

EASTER IN CRICKET COUNTY

by Eddie McPherson



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Easter in Cricket County

A one-act Easter season comedy

by Eddie McPherson

SYNOPSIS

It's Easter in Cricket County, and the Taylor clan has taken it upon themselves to host this year's Easter sunrise service in their front yard. The action begins half an hour before sunrise as Grandma Taylor sweeps the front porch of her cabin and sets out the lawn chairs as she prepares for the parishioners to arrive. She isn't very happy, however, that her highbrow family members from the city are showing up this year. These city dwellers have always been after the coal mines and oil fields the Taylors inherited from their late Uncle Zeke, and Grandma knows this year will be no exception for these money-grubbing kinfolk. Sure enough, the city bunch shows up, keeping their eyes open for a new "treasure" they heard Grandma found recently.

Once the sunrise service begins, however, thoughts quickly turn to the true meaning of Easter as everyone, including the city bunch, begins sharing what the Resurrection means to them. When Grandma's treasure is revealed and the sun starts to rise above the ridge, greedy hearts are softened and the things that are truly important are put in their proper perspective.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

COUNTY BUNCH:

Grandma Taylor

Elkin

Fester

Glenda Mae

Brenda Mae

Preacher Hobbs

CITY BUNCH:

Oswald

Pete

Mimi

Petunia

PRODUCTION NOTES

The action takes place in the front yard and on the front porch of the Taylor's country cabin. You may choose to have a rocking chair on the porch and a couple of steps that lead to the porch. The characters set out lawn chairs after the performance begins. The unseen rooster's crowing may come from a sound effects CD or an Off-stage actor.

Props

Easter baskets, coffee cups, broom, sheet of sunshine stickers, wooden or galvanized pail, ladle, old camera, old trunk, Grandma's Easter quilt (could be an authentic quilt with pictures of the symbols of Easter added using fabric paint on white squares of material), lawn chairs, rocking chair (optional), harmonica or kazoo, high-end shopping bag such as Macy's, shoe box, Easter egg, sunglasses, artificial palm branch, bottle of perfume, piece of a briar bush, railroad spike or large nail, rock, broken tree limb.

Costumes

The county girls may wear gingham or plain cotton dresses. All the girls will need Easter bonnets, which are wide-brimmed straw hats with gaudy and excessive flowers, ribbons, lace, etc. affixed with a hot glue gun. The county boys wear overalls or blue jeans with dress shirts and work boots. Their ties are solid colors — extra-wide with a hand painted picture such as a red barn or deer head. You will need two extra ties for the city boys' gifts. Pastor Hobbs also dresses this way and wears wire-rimmed glasses. The city bunch wears high-priced clothes that clash quite nicely with the hillbillies' attire. The city girls need purses.

Running Time

Approximately 30 to 35 minutes.

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- 1 *(It's the front porch of the Taylors' cabin in Cricket County.*
 2 *BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE enter in their Sunday best.*
 3 *BRENDA MAE carries an Easter basket.)*
 4 BRENDA MAE: But Glenda Mae, we hid thirty eggs and only
 5 twenty-nine was found.
 6 GLENDA MAE: That means there's still one egg around here
 7 somewhere.
 8 BRENDA MAE: Grandma will skin us alive if that egg ain't
 9 found and starts stinkin' up the place. *(GRANDMA enters*
 10 *in her best dress and Easter bonnet holding a cup of coffee.)*
 11 GLENDA MAE: Mornin', Grandma.
 12 GRANDMA: Mornin', you two. Y'all look like you're up to
 13 somethin'.
 14 BRENDA MAE: No, ma'am. Just breathin' in the early mornin'
 15 air.
 16 GRANDMA: *(Grabbing a broom)* Don't give me that. I've
 17 known both of you since you was born, and I know
 18 when you're hidin' somethin'.
 19 GLENDA MAE: *(As though confessing)* Easter eggs! We hid
 20 thirty Easter eggs. There, I said it.
 21 BRENDA MAE: *(Scolding)* Glenda Mae, you're such a snitch!
 22 GLENDA MAE: Sorry, Brenda Mae — but I can't fib to
 23 Grandma. Especially on Easter Sunday mornin'. *(Turns to*
 24 *GRANDMA.)* We hid thirty eggs, but only twenty-nine was
 25 found at the Easter egg hunt yesterday.
 26 GRANDMA: *(Sweeping off the porch)* Good gracious alive, we'll
 27 be smellin' that egg 'til the Fourth of July.
 28 BRENDA MAE: I'll find it before the day is over, Grandma.
 29 GRANDMA: *(Stops sweeping and looks out over the audience.)* I
 30 have a feelin' in my bones it's goin' to be a bee-u-tiful
 31 sunrise.
 32 GLENDA MAE: Yes ma'am, and they say clear skies all day
 33 today.
 34 GRANDMA: Do y'all remember what time Preacher Hobbs is
 35 supposed to get here?

