

CHRISTMAS LEAVES CRICKET COUNTY

by Eddie McPherson



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Christmas Leaves Cricket County

A Christmas comedy

by Eddie McPherson

CAST OF CHARACTERS

NARRATOR
SANTA CLAUS
MRS. SMITH

Country Bunch:

ELKIN
FESTER
DONNA JO
GLENDA MAE
BRENDA MAE

City Bunch:

OSWALD
PETE
PETUNIA
MIMI

PRODUCTION NOTES

Summary: Years after becoming rich from an inheritance left by their late Uncle Zeke, the country family from Cricket County has finally decided to move from their humble log cabin to the bright lights of the city. Each family member is excited, each family member is eager, each family member is ready; each family member, that is, except Fester. He has decided he's happy in Cricket County and doesn't want to move away from the only home he has ever known.

But the deal has already been made with Mrs. Smith, the real estate agent, and the plan is to be in the new city home by Christmas Eve. But will the family move to the city without their beloved Fester? Will they get him to change his mind and celebrate the first Christmas in their new surroundings? It's a touching story with lots of comic moments that reminds us to rethink our priorities at this special time of year.

Setting and Staging: The stage may be set up a couple of different ways. You may choose to split the stage down the middle, having an equal amount of stage area on each side. If you have ample stage space, this would probably work best. If your stage area is smaller, you could have the main acting space decorated as the cabin with a smaller space extreme Stage Left or extreme Stage Right to represent the city house. Work it out according to your needs.

If possible, leave the city house in darkness while action takes place inside the cabin and vice versa. When the action takes place on both sides at the same time, the lights come up on both areas.

It is very important when you have actors in the city house and the country cabin at the same time that they never look at one another. This will be tempting for the actors, but it ruins the illusion of being in two different places. Toward the end, when the Santa scene and the Nativity scene are being acted out simultaneously, the city scene should come across as very festive so it will contrast with the reflective slowness of the Nativity Fester is acting out. The gift-giving from Santa shouldn't finish before Fester bows to the baby Jesus, however. The scenes should be rehearsed so the timing is right.

The Narrator may stand off to one side with a microphone. The cabin is simply decorated in earth tones (browns and grays). There is a small wooden table at the center of the cabin and wooden chairs are set about. The city house is painted in white (or off-white) with nice furniture such as a sofa and/or recliner, depending on space. Nice pictures hang on the walls.

The small Christmas tree in the cabin is decorated with homemade paper decorations. The star is cut out of cardboard and wrapped in aluminum foil. The tree in the city should be decorated with bright, colorful glass ornaments.

The three scarecrows representing Mimi, Pete, and Petunia are a nice comic visual and should look clumsy and be dressed like the person they are portraying; if possible they should even wear the very same costume. An easy way to make a scarecrow is to sew a shirt and a pair of pants together and stuff them with newspapers. The head can be a brown paper bag stuffed with newspaper and a face drawn onto it, then topped off with a straw hat or yarn hair. Stuffing the scarecrows with newspaper makes them very light. These are only suggestions, however. Have fun making your own scarecrows.

The money song that is played at the beginning can be any song about money or living the good life. Suggested ideas:

Madonna — “Material Girl”

Various — “Diamonds Are a Girl’s Best Friend”

The Beatles — “Money”

Pink Floyd — “Money” (verse 1 only; second verse contains objectionable language)

Cabaret soundtrack — “Money”

Abba — “Money Money Money”

Monty Python’s Flying Circus — “Money Song”

Dorothy Fields — “Hey Big Spender”

The traditional carol sung while the Santa and the Nativity scenes are performed may be recorded or performed live. Make sure the music is loud enough for effect and that no sound can be heard coming from the stage during this time. “Away in a Manger,” “Silent Night,” or “What Child Is This?” would work well for this selection.

If theatrical lights are unavailable, simply turn off the house lights during the scene transitions.

