALD behind the map.*
- 16
- 17 **PETUNIA:** What do you think, Oswald?
- 18 **OSWALD:** I think they're a little wacky.
- 19 **PETUNIA:** I mean about the map.
- 20 **OSWALD:** *(Holding the map up close to his face.)* It's hard to tell.
21 The only way to know for sure is to look at it through a magnifying
22 glass.
- 23 **PETE:** *(Hands him one.)* Here you go.
- 24 **OSWALD:** Since when do you carry a magnifying glass around?
- 25 **PETE:** I was a boy scout.
- 26 **OSWALD:** Let's see. *(Looking at the map through the glass.)* Uh-
27 oh.
- 28 **PETE:** What's the matter?
- 29 **OSWALD:** There is no doubt about it. The oil field is on the Chigger
30 County side.
- 31 **PETUNIA:** You mean that Polly woman is the rightful owner of
32 Fester's oil field?
- 33 **OSWALD:** Sure looks that way.
- 34 **MIMI:** Wait one moment. If that oil field is on the Chigger County
35 side of the line, *(Eyes grow wide.)* the Chigger County bunch
36 are...
- 37 **ALL:** *(Together to audience, wide-eyed.)* Millionaires?
- 38 **MIMI:** *(Rushing to the front door.)* Let's go.

1 **PETE:** Where?

2 **MIMI:** Don't you see? If the Chigger County bunch own that oil field,
3 that means the Chigger County bunch are about to come into a
4 lot of money, which means the Chigger County bunch are our
5 new best friends.

6 **OSWALD:** *(After a quick beat.)* She's right, let's go!

7

8 *He opens the door and in runs FESTUS from Chigger County. He*
9 *stops in the middle of the room and puts a finger to his lips.*

10

11 **FESTUS:** Shhhh. Please, whatever you do, don't tell nobody where
12 I'm a-hidin'.

13

14 *He hides behind the counter. Before anyone can react, BERTHA*
15 *MAE and GERTHA MAE run in and stop in the middle of the room.*

16

17 **BERTHA MAE:** Did anybody see a funny-lookin', dimwitted boy run
18 in here?

19 **GERTHA MAE:** *(Gestures.)* He's about this tall and smells a little
20 bit like a dead polecat.

21 **FESTUS:** *(Pops up from behind the counter.)* Over here! Over
22 here!

23

24 *They run to him and all three duck behind the counter.*

25

26 **OSWALD:** Uh, excuse me, but can we help you with something?

27 **FESTUS:** *(Pops up.)* The Taylor clan is after us! *(Disappears.)*

28 **BERTHA MAE:** *(Pops up.)* And they're madder than a wet hen!
29 *(Disappears.)*

30 **GERTHA MAE:** *(Pops up.)* And if they happen to catch us here...
31 *(Disappears.)*

32 **FESTUS:** *(Pops up.)* They'll surely do us in. *(Disappears.)*

33 **OSWALD:** Wait a minute. You three wouldn't be from Chigger
34 County, would you?

35 **FESTUS:** *(Pops up.)* That's us, that's us, that's us, dear feller. If
36 Glenda Mae should come on in, I beg you, please don't tell 'er.
37 *(Ducks again.)*

38

1 *GLEND MAE runs in with BRENDA MAE. GLEND MAE holds a*
2 *bow and arrow and BRENDA MAE holds a power drill.*

3
4 **GLEND MAE:** Cousins, we thought we saw a Chigger County
5 rascal run in here. As soon as I see one of 'em, they're goin' to
6 get it in the caboose with one of my homemade arrows.

7 **BRENDA MAE:** And I got my power drill charged and ready to go.
8 Maybe they're behind the counter.

9 **MIMI:** (*Running to GLEND MAE and BRENDA MAE and stopping*
10 *them.*) No! If they were behind the counter, we would have seen
11 them run back there, right?

12 **BRENDA MAE:** I guess you're right. I mean, you couldn't miss
13 them big ol' hips of theirs.

14 **PETUNIA:** Glenda Mae, I have never seen you this worked up
15 before.

16 **GLEND MAE:** Cousin Petunia, I might be beautiful, but I can get
17 my dander worked up just like ugly folk. (*To BRENDA MAE.*)
18 Let's check the storage room.

19 **BRENDA MAE:** Storage room, got it!

20
21 *She presses the trigger on her power drill, causing it to whirrrr,*
22 *whirrrr as they run out. FESTUS, BERTHA MAE and GERTHA MAE*
23 *pop up from behind the counter. FESTUS runs to OSWALD while*
24 *the BERTHA MAE and GERTHA MAE stay behind the counter.*

25
26 **FESTUS:** We are much obliged to you for not givin' us away.