- 1 **BRENDA MAE:** Cousin Elkin said around five.
- 2 **GLEND A MAE:** And the service'll start at five-thirty.
- 3 **GRANDMA:** Do you girls know any good Easter songs we can
4 sing this mornin'?
- 5 **BRENDA MAE:** I got one. *(She stands up straight and sings.)*
6 Here comes Peter cottontail, hoppin' down the bunny
7 trail ...
- 8 **GRANDMA:** Brenda Mae, what in the Sam Hill are you
9 singin'?
- 10 **BRENDA MAE:** That's a real popular Easter song. They sing
11 it all the time on TV.
- 12 **GRANDMA:** Peter Cottontail? Hidin' Easter eggs? Is that all
13 Easter time means to y'all?
- 14 **GLEND A MAE:** Them people on our new TV set says them
15 kind of things is what people do at Easter time these
16 days.
- 17 **GRANDMA:** *(Standing between them)* Let me tell you somethin'.
18 As long as I am your grandma and there's breath in this
19 body of mine — and I intend on bein' around a loooong
20 time — you will celebrate the true reason for the season.
21 What part of what I just said don't you understand?
- 22 **GLEND A MAE and BRENDA MAE:** *(Singing together)* Up from
23 the grave he arose, with a mighty triumph o'er his
24 foes ...
- 25 **GRANDMA:** That's more like it.
- 26 **BRENDA MAE:** We're sorry, Grandma. We was just tryin' to
27 keep up with the modern times. Here, have a sunshine
28 sticker. *(She sticks one on the broom GRANDMA is holding.)*
- 29 **GRANDMA:** What are you a-doin', child?
- 30 **BRENDA MAE:** I'm stickin' these here sunshine stickers on
31 ever'thing to remind us it's a sunrise service.
- 32 **GRANDMA:** I think we'll remember it's a sunrise service
33 when the sun starts to rise.
- 34 **GLEND A MAE:** *(Pointing at a wooden pail GRANDMA has picked*
35 *up off the porch)* What's that, Grandma?

- 1 GRANDMA: Don't you remember? Preacher Hobbs asked
 2 ever'body to bring an object to the service that
 3 represented what Easter means to them.
- 4 BRENDA MAE: Easter makes you think of a old, wooden
 5 pail?
- 6 GRANDMA: No, honey. It's what's *inside* the pail. Fresh
 7 rainwater. It reminds me how Jesus washed my sins
 8 away when he died on the cross.
- 9 BRENDA MAE: Rainwater. That's real creative, Grandma.
 10 I'm goin' to give you a sticker for that.
- 11 GRANDMA: Get them sticky things away from me.
- 12 GLENDA MAE: I almost forgot. (*Reaches inside her apron pocket*
 13 *and pulls out an old, dusty camera.*) Look what I found in
 14 the old shed last week.
- 15 GRANDMA: Well, looky there — that there camera belonged
 16 to your Aunt Jessie back before you was born.
- 17 GLENDA MAE: And it still works, too. Smile, Grandma! (*She*
 18 *snaps GRANDMA's picture.*)
- 19 GRANDMA: (*Flattered, fiddles with her hair*) Oh, stop, honey. I
 20 ain't fit to have my picture took this early in the mornin'.
- 21 GLENDA MAE: Don't worry, Grandma. I ain't gettin' your
 22 wrinkled panty hose in the shot.
- 23 GRANDMA: I ain't wearin' pantyhose.
- 24 BRENDA MAE: Take my picture with my sunshine stickers,
 25 Glenda Mae. (*She poses on the porch.*)
- 26 GLENDA MAE: (*Holds the camera up.*) OK, say moo.
- 27 BRENDA MAE: M-o-o-o. (*GLENDA MAE snaps the picture.*)
- 28 GRANDMA: Did you girls finish dustin' the cabin down?
- 29 GLENDA MAE: No ma'am, not yet.
- 30 GRANDMA: I declare. Work is the magic word around this
 31 cabin.
- 32 GLENDA MAE: What do you mean?
- 33 GRANDMA: When I say "work," both of you disappear.
- 34 GLENDA MAE: We'll do it right now, Grandma.
- 35 BRENDA MAE: (*To GLENDA MAE*) Then you can take more

- 1 pictures of me on the porch.
- 2 **GLEND A MAE:** That'll be fun, 'cause like we say here in the
 3 country, "If you make socks at a sock mill, what do you
 4 make at a windmill?" *(They exit into the cabin. ELKIN enters*
 5 *from the same door.)*
- 6 **ELKIN:** *(Also holding a cup of coffee)* Mornin', Cousins.
- 7 **BRENDA MAE:** Mornin', Cousin Elkin.
- 8 **GLEND A MAE:** We'll be back in a bit.
- 9 **ELKIN:** *(To GRANDMA)* They sure are full of energy so early
 10 in the mornin'. *(A rooster crows Off-stage.)*
- 11 **GRANDMA:** *(Shouting to Off-stage)* Pipe down, Leroy! The sun
 12 ain't comin' up yet! *(To ELKIN)* I tell you what, that
 13 rooster ain't got both oars in the water.
- 14 **ELKIN:** Leroy gets a little confused sometimes. *(Shouting off)*
 15 Hush up, Leroy! Speakin' of the service, is Preacher
 16 Hobbs here yet?
- 17 **GRANDMA:** Not yet. I hope we have a good turnout this
 18 mornin'.
- 19 **ELKIN:** *(Sitting on the edge of the porch)* I'm sure glad we get
 20 to share our first Easter with our cousins from the city.
- 21 **GRANDMA:** I still don't know why you had to invite them
 22 snooty city slickers to our Easter service. Ever' since
 23 Uncle Zeke passed away and left us all them coal mines
 24 and oil fields, them money-grubbin' family members has
 25 been tryin' to get their hands on our inheritance.
- 26 **ELKIN:** They're still our family, Grandma. We should treat
 27 them with respect.
- 28 **GRANDMA:** Couldn't we respect them without invitin' them
 29 out to Cricket County?
- 30 **ELKIN:** If I remember right, they sorta invited theirselves to
 31 the service. I was tellin' Cousin Oswald about you findin'
 32 your grandma's homemade quilt, and the next thing I
 33 knew, they said they was on their way out here for a
 34 visit.
- 35 **GRANDMA:** Why would them selfish cousins of yours care

1 anything about me findin' my grandma's quilt?

2 ELKIN: It's a mystery to me. All I said was, "Cousin Oswald,

3 it sure would be nice if you could see this old treasure

4 Grandma found." And he says to me, he says, "Treasure?

5 Grandma Taylor found a treasure?" And I says, "Yep!"

6 And he says, "We're on our way!" and hangs up the

7 phone, just like that. (*Snaps his fingers.*)

8 GRANDMA: (*Crossing over to an old chest, reaches inside and pulls*

9 *out a folded quilt.*) My mama said Granny called it her

10 special Easter quilt.