Props

Fake jewelry (large and flashy)	Bandana
Pipe	Small sticks of firewood
Play money	Glasses for “punch”
Writing table and pen	Paper plate with sandwich
Ax	Bathrobes, towels, and angel outfit (white sheet and halo)
Suitcases	Bag or small but expensive gifts, such as jewelry, watches, wallets,
Paper and pen	fancy hats, small electronic games, etc.
Three scarecrows	Star wrapped in foil attached to a stick
Fashion magazine	
Two small Christmas trees	
Christmas tree ornaments (homemade and store-bought)	
Clipboard	
Cell phone	
Doll wrapped in blanket	

Costumes

The City Cousins should dress to impress — their clothing should be dressy and fashionable. Mrs. Smith should dress like this also. The guys should wear ties, and Oswald will need a watch. The City Cousins should wear nice coats when needed.

The Country Cousins’ clothing is a mixture of *nouveau riche* and down home. You will need pieces that say “rich” for the Country Cousins’ entrance: fur coats, boas, large pieces of flashy costume jewelry, etc.; but they should wear these things over their homespun country clothes. It should look somewhat over the top, like they are trying too hard. The Country Cousins should go barefoot when they can. Elkin and Fester wear overalls with T-shirts or flannel shirts. You will also need a navy blazer for Fester and Elkin to wear at different times and a fedora for Fester. Brenda Mae and Glenda Mae — the identical twins that look nothing alike — should be dressed the same, perhaps in simple brown dresses. They should wear their hair in pigtails. Donna Jo may wear jeans or a dress in gingham or denim. Elkin, Brenda Mae, and Glenda Mae will need fancy coats. You will also need a Santa costume.

1 **NARRATOR:** A few years back one cold Christmas Eve, a
 2 simple family who lived in the backwoods of Cricket
 3 County read a will that informed them that they had
 4 come into a large sum of money after their Uncle Zeke
 5 passed away. Unbeknownst to everyone in Cricket
 6 County, Zeke Crabgrass had been an old miser who
 7 owned oil fields, coal mines, and diamond mines. So
 8 this small country family became millionaires
 9 overnight. They didn't think much about their newly
 10 inherited riches until their wealthy cousins from the
 11 city helped them see the light.

12 These city cousins assisted their backward family
 13 members by investing their inheritance and even tried
 14 to sophisticate them a time or two, which, by the way,
 15 wasn't the easiest thing to do. Eventually, though, the
 16 fact that they were filthy rich became an attractive idea
 17 to the Cricket County family.

18 They began to realize what money could do for them,
 19 and they liked it very much. As time passed in this
 20 small rural county, the country clan began to
 21 appreciate that they had the resources to make their
 22 lives a lot more comfortable. They decided they were
 23 going to start using that resource. And that was exactly
 24 what they did.

25 *(NARRATOR exits. A song about money plays. Suggested*
 26 *songs are listed in the Production Notes. As the song plays,*
 27 *the COUNTRY BUNCH enters one at a time as though they*
 28 *are in a beauty pageant, sporting fur coats, jewelry, boas, etc.*
 29 *One of the TWINS drags FESTER On-stage and puts a nice*
 30 *sports jacket on over his overalls. They then place a nice*
 31 *fedora on his head. They turn him around for the audience.*
 32 *He quickly takes both the hat and jacket off and exits.*
 33 *ELKIN enters with an unlit pipe clenched in his teeth. He*
 34 *throws wads of play money out to the audience. After a*
 35 *moment, the song fades out and the family exits.)*