27
28 *Shakes OSWALD's hand wildly. GLEND MAE and BRENDA MAE*
29 *run back in and as soon as they do, FESTUS quickly runs and*
30 *stands behind OSWALD. Because it happens so fast, FESTUS'S*
31 *arms are revealed, causing OSWALD to quickly place his arms*
32 *behind his back. This makes it look as if FESTUS'S arms belong to*
33 *OSWALD. OSWALD stands up straight and tall as possible.*
34 *BERTHA MAE and GERTHA MAE disappear behind the counter*
35 *again.*

36
37 **GLEND MAE:** Oh, and I forgot to tell you what they look like.

1 *FESTUS quickly begins waving “hello” with one of his hands which*
2 *makes it look as though OSWALD is waving.*

3

4 **OSWALD:** *(Thinks on his feet.)* Uh, hello again Glenda Mae,
5 Brenda Mae, good to see you two again.

6

7 *FESTUS keeps waving.*

8

9 Hel-loooo. I just love saying “hello” over and over again. Hello,
10 hello, hello.

11 **GLEND A MAE:** Cousin Oswald, will you hush up so I can tell you
12 what them crooked folk look like?

13 **BRENDA MAE:** They is ugly goomers.

14 **GLEND A MAE:** Regular hillbillies.

15 **BRENDA MAE:** Especially the one they call Festus. He stands
16 about this tall and is a little funny lookin’.

17 **OSWALD:** Funny looking?

18 **GLEND A MAE:** Honey, he’s so ugly, even Ripley wouldn’t believe
19 it.

20

21 *FESTUS makes a “come here” gesture with his finger to GLEND A*
22 *MAE and BRENDA MAE.*

23

24 **OSWALD:** *(Taking FESTUS’s lead.)* Uh... come over here, you
25 two.

26 **GLEND A MAE:** *(Crossing.)* Whatcha want?

27 **BRENDA MAE:** Yeah, whatcha want?

28

29 *FESTUS takes his slingshot, points it at the GLEND A MAE and*
30 *BRENDA MAE, and pulls it back. PETUNIA grabs the slingshot.*

31

32 **PETUNIA:** Oswald, no!

33 **GLEND A MAE:** *(Hands on her hips.)* Why in Sam hill you wantin’
34 to hit us with a sling shot?

35 **BRENDA MAE:** You know how strange city folk can be, Glenda
36 Mae.

37 **GLEND A MAE:** I guess you’re right, Brenda Mae.

38 **OSWALD:** They don’t call me “crazy Oswald” for nothin’, ha ha.

1 **GLEND A MAE:** Crazy with a capital K.

2 **BRENDA MAE:** And a capital Cra and a capital Z.

3

4 *FESTUS points at GLEND A MAE.*

5

6 **GLEND A MAE:** Me?

7

8 *Then FESTUS makes the crazy sign at OSWALD'S head.*

9

10 You callin' *me* crazy, Cousin Oswald?

11 **BRENDA MAE:** I don't think you're funny a-tall. Like we say in the
12 country, "Never dig for water under the outhouse."

13

14 *BRENDA MAE and GLEND A MAE storm out. FESTUS and the*
15 *GERTH A MAE and BERTH A MAE come out of hiding.*

16

17 **OSWALD:** *(To FESTUS.)* Would you like to tell me what *that* was
18 all about?

19 **FESTUS:** Sorry, city slicker. I was panicked.

20 **PETUNIA:** So, you guys are from Chigger County, huh?

21 **GERTH A MAE:** Yes, ma'am.

22 **BERTH A MAE:** That's right.

23 **MIMI:** *(Moving to and flirting with FESTUS.)* Festus, has anybody
24 ever told you you're cute as a button? Your girlfriend sure is
25 lucky.

26 **FESTUS:** I'm single.

27 **MIMI:** By choice?

28 **FESTUS:** Yes ma'am, but not *my* choice.

29

30 *MIMI and PETUNIA giggle.*

31

32 **PETUNIA:** I'm sorry, we don't mean to laugh.

33 **BERTH A MAE:** That's OK. Festus is used to people laughin' at
34 him.

35 **FESTUS:** You be quiet, Bertha Mae!

36 **PETE:** *(To FESTUS.)* People laugh at you?

37 **FESTUS:** *(Shyly.)* Yes sir, mostly 'cause of the hobby I used to
38 have.

1 **PETUNIA:** What was your hobby?

2 **FESTUS:** *(Puts his head down.)* Never mind.

3 **BERTHA MAE:** Ah, go on and tell 'em, Festus.

4 **GERTHA MAE:** Yeah, tell 'em.