11 ELKIN: That's a treasure, all right.

12 GRANDMA: (*Hugs it.*) It's priceless. Plum priceless. I'm goin'

13 to keep it in this here trunk 'til I donate it to the church.

14 (*Sets it back inside the trunk and closes the lid.*) There. It will

15 be safe in there. (*OSWALD runs in, all out of breath.*)

16 ELKIN: Cousin Oswald, you sure are here early. Happy

17 Easter to you!

18 OSWALD: (*Out of breath*) Wa ... wa ... water.

19 ELKIN: (*Presenting a small bucket with a ladle inside*) Here you

20 go. This here water is fresh from the spring.

21 GRANDMA: Where in the sam hill is ever'body else, Ozzy?

22 OSWALD: Oswald, ma'am. (*Drinking the water*) They're behind

23 me. I ran track in high school.

24 ELKIN: Why are y'all runnin'? Where's that fancy limousine of

25 yours?

26 OSWALD: We decided to rent a car this time, and it broke

27 down about half a mile down the road.

28 ELKIN: Bless y'all's hearts. You drink all the water you can

29 hold. (*PETE runs in.*) There's Cousin Pete. He made it.

30 PETE: Wa ... wa ... water.

31 OSWALD: (*Holds up the ladle.*) Right here.

32 GRANDMA: (*Laughing as she sets out a couple of lawn chairs*)

33 That just goes to show how out of shape you city slickers

34 are. I could outrun ever' one of you with both feet tied

35 behind my back.

- 1 **PETE:** (*Out of breath*) I'm exhausted. I can't go on. Elkin, call
 2 me a paramedic.
- 3 **ELKIN:** (*Shrugs.*) OK, you're a paramedic.
- 4 **OSWALD:** (*To PETE*) Where are the girls?
- 5 **PETE:** Right behind me. (*PETUNIA enters carrying MIMI on her*
 6 *back.*)
- 7 **MIMI:** Hurry, Petunia — I can't take another step.
- 8 **ELKIN:** (*Pointing*) There they are, bless their hearts.
- 9 **PETUNIA:** (*About to fall*) I can't go on.
- 10 **OSWALD:** You don't have to because you're here.
- 11 **PETUNIA:** (*As MIMI dismounts*) Wa ... wa ...
- 12 **PETE:** (*Holds up another ladle.*) Right here.
- 13 **PETUNIA:** I'm so thirsty.
- 14 **OSWALD:** Mimi, aren't you thirsty?
- 15 **MIMI:** Don't be silly. I only drink bottled water.
- 16 **GRANDMA:** Where do you think they get that bottled water
 17 from?
- 18 **MIMI:** (*Frantically looking around*) Enough of the chitchat.
 19 Where is it?
- 20 **PETE:** (*Scolding*) Mimi!
- 21 **GRANDMA:** What's she lookin' for?
- 22 **OSWALD:** (*Trying to cover*) Nothing, nothing at all. Mimi
 23 becomes hysterical when she's exhausted.
- 24 **MIMI:** But they said they found a treasure ...
- 25 **OSWALD:** (*Through his teeth in an attempt to keep her quiet*) I
 26 don't know what you're talking about, Mimi dear.
- 27 **ELKIN:** I'm sorry your car conked out on you, Cousin Oswald.
 28 After the service, I'll take my tool box over and take a
 29 gander under the hood for you.
- 30 **OSWALD:** Thank you, Elkin. That would be very kind of you.
- 31 **MIMI:** (*Fake smile*) Oswald, could I see you for a moment,
 32 pleeeaaase? (*She pulls him away from the others.*)
- 33 **MIMI:** Why won't you allow me to ask them about the
 34 treasure they found?
- 35 **OSWALD:** It would be rude. This is Easter Sunday. If they

- 1 find out we came out for a treasure hunt, it will offend
 2 them. The best thing to do is allow *them* to bring it up.
- 3 MIMI: You're saying if *they* bring up the new treasure, I can
 4 ask them about it?
- 5 OSWALD: Yes, but only if *they* bring it up.
- 6 PETUNIA: (*Approaching*) You two are being extremely rude.
- 7 ELKIN: (*Approaching the CITY BUNCH*) Have y'all ever been to
 8 a sunrise service before?
- 9 MIMI: I've never been up before ten. Only something *very*
 10 special would inspire me to awaken this early in the
 11 morning.
- 12 GRANDMA: Well, there's nothin' more special than Easter
 13 Sunday.
- 14 MIMI: (*Hinting*) You didn't hear me clearly. I said *very* special.
- 15 OSWALD: (*Warning her*) Mimi ...
- 16 MIMI: Elkin, have you read that book called *Treasure Island*?
 17 It's such a *treasure* of a book. It's a *treasure* of a book
 18 about finding *treasure* on *Treasure Island*.
- 19 OSWALD: Mimi, you don't actually think you can hint ...
- 20 ELKIN: No, I ain't read that one, Cousin Mimi; but speakin' of
 21 treasure ...
- 22 MIMI: (*Rushing to him*) Yes?
- 23 ELKIN: Grandma uncovered a priceless treasure just the
 24 other day. She put it right over there in that there trunk.
- 25 MIMI: (*Rushing to the trunk*) You mean right here? Oswald,
 26 look at this beautiful treasure chest.
- 27 GRANDMA: Keep your greedy hands off my trunk.
- 28 ELKIN: Grandma, don't forget — it's Easter. (*To PETE, pointing*
 29 *to the chest*) I didn't know you city folks was interestin' in
 30 stuff like that.
- 31 PETE: Interested? Why do you think we came all this —
- 32 OSWALD: (*Interrupting, laughing nervously*) Pete, maybe we
 33 need to change the subject.
- 34 PETUNIA: I think changing the subject is a *wonderful* idea.
- 35 GRANDMA: Did y'all city slickers remember to bring your