- 1 with all the exciting work we've got to do.
- 2 **FESTER:** Howdy, Cousin Oswald.
- 3 **ELKIN:** *(To OSWALD)* OK. Then go ahead and take a load
- 4 off.
- 5 **FESTER:** How do, Cousin Pete. Look, I got me a new ax.
- 6 **PETE:** *(To OSWALD, as they set their suitcases down and take a*
- 7 *seat at the table)* Look, Oswald. Looks like Elkin has
- 8 already been hard at work on our plans.
- 9 **ELKIN:** Sure have. I'm still not understandin' ever'thing, but
- 10 I done learned me a little since your last visit.
- 11 **FESTER:** I can cut firewood twice as fast as I could before.
- 12 *(Pretends to cut down a tree.)* Tim-berrrr! Want to come
- 13 out and let me show you?
- 14 **ELKIN:** Fester, you still here? I told you to go on now; we're
- 15 busy with important stuff.
- 16 **FESTER:** What are y'all doin'?
- 17 **ELKIN:** We're just talkin' about the big move. *(FESTER drops*
- 18 *his head and exits. To OSWALD and PETE)* Where's
- 19 Cousins Mimi and Petunia? Didn't they come with you?
- 20 **OSWALD:** They're outside talking to the twins. Now, are you
- 21 sure you're ready to do this, Elkin?
- 22 **ELKIN:** Heck, yeah! Just like you told me before — it's way
- 23 overdone.
- 24 **PETE:** Overdue.
- 25 **OSWALD:** *(Spreading papers out on the table)* Mr. Touchstone
- 26 at the bank has drawn up all the papers. All you have
- 27 to do is sign on the dotted line.
- 28 **ELKIN:** Right here?
- 29 **OSWALD:** Right there. Just sign your John Hancock.
- 30 **ELKIN:** OK. *(Writing)* Jooooohn Haaaancock.
- 31 **PETE:** No, Elkin. Write your name.
- 32 **ELKIN:** Sorry. *(Marks through what he has written and writes*
- 33 *again.)* Yooooour naaaame ...
- 34 **OSWALD:** Elkin Jennings! Write Elkin Jennings right there.
- 35 **ELKIN:** OK. *(Marking through and writing again)* Elkin

- 1 Jennings right there ...
- 2 **PETE:** Oswald, he's messing up the contract.
- 3 **OSWALD:** We can white it out later. (*Folding the paper and*
- 4 *standing*) Well, Cousin Elkin Jennings, congratulations.
- 5 You are now the proud owner of one of the most
- 6 beautiful mansions in Huntington Hills. (*Shakes ELKIN's*
- 7 *hand.*) How does it feel?
- 8 **ELKIN:** Well, it feels real soft, Cousin Oswald. Do you use
- 9 moisturizer?
- 10 **PETE:** Not his hand. How does it feel to be the owner of an
- 11 exquisite and luxurious palace?
- 12 **ELKIN:** I don't know; I bought a house. (*MIMI runs in and*
- 13 *hides behind OSWALD.*)
- 14 **MIMI:** Oswald! Those twins are scaring me to death! Protect
- 15 me!
- 16 **OSWALD:** Protect you from what?
- 17 **MIMI:** I think they've cast some kind of evil voodoo spell on
- 18 me.
- 19 **PETE:** Voodoo spell?
- 20 **MIMI:** They have constructed a giant voodoo doll in my
- 21 likeness. Those hillbilly girls are out to hex me.
- 22 **OSWALD:** That's the silliest thing I've ever heard.
- 23 **MIMI:** Just wait until you've seen it. It's the scariest thing I
- 24 have ever seen.
- 25 **ELKIN:** Them ain't voodoo dolls, Cousin Mimi. Them are
- 26 scarecrows the twins made for next year's garden.
- 27 **OSWALD:** There now, Mimi, I knew they weren't making
- 28 voodoo dolls.
- 29 **MIMI:** It looked like it to me. Can we go home now?
- 30 **PETE:** Not yet. We still have some business to take care of.
- 31 It might be awhile yet.
- 32 **MIMI:** But I'm so bored out here in the middle of nowhere.
- 33 No TV, no e-mail. Elkin, what do you guys do to stay
- 34 busy all day?
- 35 **ELKIN:** Shoot, we're busy with chores all day, and then at

1 night, after a good meal, we sit around the fire and tell
2 stories.

3 **MIMI:** And?

4 **ELKIN:** Then we go to bed and start all over the next day.

5 **OSWALD:** Just wait until you get into your new home,
6 Elkin. There'll be movies you can see in your own
7 private home theatre.

8 **PETE:** There will be tennis, golf, and fine restaurants.

9 **ELKIN:** Golly, sure sounds like a lot. You sure we can afford
10 all that?

11 **OSWALD:** My dear cousin, you can afford New York City.

12 **ELKIN:** OK, I'll take it.

13 **PETE:** (*Looking at the contract*) Oswald, I'm not sure they'll
14 accept this contract. You can hardly read the signature.

15 **MIMI:** (*Plopping down in a chair*) No telephone, no clothing
16 stores, no beauty salons ...

17 **OSWALD:** (*Looking over the contract*) You're right. We may
18 have to go back into town and have another written up.

19 **PETE:** But that would take a whole day.