5 **FESTUS:** Well... I used to be one of them there ballerinas.

6

7 *OSWALD and PETE stifle their laughter.*

8

9 **MIMI and PETUNIA:** *(Together, to PETE and OSWALD.)* Shhhh!

10 **PETUNIA:** *(Back to FESTUS, politely.)* So, you took ballet as a
11 child? That's nice.

12 **FESTUS:** Yes ma'am, but I had to give it up when I injured a groin
13 muscle.

14 **MIMI:** Oh my, did it hurt?

15 **FESTUS:** I don't know, it wasn't mine.

16 **BERTHA MAE:** *(Has been peeking out the window but now*
17 *approaches.)* Come on, Festus. We got to git 'fore anybody else
18 comes runnin' in.

19 **GERTHA MAE:** We are much obliged again for you strangers' help.

20 **FESTUS:** *(Flirty, to MIMI.)* Will you be hangin' around a while,
21 miss?

22 **MIMI:** *(Flirting back.)* I'll wait as long as it takes, Mr. Fester Ray.

23 **PETUNIA:** *(To FESTER.)* See you later, alligator.

24 **FESTUS:** *(Sincerely, as he waves.)* After 'while, brown-spotted
25 heifers.

26

27 *The CHIGGER COUNTY TWINS pull him out.*

28

29 **MIMI:** Getting money from them will be like taking candy from a
30 hillbilly baby.

31 **PETUNIA:** I keep forgetting just how boring our lives are until we
32 visit Cricket County.

33

34 *There is a knock at the outside door. The door then opens, and*
35 *there stands a figure, AUNT POLLY, wearing an oversized*
36 *camouflage hooded jacket with the hood pulled over their face. She*
37 *just stands in the doorway, no one knows who she is.*

38

1 **OSWALD:** *(Taken aback.)* Hello?

2 **PETE:** Can we help you?

3

4 *The hooded figure slowly enters and closes the door.*

5

6 **MIMI:** *(Hiding behind OSWALD.)* Oswald, it's going to hurt us.

7 **PETUNIA:** Please don't harm us, whoever you are.

8

9 *POLLY'S hood comes off.*

10

11 **POLLY:** Shhhh! Keep your voices down. Is Imogene Taylor
12 around?

13 **OSWALD:** Uh, no ma'am.

14 **POLLY:** Good. *(She starts to hang a Chigger County flyer.)*

15 **OSWALD:** Excuse me, ma'am, but I'm afraid I can't let you do that.

16 **POLLY:** *(Looking him up and down.)* Listen here, city slicker, I
17 could whoop you with one hand tied behind my back.

18 **OSWALD:** Yes ma'am, I'm sure you could, but that's not quite the
19 point.

20 **PETE:** Oswald, let me handle this. *(To POLLY.)* Ma'am, I'm afraid
21 I'm going to have to confiscate your flyers.

22 **POLLY:** *(Shouting.)* Urskin, come a-runnin'!

23

24 *URSKIN enters carrying a pitchfork.*

25

26 **URSKIN:** You call me, Aunt Polly?

27 **POLLY:** This here feller says he's goin' to con-fin-skate my flyers.

28 **URSKIN:** *(Moves toward PETE.)* Oh, yeah?! Listen here, feller. I
29 have one thing to say to you.

30 **PETE:** Yes?

31 **URSKIN:** What does con-fin-skate mean?

32 **POLLY:** Don't matter, Urskin. Just keep these varmints away from
33 me while I hang up a few more flyers.

34 **URSKIN:** Yes'm. *(Holds up his pitchfork.)* You con-fin-skaters git
35 back so Aunt Polly can finish up.