- 1 objects with you the way we asked you to?
- 2 PETE: Objects?
- 3 GRANDMA: Objects that tells what Easter means to you.
- 4 PETE: I'm afraid we forgot.
- 5 GRANDMA: (*Can't believe it.*) You forgot?
- 6 OSWALD: (*Covering*) What he means is we forgot and left the
- 7 objects in the car down the road. Don't worry, though.
- 8 Once I catch my breath, I'll run back and grab
- 9 everything.
- 10 ELKIN: Grandma, how many lawn chairs do we need to set
- 11 up?
- 12 MIMI: (*Rushing to OSWALD*) Oswald, what are you talking
- 13 about?
- 14 PETUNIA: We didn't bring anything with us but the clothes
- 15 on our backs.
- 16 OSWALD: Elkin had told me to bring some items, but I forgot.
- 17 Don't worry, I'll find something around here. (*FESTER*
- 18 *enters from the cabin carrying a shoe box. He's dressed as nice*
- 19 *as it gets out there in the country — overalls with a plaid shirt*
- 20 *and a bright tie with a hand-painted scene on it. He also wears*
- 21 *work boots.*)
- 22 ELKIN: (*Unfolding a lawn chair*) Well, look who finally got out
- 23 and about.
- 24 FESTER: (*Yawning*) I'm sorry, Cousin Elkin, but I stayed up
- 25 all night tryin' to catch me the perfect bullfrog. Preacher
- 26 Hobbs asked us to bring somethin' that reminded us of
- 27 Easter.
- 28 MIMI: (*Sarcastically*) And the hillbilly fun begins.
- 29 GRANDMA: Bullfrog? Fester Eugene Taylor, this is a
- 30 dignified Easter service. You're supposed to bring
- 31 somethin' that represents what *Easter* means to you.
- 32 FESTER: Yes ma'am, that's why I caught myself this here
- 33 bullfrog.
- 34 ELKIN: Fester, just admit you stayed up all night catchin'
- 35 critters for your backyard zoo.

- 1 FESTER: But that's not what I was doin', Cousin Elkin. Really.
- 2 GRANDMA: A Easter sunrise service ain't no place for a slimy,
3 wart-covered, slew-dwellin' pest.
- 4 FESTER: What does Glenda Mae have to do with anything?
- 5 GRANDMA: I'm a-talkin' about that bullfrog. Say howdy to
6 your cousins, then get rid of that critter this very minute!
- 7 FESTER: But Grandma ...
- 8 ELKIN: Fester, you need to do what Grandma says.
- 9 FESTER: Howdy, Cousins.
- 10 OSWALD: Hello, Fester.
- 11 FESTER: *(Frustrated, he heads back into the cabin.)* I'll do it. I don't
12 understand it, but I'll do it. *(He re-enters the cabin.)*
- 13 MIMI: *(Pulling a lawn chair over with her)* I think I will relax
14 riight over here for a while. *(She crosses to the trunk.)*
- 15 PETUNIA: Mimi, don't do anything sneaky.
- 16 MIMI: Me? Sneaky? Please. *(She puts her hand on the trunk.)*
- 17 PETUNIA: *(Sharply)* Mimi! *(MIMI pulls her hand back quickly and*
18 *tries to act innocent.)*
- 19 OSWALD: So this is where the sunrise service takes place, huh?
- 20 GRANDMA: *(Dripping with sarcasm)* No, this is where we play
21 bingo and drink spring water from a canteen. Of course
22 this is where we're havin' the sunrise service.
- 23 ELKIN: What Grandma means is she's not too happy 'cause she
24 got the crazy notion in her head that y'all didn't really
25 come out here to help us celebrate Easter.
- 26 OSWALD: *(Nervous laugh)* She ... she did?
- 27 GRANDMA: I'm on to you greedy city folks. You came out to
28 Cricket County for a reason. I just ain't figured out *what*
29 reason yet. I got my eyes on you.
- 30 ELKIN: What Grandma means is, welcome to our humble little
31 service.
- 32 PETE: Grandma Taylor, do we look like we are up to something
33 sneaky? *(The CITY BUNCH sports a fake, cheery smile.)*
- 34 GRANDMA: You look like a creek full of guilty buckteeth
35 beavers.

1 ELKIN: What Grandma means is —

2 GRANDMA: And would you stop tellin' ever'body what I mean?

3 (*Turns back to the CITY BUNCH.*) I won't have you comin'
4 out here turnin' our Easter celebration into some type of
5 gold-seekin' circus. (*GLENDA MAE rushes out of the cabin*
6 *carrying a fancy Easter basket.*)

7 GLENDA MAE: (*Singing*) Here comes Peter Cottontail, hoppin'
8 down the bunny trail. Hippity hoppity Easter's on its
9 way ...

10 GRANDMA: (*Scolding*) Glenda Mae!

11 GLENDA MAE: (*Quickly changing her tune*) Up from the grave
12 he arose, with a mighty triumph o'er his foes ... (*BRENDA*
13 *MAE enters and sings to the tune of "Jingle Bells"*)

14 BRENDA MAE: Easter eggs, Easter eggs! Hide them
15 ever'where. If you can't find one right here, try searchin'
16 over there, hey!

17 GRANDMA: Brenda Mae!

18 BRENDA MAE: (*Quickly changing her tune*) Up from the grave
19 he arose, (*GLENDA MAE joins her*) with a mighty triumph
20 o'er his foes ...

21 ELKIN: Girls, that's pretty, but we'll be singin' later. Look
22 who has come to pay us a visit.

23 BRENDA MAE: It's our cousins from the city! Here, have a
24 sunshine sticker. (*She sticks one on PETUNIA's purse.*)

25 PETUNIA: Thank you, Brenda Mae.

26 GLENDA MAE: Ever'body get together and let me take your
27 picture. Get real close. That's it. OK, ever'body say moo.

28 ALL: (*Together*) M-o-o-o. (*She snaps a picture.*)

29 GLENDA MAE: That will be a real good one.

30 GRANDMA: So, what *is* the real reason y'all came out here?

31 ELKIN: (*Scolding*) Grandma.

32 OSWALD: (*Dramatically*) Grandma Taylor, are you questioning
33 our motives? I must say I am hurt to the core. I am
34 offended. I am ... I am ...