20 **OSWALD:** (*Taking a piece of paper from his pad*) Here, Elkin.
21 Practice writing your name on here.

22 **MIMI:** No formals to attend, no yachts to take out ...

23 **ELKIN:** (*Writing*) Elkin Jennings. How's that?

24 **OSWALD:** Perfect. Now, if only we had that on this contract.

25 **MIMI:** I miss Robert.

26 **PETE:** Who's Robert?

27 **OSWALD:** Her new boyfriend.

28 **PETE:** Poor guy.

29 **MIMI:** We e-mail one another every day.

30 **OSWALD:** Why don't you just write him a letter?

31 **MIMI:** How? I don't have my laptop.

32 **OSWALD:** There's this really cool new invention called
33 paper and pen.

34 **MIMI:** Paper and pen? I'm not sure I remember how to use
35 those things.

- 1 **PETE:** It's like falling off a bicycle. Here's a brand-new
 2 ballpoint pen. Elkin, give her a piece of paper.
- 3 **ELKIN:** Here, she can have this one. (*Gives her the one on*
 4 *which he was practicing writing his name.*)
- 5 **MIMI:** This might be fun after all — like going to the opera
 6 in an ordinary car instead of the limo. You know —
 7 roughing it. (*BRENDA MAE enters with her scarecrow.*)
- 8 **BRENDA MAE:** Come on, Mimi Two. Let's get you in here
 9 out of that cold weather.
- 10 **MIMI:** (*Standing and hiding behind OSWALD*) See, Oswald? I
 11 told you — she's bringing that voodoo doll in here so
 12 she can hex me.
- 13 **BRENDA MAE:** Voodoo doll?
- 14 **ELKIN:** Cousin Mimi, I told you this here is a scarecrow.
 15 Brenda Mae, what you doin' bringin' that thing in here?
 16 You're supposed to keep it in the barn 'til next summer.
- 17 **BRENDA MAE:** I know, but I wanted to get some more
 18 stuffin' in it before we put it back in the garden next
 19 year. I modeled it after Cousin Mimi.
- 20 **PETE:** You're right, Brenda Mae. If you want it to look like
 21 Mimi, you need a lot more stuffing.
- 22 **MIMI:** It scares me. Tell her to leave it outside. (*Turns sharply*
 23 *to PETE.*) And what do you mean, "It needs more
 24 stuffing"?
- 25 **OSWALD:** (*Looking over the scarecrow*) Now that I get a closer
 26 look, it does bear a striking resemblance to you, Mimi.
 27 Especially around the hips.
- 28 **BRENDA MAE:** Can't I keep it in here, Cousin Elkin? Just
 29 for a few days.
- 30 **ELKIN:** Well, OK, I guess this one time won't hurt.
- 31 **BRENDA MAE:** I'll set it right back here in this chair, and
 32 you'll never know it's here. Come on, Mimi Two — sit
 33 right back here.
- 34 **OSWALD:** Mimi Two? (*He and PETE begin snickering.*) Yes, go
 35 on over and have a seat, Mimi Two. (*They laugh.*)

- 1 **MIMI:** *(With hands on hips)* I don't see a thing funny. If you'll
 2 excuse me, I'm going to try and forget all of you and
 3 write my sweetheart a letter. *(She sits and begins writing.)*
- 4 **OSWALD:** Maybe we could take the dummy back to the city
 5 and leave Mimi here.
- 6 **PETE:** Ride home sure would be quieter.
- 7 **MIMI:** *(Writing her letter)* I'm ignoring both of you.
- 8 **OSWALD:** Brenda Mae, it sure is great how you caught
 9 Mimi's personality in your scarecrow. Is it effective
 10 keeping predators out of the garden?
- 11 **BRENDA MAE:** I don't know about predators, but it sure
 12 keeps the critters away. Them crows won't come
 13 nowhere near Mimi Two. *(The BOYS laugh.)* But no
 14 matter how good Mimi Two works, nothin' scares them
 15 crows away like Cousin Pete Junior.
- 16 **PETE:** *(Laughing louder)* Cousin Pete Junior. That's a good
 17 one.
- 18 **MIMI:** Pete Junior?
- 19 **OSWALD:** Pete Junior?
- 20 **PETE:** *(Still laughing)* That's what she said, Pete Junior. *(All*
 21 *stare at PETE.)* Now I've heard it all. A scarecrow
 22 named Pete ... *(Starts to sink in)* Junior? *(GLENDA MAE*
 23 *enters holding another scarecrow dressed like PETE.)*
- 24 **GLENDA MAE:** *(Singing)* Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all
 25 the way ... Oh, hi, ever'body. Elkin, is it OK if I leave
 26 Cousin Pete Junior in here 'til I get some mendin' done
 27 on his shirt?
- 28 **BRENDA MAE:** You can put him right over here by Mimi
 29 Two, Glenda Mae.
- 30 **PETE:** *(Crossing to the scarecrow)* Look, Oswald, it's me.
 31 *(Flattered, he places his arm around the scarecrow.)* It's
 32 Cousin Pete Junior.
- 33 **MIMI:** *(Sarcastically)* Oh, and he looks just like you.
 34 Especially the bulging belly. *(Goes back to her letter.)*
- 35 **PETE:** Brenda Mae, I think you need a little more padding