36

37 *They stand against the counter with their hands up.*

38

- 1 **OSWALD:** Sir, you need to know that I am Oswald Tippinheimer
2 the Third.
- 3 **URSKIN:** Nice to meet you, Mr. Third. I'm Urskin Ray.
- 4 **OSWALD:** My last name's not third. It's Tippinheimer.
- 5 **URSKIN:** Tippenhomer?
- 6 **OSWALD:** Heimer! *Heimer!*
- 7 **URSKIN:** No sir, it's a pitchfork. My hammer's in the shed.
- 8 **OSWALD:** Are you joshing?
- 9 **URSKIN:** No, sir. Baptist. *[Insert your own denomination here.]*
- 10 **POLLY:** Ain't no use talkin' to him, Urskin. Poor thing ain't too
11 bright.
- 12 **URSKIN:** *(Staring at OSWALD.)* Like we say in the country, "There
13 might be a barn on the hill, but that don't mean there's hay in the
14 loft."
- 15 **POLLY:** *(Taping up the latest flyer.)* I guess that's enough. Let's
16 go, Urskin.
- 17 **URSKIN:** Yes, ma'am. *(To CITY BUNCH.)* It's been real nice talkin'
18 to y'all.
- 19 **MIMI:** Wait a minute, I haven't had a chance to flirt with you.
- 20 **URSKIN:** What does "flirt" mean?
- 21 **MIMI:** It means to philander.
- 22 **URSKIN:** *(Scratching his head.)* Well, that clears things up.
- 23 **MIMI:** I wanted to talk to you about the oil field that is on your
24 property.
- 25 **POLLY:** What do you know about our oil field?
- 26 **OSWALD:** We happen to know that oil well really does belong to
27 you and not to the Taylors.
- 28 **PETE:** And we know that because of this. *(Holds up the magnifying
29 glass.)* See?
- 30 **URSKIN:** *(Grabbing the glass and looking through it.)* Gol-lee, it
31 makes ever'thing look bigger.
- 32 **POLLY:** You need to hold it up to your brain, then.
- 33
- 34 *URSKIN holds it up to POLLY'S face.*
- 35
- 36 **URSKIN:** Would you look at that? Your wrinkles just pop right out!

- 1 **POLLY:** (*Grabs it.*) Give me that! (*To OSWALD.*) Won't do no good
2 if the map *does* show it's on our property. That Taylor clan won't
3 ever give it up and let us have it.
- 4 **OSWALD:** They won't have a choice if you hired a lawyer to
5 represent you.
- 6 **POLLY:** There ain't no lawyers in these parts.
- 7 **OSWALD:** (*Stands up straight.*) Well, maybe there is.
- 8 **URSKIN:** Where?
- 9 **OSWALD:** Standing right in front of you. I happen to be a lawyer.
- 10 **URSKIN:** I always pictured lawyers lookin' smart and suffocated.
- 11 **OSWALD:** You don't think I look smart?
- 12 **POLLY:** Is the Pope Baptist? [*Insert your denomination.*]
- 13 **OSWALD:** No.
- 14 **POLLY:** Well, there you go.
- 15 **PETUNIA:** Oswald, can I speak to you, please?
- 16
- 17 *She pulls OSWALD Downstage, joined by MIMI and PETE.*
- 18
- 19 Our country cousins look up to you. It would destroy them!
- 20 **OSWALD:** Look, I won't charge the Chigger County bunch for
21 representing them. I'll simply take a small percentage of the oil
22 that comes in. We four will get filthy rich.
- 23 **MIMI:** The only kind of rich to be is filthy, that's for sure.
- 24 **PETUNIA:** It sounds hypocritical.
- 25 **OSWALD:** It's nothing of the kind. Let's go tell them the good news.
26 (*Approaching POLLY and URSKIN.*) Well, Ms. Polly, Mr. Urskin,
27 what if I told you that I will represent you at no charge?
- 28 **URSKIN:** Wait a cotton-pickin' minute. Somethin' smells fishy in
29 Wal-Mart –
- 30 **OSWALD:** Denmark.
- 31 **POLLY:** Why you doin' this for us?
- 32 **OSWALD:** I simply want to see justice served, that's all.
- 33 **PETE:** When justice is served, we all win.
- 34 **URSKIN:** What you think, Aunt Polly? Should we trust him?
- 35 **POLLY:** (*Looks back at OSWALD.*) I reckon he's all we got.
- 36 **URSKIN:** (*To OSWALD.*) OK, you got yourself a deal on one
37 condition.
- 38 **OSWALD:** What's that?

1 **POLLY:** You let us hang up one more flyer.

2 **OSWALD:** (*Shrugs.*) I guess one more flyer won't hurt.

3 **POLLY:** Good. And we'll even let you hang it anywhere you'd like.
4 Here you go.

5

6 *She throws a white bed sheet into OSWALD'S arms.*

7

8 Let's get out of here, Urskin.

9 **OSWALD:** See you later, alligator.

10 **URSKIN:** After 'while, saltwater hammerhead. (*They exit.*)

11 **PETUNIA:** It looks like a bed sheet.

12 **MIMI:** Look – there's writing on it.

13 **PETE:** Oswald, help me open it up.

14

15 *OSWALD takes one end and PETE the other as they spread it out.*

16 *DONNA JO sneaks in, covered by the sheet. There is writing on the*

17 *sheet with the following message: "Come worship with us. The*

18 *Chigger County Café. Christmas Eve. Eight o'clock."*

19

20 **OSWALD:** What do you know about that? The first hillbilly
21 billboard.

22

23 *PETE and OSWALD lower the sheet, and there stands DONNA JO.*

24

25 **MIMI:** (*Startled.*) Donna Jo?