35 GRANDMA: Overactin'.

- 1 ELKIN: Grandma, remember what the Good Book says:
2 "Judge not, that you be not judged" (Matthew 7:1).
- 3 GLENDA MAE: And don't forget what else it says: "Conduct
4 most of your garden chores during the waxin' of the
5 moon."
- 6 BRENDA MAE: I think that's from *The Farmer's Almanac*,
7 Glenda Mae.
- 8 MIMI: (*Cheerily*) I've thoroughly enjoyed all this idle chitchat.
9 Well, if everyone's ready — shall we see what's inside the
10 trunk? (*She reaches for the lid of the trunk.*)
- 11 PETUNIA: (*Stopping her as the COUNTRY BUNCH heads back to*
12 *the porch*) Mimi, the service hasn't even begun. Behave
13 yourself, or we'll be disowned forever.
- 14 MIMI: Someone needs to get the show on the road. (*FESTER*
15 *enters eating a banana.*)
- 16 GRANDMA: Fester, did you get rid of that bullfrog?
- 17 FESTER: Yes, ma'am. But now I ain't got nothin' to show at
18 the sunrise service.
- 19 GRANDMA: And what you doin' eatin' this early in the
20 mornin'? I'll be cookin' a big, hot breakfast later.
- 21 FESTER: Sorry, Grandma. This early mornin' air is makin' me
22 hungry. (*LEROY crows Off-stage.*)
- 23 GRANDMA: (*Shouting*) You keep up that crowin' and we'll be
24 havin' chicken and dumplin's for supper tonight!
- 25 PETE: (*Pulling FESTER away from the others*) Fester, could I
26 talk to you for a minute?
- 27 FESTER: Sure, Cousin Pete.
- 28 PETE: I'm goin' to ask you a question, and I want you to
29 shoot straight with me, OK?
- 30 FESTER: You want to go shootin', Cousin Pete?
- 31 PETE: No, Fester — let's just shoot the breeze for a minute.
- 32 FESTER: You mean straight up in the air?
- 33 PETE: I mean let's shoot the bull.
- 34 FESTER: But we only have the one bull.
- 35 PETE: (*Taking FESTER by the shoulder*) *Talk*, Fester. I just

- 1 want to talk.
- 2 FESTER: Before or after we go shootin'?
- 3 PETE: I need you to focus. Look me in the eye and focus.
- 4 Fester, have you done your good deed for the week?
- 5 FESTER: Yes sir, me and Elkin helped a little old lady across
- 6 the street the other day.
- 7 PETE: It took both of you?
- 8 FESTER: Yes sir, she didn't want to go.
- 9 PETE: Well, here's your chance to do a really good deed. An
- 10 *outstanding* deed.
- 11 FESTER: It is?
- 12 PETE: Do you know anything about a new treasure that
- 13 Grandma Taylor supposedly found?
- 14 FESTER: (*Staring PETE right in the eye almost nose to nose*) Yes
- 15 sir, she found it last week.
- 16 PETE: And she put the treasure in that trunk over there?
- 17 FESTER: Yep, in that trunk right over there.
- 18 PETE: Is the chest full of diamonds?
- 19 FESTER: It's more precious than diamonds.
- 20 PETE: G-gold?
- 21 FESTER: It's more precious than gold.
- 22 PETE: (*Can hardly stand the suspense*) More precious than
- 23 diamonds or gold? (*Draws closer to FESTER.*) I think I
- 24 might pass out.
- 25 FESTER: (*Takes PETE by the arm.*) Are you OK, Cousin Pete?
- 26 PETE: Just a little weak; I haven't had a chance to eat
- 27 breakfast yet. Fester, we've been friends for a long time,
- 28 haven't we?
- 29 FESTER: Heck, we're more than friends, we're family.
- 30 PETE: Exactly! And friends share everything, right?
- 31 FESTER: Why, of course we do.
- 32 PETE: Share and share alike.
- 33 FESTER: Share and share alike.
- 34 PETE: So, you know what I'm getting at then?
- 35 FESTER: I sure enough do. (*He breaks off the top part of his*

- 1 *banana.*) I'll be glad to share my banana with you.
- 2 PETE: Fester, I was hoping for a little more than half a
3 banana.
- 4 FESTER: You're right, Cousin Pete — it *is* Easter after all. (*He*
5 *hands PETE the rest of his banana.*) Here you go.
- 6 PETE: (*Deflated*) You're all heart, Cousin.
- 7 GLENDA MAE: Cousin Mimi, that sure is a pretty Easter
8 dress you're a-wearin'. (*She snaps MIMI'S picture.*)
- 9 MIMI: (*Staring at the trunk, her chin resting in her hands*) Yes,
10 yes. Run along and play with your camera.
- 11 BRENDA MAE: You look bored, Cousin Mimi. Maybe you can
12 help me decorate ever'thing with these here sunshine
13 stickers. You can start right over there. (*Points to the*
14 *trunk.*)
- 15 MIMI: Are you telling me to put all these stickers on myself?
- 16 BRENDA MAE: Heck no, put 'em on the trunk.
- 17 GLENDA MAE: Y'all can do that later, Brenda Mae. I think
18 we should give them their surprises before the service
19 starts.
- 20 BRENDA MAE: That's a good idea, Glenda Mae.
- 21 MIMI: (*This grabs her attention. She stands.*) Give us our
22 surprise? As in *right* now? Oh, Glenda Mae, Brenda Mae,
23 you've made me so happy.
- 24 GLENDA MAE: OK now, Cousin Mimi and Cousin Petunia —
25 close your eyes.
- 26 MIMI: Did you hear that, Petunia? They want us to close our
27 eyes so they can give us part of the surprise now.
28 (*PETUNIA and MIMI close their eyes.*)
- 29 PETUNIA: Our eyes are closed.
- 30 MIMI: We're ready for our surprise! (*BRENDA MAE runs over*
31 *and grabs a couple of bonnets that have been hidden*
32 *somewhere on stage. They hold them out to MIMI and*
33 *PETUNIA.*)
- 34 BRENDA MAE: You can open your eyes now. (*They open their*
35 *eyes. MIMI ignores the bonnets and walks around the twins to*