26 **PETE:** How do you keep doing that?

27

28 *DONNA JO stands with her head hung low, clutching to a*
29 *homemade doll.*

30

31 **PETUNIA:** Donna Jo, are you all right? (*She is silent.*)

32 **OSWALD:** Did we say something that hurt your feelings?

33

34 *After a quick beat, DONNA JO runs to the back room.*

35

36 **PETUNIA:** Donna Jo, wait!

37 **PETE:** (*Looking nervously at his family.*) You don't suppose Donna
38 Jo overheard us talking?

- 1 **OSWALD:** What if she tells on us to the Cricket County bunch
2 before we have a chance to explain?
- 3 **PETUNIA:** I tried to warn you. If Donna Jo tells our cousins what
4 we were talking about, we might as well say our good-byes
5 forever.
- 6 **OSWALD:** You're right! Let's go!
- 7
- 8 *PETUNIA and OSWALD run out the back door. ELMER and*
9 *FESTER enter through the front door. ELMER carries a large*
10 *cardboard box, a yardstick, and a package of bologna. FESTER*
11 *carries a net.*
- 12
- 13 **ELMER:** Come on in here, Fester, and I'll show you how it works.
- 14 **FESTER:** *(Enters wearing a shepherd's headpiece.)* Them
15 varmints have been in here puttin' up their flyers again.
- 16 **ELMER:** Fester, why you wearin' part of your shepherd costume?
- 17 **FESTER:** So them Chigger critters don't recognize me and I can
18 sneak up on 'em.
- 19 **ELMER:** You look plumb silly.
- 20 **FESTER:** Don't neither. It makes me look smart. Who you playin'
21 in the Christmas play?
- 22 **ELMER:** Nobody. I quit wearin' costumes years ago.
- 23 **FESTER:** Why?
- 24 **ELMER:** 'Cause of what happened to me in the third grade. We
25 had a Halloween party and the teacher told us to wear a
26 costume. When I walked in that mornin' wearin' my costume, all
27 the kids beat me up.
- 28 **FESTER:** 'Cause you was dressed like a shepherd?
- 29 **ELMER:** No, 'cause I was dressed like a piñata.
- 30 **FESTER:** Oh. Well, I guess I can't blame you. *(Pointing at*
31 *ELMER'S supplies.)* What you got there?
- 32 **ELMER:** I got it all figured out. We will make a trap and catch that
33 there Festus feller and hold him hostage. That way they'll give
34 up this crazy notion of takin' Grandma's customers away from
35 her.
- 36 **FESTER:** How the heck does your trap work?

1 **ELMER:** It's real clever, Fester. You see, what you do is, *(As he*
2 *demonstrates.)* you take this ordinary cardboard box like this and
3 put it upside down like this. Then you prop up this end with this
4 here stick, like this right here. When that Festus feller comes
5 sneakin' in, he will crawl under the box, spring the trap, and we
6 got us a hostage.

7 **FESTER:** What you goin' to use for bait?

8 **ELMER:** I done a little research and found out that his most favorite
9 food in the world is bologna. *(Pronounces it ba-log-nuh.)*

10 **FESTER:** What's ba-log-nuh?

11 **ELMER:** It's this here right here. *(He holds up a small package of*
12 *bologna.)* See?

13 **FESTER:** Elmer, that don't say ba-log-nuh, it says bologna.
14 *(Pronounces it correctly.)* See? Ba-lone-ee.

15 **ELMER:** Ba-lone-ee.... Got it. Since it's his most favorite food in
16 the whole world, he will see the ba-lone-ee, crawl under the box,
17 spring the trap, and – *(Slapping hands together.)* boom! We got
18 our man.

19 **FESTER:** That ain't a bad trap for a amateur, Elmer, but I have to
20 say mine is a lot better trap than yours. *(Holds up his net.)* When
21 the no-account comes around, I just throw a net over him.

22 **ELMER:** That's dumb.

23 **FESTER:** I'll have you know this plan come to me in a dream.

24 **ELMER:** It did?

25 **FESTER:** Sure enough. I dreamed I was in the woods, and I took
26 my axe and I cut down this big tree in the middle of the woods.
27 All of a sudden, these little Keebler Elves started runnin' all over
28 the place. They was tryin' to dip me in chocolate. That's when
29 this giant net from heaven came down on top of them there elves
30 and saved my life.

31 **ELMER:** What you know about that? A net from heaven. OK, the
32 trap is set. Now we wait for our unsuspectin' prey.

33 **FESTER:** Come on over here.

34
35 *They cross and hide behind the counter. A few seconds pass.*
36 *FESTUS slowly sticks his head through the front door and says,*
37 *softly and carefully.*
38

FESTUS: Hello? *(Pause.)* Hellooooo? *(After another pause, he slowly emerges, holding more flyers and a roll of tape. He tiptoes over and hangs another flyer. Then he turns his head toward the audience and sniffs. He turns and slowly crosses toward the trap, tiptoeing as he goes. He is sniffing the air the whole time. He passes the trap, stops, then looks back at the trap. He looks around to make sure no one is looking. He stoops down and sees the bologna.)* Mmmm, ba-log-nuh, my favorite. *(He looks around one more time, then turns and crawls under the box, sits with his legs crossed, reaches for the bologna and springs the trap as the box falls over on top of him. After a beat, he speaks loudly.)* It shore is dark up under this here box.

FESTER and ELMER slowly raise up from behind the counter. They shake hands in celebration of their victory. POLLY enters through the front door with BERTHA MAE and GERTHA MAE.

POLLY: I think I saw Festus come in here.

FESTER and ELMER quickly duck behind the counter.

Bertha Mae, you look over there, Gertha Mae, you look over there, and I'll look right over here.

They spread out and begin looking around. After a few seconds FESTUS begins to sing "The Twelve Days of Christmas" under the box. As FESTUS sings, they follow his voice until it brings them to the box. They lift the box up just as he sings "flannel long johns."

FESTUS: *(Singing.)*

ON THE FIFTH DAY OF CHRISTMAS,
MY TRUE LOVE SENT TO ME
FIVE PAIRS OF BOOTS,
FOUR POSSUM HATS,
THREE BEAR SKIN RUGS,
TWO MASON JARS,
AND A RED PAIR OF FLANNEL LONG JOHNS.

POLLY: Festus Ray, what in Sam hill you doin' in there?

- 1 **FESTUS:** (*Holding up a piece.*) Eatin' me some ba-log-nuh, and it's
2 gooood. Want some?
- 3 **BERTHA MAE:** Festus, you are slower than erosion, son. Are you
4 wantin' to get caught in here?
- 5 **POLLY:** Get up from there and come on, 'cause we got to go.
- 6 **BERTHA MAE:** But, Aunt Polly, they are takin' our flyers down just
7 as quick as we put 'em up.
- 8 **POLLY:** They won't find all of 'em.
- 9 **BRENDA MAE:** (*From Off-stage.*) Come on, Glenda Mae, let's go
10 inside for a bit.
- 11 **GERTHA MAE:** Somebody's a-comin'. Let's go!
12
- 13 *GERTHA MAE grabs FESTUS's hand and pulls him up as they*
14 *head for the storage room door. About that time the net comes flying*
15 *from behind the counter and hits the floor with a plop. They're gone.*
16 *FESTER pops up from behind the counter.*
17
- 18 **FESTER:** Drat! I missed. Let's go.
19
- 20 *FESTER grabs the net and he and ELMER run out the back door.*
21 *BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE enter through the front door.*
22
- 23 **GLENDA MAE:** How in the world do them Chigger County folk
24 keep hiding from us so good?
- 25 **BRENDA MAE:** I don't know, but I am bound and determined to
26 find them rascals 'fore the sun goes down, or my name ain't
27 Brenda Mae Rapunzel Taylor.
- 28 **GLENDA MAE:** Right, 'cause like we say in the country,
29 "Sometimes life makes me feel like a ground floor tenant in a
30 two-story outhouse."
- 31 **BRENDA MAE:** Look what I done found. (*She picks up a*
32 *handkerchief off the floor.*)
- 33 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Rushes to her.*) What is it?
- 34 **BRENDA MAE:** Somebody's hang-kerchief.
- 35 **GLENDA MAE:** (*Hands on hips.*) What's so dag-gum special 'bout
36 a hang-ker-chief?
- 37 **BRENDA MAE:** Look, it's got some initials on it. See? B.M.R.
- 38 **GLENDA MAE:** B.M.R? I wonder what that stands for.