- 1 *the chest.*)
- 2 MIMI: Where is it? Where is our surprise? Where, where,
- 3 where?
- 4 GLENDA MAE: (*Holding the bonnet higher*) Right here, Cousin
- 5 Mimi. See?
- 6 PETUNIA: (*Pointing to one of the bonnets*) What do you mean,
- 7 right here? What is that?
- 8 BRENDA MAE: They're bonnets, silly girl. But not just
- 9 ordinary bonnets, but true-to-life, hand-made Easter
- 10 bonnets. Grandma made one for each of us girls.
- 11 GLENDA MAE: Ain't it pretty?
- 12 MIMI: Are you telling me *this* is our surprise?
- 13 BRENDA MAE: And you *are* surprised, ain't you? I can tell by
- 14 the look on your face.
- 15 GLENDA MAE: Go ahead and put 'em on.
- 16 BRENDA MAE: Let us see what they look like.
- 17 PETUNIA: Right now?
- 18 BRENDA MAE: Of course right now, silly. You don't wear
- 19 Easter bonnets at Christmas time. (*BRENDA MAE and*
- 20 *GLENDA MAE laugh at this wit.*)
- 21 OSWALD: (*Approaching and hiding a snicker*) I think they're
- 22 beautiful, girls. Don't you, Pete?
- 23 PETE: (*Laughing behind his hand*) I think they should wear
- 24 them all day.
- 25 OSWALD: Go ahead, Mimi, put it on.
- 26 MIMI: It's atrocious.
- 27 GLENDA MAE: No ma'am, it's pure cotton.
- 28 MIMI: I won't do it.
- 29 PETE: Mimi, wouldn't you like to see what's inside the trunk?
- 30 MIMI: (*She knows she's beat.*) Oh, all right. Petunia, on the
- 31 count of three. One, two, three ... (*They, along with the*
- 32 *twins, put on their bonnets.*)
- 33 OSWALD: (*He and PETE can't hold in their laughter.*) You all
- 34 look so beautiful. Here, let me take your picture.
- 35 MIMI: Oswald, don't you dare.

- 1 **PETUNIA:** Mimi, you're making a scene.
- 2 **OSWALD:** Everyone say moo.
- 3 **GIRLS:** *(Together)* M-o-o-o. *(He snaps a picture.)*
- 4 **PETE:** Brenda Mae, make sure I get a copy of that one.
- 5 **MIMI:** I'm mortified.
- 6 **GLENDA MAE:** Did you hear that, Brenda Mae? They're mor-
- 7 tee-fied. *(Back to the girls)* We're so glad you like it.
- 8 **OSWALD:** It's a shame *we* can't wear Easter bonnets, Pete.
- 9 **PETE:** It sure is a shame.
- 10 **BRENDA MAE:** Boys don't wear bonnets, silly.
- 11 **OSWALD:** Awww, that's too bad.
- 12 **GLENDA MAE:** They wear neckties. *(GLENDA MAE and*
- 13 *BRENDA MAE each hold out a homemade tie. The ties are*
- 14 *extra wide with a large knot at the top. A red barn is painted*
- 15 *on one and a deer head on the other.)*
- 16 **OSWALD:** Neck?
- 17 **PETE:** Ties?
- 18 **BRENDA MAE:** You thought we forgot you fellers didn't you?
- 19 **GLENDA MAE:** Look how surprised they are, Brenda Mae.
- 20 Their mouths are standin' wide open.
- 21 **MIMI:** *(Syrupy sweet)* Well, don't keep us waiting, Oswald. Let
- 22 us see how it looks.
- 23 **PETUNIA:** And the best part is you get to wear it aaaall day.
- 24 *(MIMI and PETUNIA have a good laugh.)*
- 25 **GRANDMA:** *(Approaching)* You young'uns need to pipe down
- 26 over there. It's time for ever'body to get settled in for the
- 27 sunrise service. *(She spots the bonnets.)* Ohhhh, would you
- 28 look at that? Why, they are plum beautiful, if I do say so
- 29 myself.
- 30 **ELKIN:** And look, Grandma; all us fellers is wearin' fancy
- 31 neckties.
- 32 **GRANDMA:** This will be the classiest Easter service in all of
- 33 Cricket County. *(The rooster crows Off-stage. GRANDMA*
- 34 *turns and shouts.)* Leroy, you'd better be glad you was
- 35 born, 'cause nobody else is! Now, hush up that crowin'!

- 1 (PREACHER HOBBS enters carrying a Bible under his arm.)
 2 **PREACHER HOBBS:** Sorry I'm late, ever'body, but I had to
 3 slop the hogs before headin' out.
 4 **GRANDMA:** That's not a problem, Preacher Hobbs — we was
 5 just gettin' settled in.
 6 **ELKIN:** Welcome to our home, Preacher. We're tickled to
 7 death to host this year's service.
 8 **PREACHER HOBBS:** (To *ELKIN*) It's amazin' how you girls
 9 are growin' prettier by the day.
 10 **ELKIN:** Maybe you should put your glasses on, Preacher.
 11 **PREACHER HOBBS:** (He puts his glasses on and sees *ELKIN*.)
 12 Sorry 'bout that, Mr Taylor. (Turns to the *CITY BUNCH*.)
 13 Who do we have here?
 14 **ELKIN:** Preacher Hobbs, these fine folks are our cousins from
 15 the city: Cousin Oswald, Pete, Petunia, and Mimi.
 16 **OSWALD:** It's nice to meet you, Reverend. Well, if you'll
 17 excuse me, I'd better run to the car and bring back those
 18 objects we'll need for the service. (He exits.)
 19 **GLENDIA MAE:** (Shouts after him) Be careful out there, Cousin
 20 Oswald.
 21 **BRENDA MAE:** Yeah, 'cause like we say in the country, "Why
 22 is a orange called a orange but a lemon ain't called a
 23 yeller?"
 24 **GRANDMA:** Shall we get started, Preacher Hobbs? The sun
 25 will be comin' up in a few minutes.
 26 **PREACHER HOBBS:** Fine, fine.
 27 **GRANDMA:** There should be a lawn chair for ever'body. (If
 28 you're using extras for other members of the church, they may
 29 come in now and have a seat.)
 30 **PETUNIA:** Mimi, you should come over here and sit with
 31 everyone else.
 32 **MIMI:** I need to be near the treasure.
 33 **PETUNIA:** Come over here now! (PETUNIA takes MIMI by the
 34 hand and pulls her over with the rest.)
 35 **PREACHER HOBBS:** (HOBBS takes his place on the porch and

1 *turns and faces the crowd who are resting comfortably in their*
 2 *lawn chairs. He takes his glasses off and wipes them.) It's*
 3 **good to see ever'body here this fine Easter mornin'. And**
 4 **look at all the beautiful Easter bonnets in the**
 5 **congregation.**

6 **FESTER:** *(Standing)* **And don't forget to mention the neckties,**
 7 **Preacher Hobbs.**

8 **PREACHER HOBBS:** **Of course, of course. We will begin this**
 9 **mornin's service with a beautiful Easter hymn. Brenda**
 10 **Mae? Glenda Mae?** *(The twins take their place in front of*
 11 *everyone. GLENDA MAE plays a note on a harmonica or*
 12 *kazoo.)*

13 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Singing)* **Here comes Peter Cottontail ...**
 14 *(GRANDMA clears her throat.)*

15 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Looks nervously to GLENDA MAE and sings to*
 16 *the tune of "Jingle Bells")* **Easter eggs, Easter eggs ...**
 17 *(GRANDMA stands and clears her throat.)*

18 **GLENDA MAE:** *(She becomes serious and plays another note on her*
 19 *harmonica or kazoo and sings.)* **Were you there when they**
 20 **crucified my Lord?**

21 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Singing)* **Were you there when they crucified**
 22 **my Lord?**

23 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Singing)* **Oh, sometimes it causes me to**
 24 **tremble, tremble, tremble.**

25 **BRENDA MAE:** *(Singing)* **Were you there ...**

26 **BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE:** *(Singing together)* **When**
 27 **they crucified my Lord?** *(At the end of the song, OSWALD*
 28 *sneaks back on with a Macy's bag.)*

29 **PREACHER HOBBS:** **Thank you, girls. What a nice way to**
 30 **start the service. Is there anyone who would like to take**
 31 **this opportunity to share what Easter means to them?**

32 **GRANDMA:** *(Stands with her pail.)* **I'll start, Preacher. I**
 33 **brought this here bucket of fresh rain water. It reminds**
 34 **me how Jesus washed my sins away when he died on the**
 35 **cross and rose from the grave three days later.** *(She sits.)*

- 1 **PREACHER HOBBS:** Thank you, Grandma Taylor. Anyone
 2 else?
- 3 **BRENDA MAE:** I'll go next. We only had one more egg to find
 4 that we hid yesterday. And I looked and looked all over
 5 until I found it, 'cause this little egg is just as important
 6 as all the others — just like Jesus searches out each one
 7 of us because of his yearning love for the lost. *(She sits.)*
- 8 **PREACHER HOBBS:** Reminds me of the Parable of the Lost
 9 Coin. Thank you, Brenda Mae. Next?
- 10 **ELKIN:** I brought these here sunglasses. They represent how
 11 I used to be spiritually blind, but because of what Jesus
 12 did for me on the cross, I can see ever'thing clearly now.
- 13 **PREACHER HOBBS:** That's good, Elkin. Anybody else?
 14 *(Everyone turns to FESTER.)*
- 15 **GRANDMA:** Go ahead, Fester, it's your turn.
- 16 **FESTER:** *(Stands slowly.)* Well ... I did bring something,' but I
 17 guess I can't use it ...
- 18 **PREACHER HOBBS:** Can't use it? Why ever not?
- 19 **FESTER:** Grandma said it wasn't appropriate for a Easter
 20 service, but I didn't have time to find somethin' else to
 21 share. I'm real sorry.
- 22 **ELKIN:** Grandma, could I have your permission to let Fester
 23 share his object with ever'body?
- 24 **GRANDMA:** That ugly old thing?
- 25 **ELKIN:** Please? He don't have nothin' else to show. *(ELKIN*
 26 *presents the shoe box.)*
- 27 **GRANDMA:** Well, since he ain't got nothin' else ... go ahead.
 28 But I ain't responsible for what he says.
- 29 **FESTER:** Much obliged, Grandma. *(Takes the box from ELKIN.)*
 30 Well, you see, I spend a great deal of time with my
 31 critters. I'm fond of them a heap. There's somethin' I
 32 know about this bullfrog critter. It goes through a real
 33 important change in its life. You see, before a frog's a
 34 frog, it's a little critter called a tadpole. He just swims
 35 and swims around in the creek until one day he starts to

1 sprout little legs and its tail disappears just like that, and
 2 all of a sudden it's a full-grown bullfrog hoppin' around
 3 ever'where. I think that's what Easter's all about. Jesus
 4 did what he did on the cross and rose from the dead
 5 because he loved us enough to want to cause a change
 6 in us. I'm glad he changed me from a clumsy, helpless
 7 tadpole to a strong bullfrog. That's all I got to say. *(He*
 8 *sits quickly.)*

9 PREACHER HOBBS: That was very good, Fester.

10 GRANDMA: Fester, I do declare I owe you an apology. That
 11 was beautiful, baby.

12 FESTER: Much obliged, Grandma.

13 PREACHER HOBBS: Who else would like to share?

14 GLENDA MAE: I brung this here palm branch to remind us
 15 that when Jesus rode in to Jerusalem on a donkey,
 16 people waved palm branches at him. Matthew twenty-
 17 one, verse eight: "Most of the crowd spread their cloaks
 18 on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and
 19 spread them on the road."