- 1 **BRENDA MAE:** Maybe it stands for Bertha Mae Ray.
2 **GLEND A MAE:** I bet you a dollar it does. That means they was
3 here.
4 **BERTHA MAE:** *(Off-stage.)* I'll look in here.
5 **GLEND A MAE:** Let's hide and catch 'em red-hunted.
6
7 *GLEND A MAE and BRENDA MAE run behind the counter and*
8 *duck. BERTHA MAE and GERTHA MAE sneak back in through the*
9 *back door.*
10
11 **BERTHA MAE:** I must've dropped it in here someplace. Look over
12 there, and I'll look over here. *(They look around on the floor.)* I
13 can't leave that handkerchief layin' around here for them to find.
14
15 *They begin looking again. As they look with their backs to the*
16 *counter, BRENDA MAE and GLEND A MAE pop up from behind the*
17 *counter. BRENDA MAE whispers in GLEND A MAE'S ear. GLEND A*
18 *MAE smiles a big smile and throws up the "OK" sign then crosses*
19 *around the counter and stands in front of the counter with her hands*
20 *down at her side looking straight out, almost like a statue. BRENDA*
21 *MAE giggles and ducks behind the counter.*
22
23 **BERTHA MAE:** *(To GERTHA MAE.)* You keep lookin' in here while
24 I check out the back storage room. *(She exits.)*
25 **GERTHA MAE:** *(To herself, as she looks around.)* It's got to be
26 here somewhere.
27
28 *She backs up to GLEND A MAE, not realizing GLEND A MAE is*
29 *standing there. When she turns around, she's directly facing*
30 *GLEND A MAE, like a reflection in a mirror. GERTHA MAE slowly*
31 *raises her left hand as GLEND A MAE follows her movements*
32 *exactly. A whole mirror routine is used here. The movements begin*
33 *simple and they get sillier as it goes. GERTHA MAE places her*
34 *finger under her nose as though she has to sneeze. GLEND A MAE*
35 *does the same. They take in three deep breaths simultaneously as*
36 *though they are about to let go of a really big sneeze. Right at that*
37 *moment, GERTHA MAE stops her sneeze, but GLEND A MAE*
38 *doesn't and sneezes a big sneeze.*

GERTHA MAE: *(Continued.)* Huh? *(She turns and runs toward the storage room door, shouting.)* Bertha Mae! Bertha Mae! Come a-runnin'!

GLEND A MAE runs around the counter and hides with BRENDA MAE. BERTHA MAE comes running in.

BERTHA MAE: What is it? Did you find the hang-ker-chief?

GERTHA MAE grabs her arm and pulls her over to the counter.

GERTHA MAE: Over here! It's a magic mirror or somethin'! *(Sees that GLEND A MAE is gone.)* Somethin' awful strange is goin' on around here.

BERTHA MAE: *(Pulls GERTHA MAE downstage, in case anyone is around to overhear her.)* Gertha Mae, could you leave me alone here for just a minute, please?

GERTHA MAE: But what if –

BERTHA MAE privately shushes her by putting her finger to her lips.

BERTHA MAE: Shhhh.

GERTHA MAE gives her the "OK" sign and tiptoes out.

Well, I guess I'm the only one in the room. I must leave now, and when I do, that will mean that nobody is in the room. So here I go, leavin' the room.

BERTHA MAE stomps to the front door, opens it, slams it, then ducks behind a chair, still inside. BRENDA MAE silently stands unseen by BERTHA MAE. BRENDA MAE is holding a large rustic wooden picture frame. She sets the frame on the counter and poses behind it, as though she were a portrait. A few silent seconds pass. BERTHA MAE stands and puts her hands on her hips, frustrated that her plan didn't work.

1 **BERTHA MAE:** *(Continued.)* I'm wastin' time. I got to get back
2 outside. *(She throws her scarf around her neck and starts to*
3 *leave when she spots the "portrait." She speaks to herself.)* What
4 in Sam hill? *(She crosses to the "portrait.")* That's funny, I didn't
5 see that sittin' there before. *(She gets a good close look at it.)*
6 Real good color. *(Turns and speaks to the audience.)* But
7 between you, me, and the fencepost, she's the ugliest varmint
8 in the whole countryside. Hmmm, I wonder why it ain't hangin'
9 on the wall.

10
11 *BERTHA MAE takes the frame and crosses to a picture of a bulldog*
12 *or cow and hangs the frame so that it perfectly frames the bulldog*
13 *picture. BRENDA MAE has a silent moment of panic and ducks*
14 *quickly behind the counter. After hanging the frame, BERTHA MAE*
15 *steps back and looks at the picture.*

16
17 **BERTHA MAE:** *(Continued.)* Oh, yes, she looks a heap of a lot
18 better in this light.

19 **BRENDA MAE:** *(She has had enough. She pops her head up and*
20 *points dramatically at BERTHA MAE.)* Aha!

21 **GLEND A MAE:** *(Also standing and pointing.)* Double aha!

22 **GERTH A MAE:** *(Storms back in and points to BRENDA MAE and*
23 *GLEND A MAE.)* Aha!

24 **BERTHA MAE:** How did y'all get in here without me seein' you?

25 **BRENDA MAE:** Well, well, well, if it ain't Bertha Mae and Gertha
26 Mae Ray from Chigger County.

27 **GLEND A MAE:** What's the likes of you doin' snoopin' around our
28 grandma's diner?