20 PREACHER HOBBS: Very nice, Glenda Mae. Anyone else
 21 before we sing another song? *(All heads turn to the CITY*
 22 *BUNCH.)*

23 PETUNIA: *(Smiling and speaking through her teeth)* Everyone is
 24 looking at us, Oswald.

25 PETE: *(Also fake smile)* Did you bring back anything for us to
 26 share, Oswald?

27 OSWALD: Yes, I did. *(Shoving the bag PETE'S way)* Here, Pete.
 28 You do the honors.

29 PETUNIA: *(Covering her face)* This is it. This is surely the end
 30 of any relationship with our country cousins.

31 OSWALD: *(Tries handing the bag off to PETE.)* This was all I
 32 could find on such short notice.

33 PETE: *(Pushing the bag back to OSWALD)* You collected, you
 34 share.

35 MIMI: Good gracious, I'll do it. The sooner we do this, the

- 1 quicker we get to the treasure. (*MIMI stands before the*
2 *group with the bag.*)
- 3 **MIMI:** It seems my family is a bit shy when it comes to
4 standing before a group of their peers.
- 5 **COUNTRY BUNCH:** (*Together*) Bless their hearts.
- 6 **MIMI:** So I will begin. First we have this (*Pulls out a small*
7 *bottle*) bottle of ... perfume? (*Turns to OSWALD.*) Wait a
8 minute, this is *my* perfume! (*Turns back to the crowd as she*
9 *reaches inside the bag again.*) Anyway, the next object we
10 have is a ...
- 11 **GRANDMA:** Hold on a cotton-pickin' minute, Moo Moo — you
12 didn't tell us how the perfume reminds you of Easter.
- 13 **MIMI:** Oh. Reminds me of Easter?
- 14 **GRANDMA:** (*Pointing at the bottle*) The perfume.
- 15 **MIMI:** Well ... um ... it's ... um ... it's a —
- 16 **BRENDMA MAE:** (*Raising her hand*) Bless her heart, she's all
17 tongue-tied. I know what it means. Can I say it, Cousin
18 Mimi? You see, ever'body, this little sweet-smellin' bottle
19 reminds us of the time when Mary poured expensive
20 perfume on Jesus' feet. Am I right, Cousin Mimi?
- 21 **MIMI:** (*Taken aback*) Um, yes, you are absolutely right. Very
22 good, Brenda Mae.
- 23 **BRENDA MAE:** I knew it! It's all right there in the Good
24 Book: John chapter twelve, verses two through eight.
25 “Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment
26 made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and
27 wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with
28 the fragrance of the perfume.”
- 29 **GLENDA MAE:** That was a real good one, Cousin Mimi.
30 (*Everyone claps.*)
- 31 **MIMI:** (*Smiling*) Why, thank you soooo much. Well, Petunia,
32 it's your turn. (*She hands PETUNIA the bag, then has a seat.*
33 *PETUNIA stands nervously, reaches in, and pulls out a piece*
34 *of a briar bush.*)
- 35 **PETUNIA:** Ouch! (*She throws the bag down and sucks her finger.*)

- 1 **FESTER:** Are you OK, Cousin Petunia?
- 2 **ELKIN:** Look, it's a branch full of briars.
- 3 **GLEND A MAE:** I bet this will be a good one. (*PETUNIA looks*
4 *nervously at OSWALD, hoping she might receive some help.*
5 *OSWALD just shrugs, leaving her to fend for herself.*)
- 6 **PETUNIA:** Well ... um ... I think that ... well ... this is a ...
- 7 **GRANDMA:** (*Impressed*) A branch of briars. I can't believe
8 they come up with a branch of briars. Tell 'em what it
9 means, child.
- 10 **PETUNIA:** Well, it represents ... um ... it symbolizes ... you
11 see ...
- 12 **GRANDMA:** Bless her heart, she's so nervous. Matthew
13 twenty-seven, verse twenty-nine: " ... And twisting
14 together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and
15 put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him,
16 they mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'"
- 17 **FESTER:** Gol-lee, that *was* a good one, Cousin Petunia.
- 18 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Pondering*) The crown of thorns. You really
19 put some thought into that one.
- 20 **PETUNIA:** (*Surprised and can hardly believe it*) I did? (*Everyone*
21 *claps.*) Your turn, Pete. (*She throws the bag PETE's way.*
22 *PETE stands nervously.*)
- 23 **PETE:** Let's see what we have here. (*He reaches in and pulls out*
24 *a railroad spike or large nail.*) A spike? Oswald, a rusty
25 spike? (*OSWALD throws up his hands and shrugs bigger than*
26 *ever.*) You see, this spike ... well, this spike is ... uh ... is
27 symbolic of ... symbolic of ...
- 28 **ELKIN:** (*Helping PETE out*) Jesus was nailed to a cross.
- 29 **PETE:** I beg your pardon?
- 30 **ELKIN:** Jesus was nailed to a cross. Ain't that what you was
31 tryin' to say?
- 32 **PETE:** (*After a beat*) Uh ... well ... yes.
- 33 **ELKIN:** John twenty, verses twenty-five and twenty-nine:
34 "Thomas said to them, 'Unless I see in his hands the
35 mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of



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