29
30 *BRENDA MAE snatches the flyers.*

31
32 **BRENDA MAE:** I knowed it! What's the big ideal sneakin' in here
33 and puttin' up these here flyers?

34 **GERTH A MAE:** *(Mocking her.)* What's the big ideal sneakin' in
35 here and puttin' up these here flyers.

36 **BRENDA MAE:** Stop mockin' us.

37 **BERTHA MAE:** *(Mocking her.)* Stop mockin' us.

- 1 **GLEND A MAE:** Brenda Mae, what do you expect from somebody
2 who has a few peas short of a casserole?
3 **GERTHA MAE:** (*To GLEND A MAE.*) Comin' from somebody who
4 uses Old Spice in all her cookin'.
- 5 **BREND A MAE:** Y'all better git!
6 **GERTHA MAE:** Oh yeah?
7 **BREND A MAE:** Yeah!
- 8 **GLEND A MAE:** I don't understand you girls a-tall. Y'all are doin'
9 this just 'cause y'all want Fester's oil field.
- 10 **GERTHA MAE:** That oil field is on Aunt Polly's property.
11 **GLEND A MAE:** Oh yeah?
12 **BERTHA MAE:** Yeah!
- 13
14 *GRANDMA runs in through the front door.*
15
- 16 **GRANDMA:** Don't nobody move! I done went and lost my
17 spectacles, and the whole world is one big blur! (*She runs up to*
18 *BERTHA MAE and GERTHA MAE.*) Brenda Mae, Glenda Mae,
19 have y'all saw any of them lowdown Chigger County folk yet?
- 20 **GERTHA MAE:** (*Points to GLEND A and BREND A MAE.*) There's
21 Bertha Mae and Gertha Mae right over yonder, Grandma.
- 22 **GRANDMA:** (*Turning sharply.*) Where? (*She looks BREND A*
23 *MAE'S and GLEND A MAE'S way.*) Aha! There's two of the
24 rascals now. (*Pushes up her sleeves.*) Are you two varmints
25 goin' to get out of my diner, or am I goin' to have to throw you
26 out?
- 27 **GLEND A MAE:** Grandma, it's us.
28 **BREND A MAE:** It's us – Glenda Mae and Brenda Mae. Them is
29 the Chigger County twins.
30
- 31 *GRANDMA, squinting her eyes, looks at one set of twins, then over*
32 *to the other. ELKIN runs through the front door carrying*
33 *GRANDMA's specs.*
34
- 35 **ELKIN:** Grandma, I found your spectacles outside.
36
37 *AUNT POLLY and URSKIN run in from the back door.*
38

- 1 **URSKIN:** Ever'body hide. They's comin'!
- 2 **GRANDMA:** (*Putting on her glasses.*) Too late, Polly, 'cause we
3 done here! (*Now that she can see, she points at the CHIGGER*
4 *COUNTY TWINS.*) Aha, so you two is the fibbers!
- 5
- 6 *BERTHA MAE and GERTHA MAE hide behind POLLY.*
- 7
- 8 **GERTHA MAE:** Aunt Polly, save us!
- 9
- 10 *The CRICKET COUNTY bunch is standing on one side of the diner,*
11 *with the CHIGGER COUNTY bunch on the other.*
- 12
- 13 **ELKIN:** Polly Ray, how dare you try and steal Grandma's
14 Christmas Eve audience over to your diner!
- 15 **POLLY:** It's a free country.
- 16 **ELKIN:** (*Pointing to URSKIN.*) Urskin Ray, how dare you say
17 Fester's oil field is on your land over in Chigger County!
- 18 **URSKIN:** It is on our land, and we have the map to prove it.
- 19 **GRANDMA:** Ain't neither, so stop puttin' up them flyers.
- 20 **URSKIN:** We'll make a deal with you. You let us have the oil field
21 that is rightfully ours, and we will call off our Christmas Eve
22 program in Aunt Polly's Diner.
- 23 **ELKIN:** It ain't your oil field!
- 24 **URSKIN:** Is so!
- 25 **ELKIN:** It ain't!
- 26 **CHIGGER BUNCH:** Is so!
- 27 **CRICKET BUNCH:** It ain't!
- 28
- 29 *They have made a wall of people at Center Stage. DONNA JO*
30 *sneaks in and sits on the counter.*
- 31
- 32 **CHIGGER BUNCH:** Is so!
- 33 **CRICKET BUNCH:** It ain't!
- 34 **DONNA JO:** Would ever'body please be quiet?
- 35
- 36 *Everyone looks surprised and looks around trying to figure out*
37 *where the voice came from. Then the two families separate, and*
38 *there sits DONNA JO on the counter.*



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