1 in the bicep area, see? (*Flexes his bicep.*)

2 OSWALD: Brenda Mae, I think Pete Junior needs a little

3 more stuffing in the head. It's not quite fat enough.

4 BRENDA MAE: It took forever to find the right color of

5 buttons for the eyes. You don't come across that color

6 of blue ever' day. (*FESTER and DONNA JO enter.*)

7 FESTER: Anybody want to go with me and Donna Jo to cut

8 a Christmas tree?

9 MIMI: Would everyone please be quiet? I'm trying to write

10 a romantic letter here.

11 OSWALD: Back to business. Elkin, when do you think you

12 and your family can be ready to move out of here?

13 FESTER: (*Ignoring OSWALD*) After we cut it, we can bring it

14 back and decorate it and sing Christmas carols.

15 ELKIN: Well, just as soon as you say the word, Cousin

16 Oswald.

17 OSWALD: I say the sooner the better.

18 FESTER: (*Still fixated on their Christmas tree*) We won't be

19 gone long if anybody wants to go.

20 PETE: (*Moving to center of the cabin*) Could I have everyone's

21 attention, please? Where's Petunia?

22 BRENDA MAE: She's on her way in.

23 MIMI: (*Still writing*) She's jealous because they made a Mimi

24 voodoo doll and not a Petunia voodoo doll.

25 FESTER: Come on, Donna Jo. I guess you and me can go

26 get a Christmas tree by ourselves. 'Bye, ever'body.

27 (*FESTER and DONNA JO exit.*)

28 PETE: Country Cousins, do you all realize just how

29 important the signing of these papers is?

30 OSWALD: It means freedom from running to the outhouse

31 in zero-degree weather.

32 ELKIN: Yea!

33 PETE: It means never having to cut your own firewood or

34 kill your own dinner.

35 BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE: (*Together*) Yea!

- 1 **BRENDA MAE:** I won't have to worry about makin'
 2 scarecrows to put in my garden!
- 3 **MIMI:** *(Still writing her letter)* Right. They have grocery
 4 stores for all your food shopping needs.
- 5 **GLENDA MAE:** I can't believe it. No more plantin' my own
 6 seeds and watchin' them grow tall and healthy!
- 7 **OSWALD:** And getting your hands dirty. Those days are
 8 over. You're going to be living in the lap of luxury.
- 9 **BRENDA MAE:** I sure hope she's friendly.
- 10 **PETE:** Who?
- 11 **BRENDA MAE:** Luxury. I don't want to make her mad if I
 12 sit in her lap. *(PETUNIA enters holding a fashion*
 13 *magazine. It's clear that she's upset.)*
- 14 **OSWALD:** Good, Petunia. We were just going over the plans.
- 15 **PETUNIA:** *(Snappish)* That's nice. *(She sits and turns away*
 16 *from the group, opening up her magazine and reading it*
 17 *upside-down.)*
- 18 **PETE:** Come on, Petunia; this is no time to be cross.
- 19 **PETUNIA:** I'm perfectly fine. I'm just going to sit here and
 20 read my magazine. Pretend I'm not even here.
- 21 **MIMI:** Petunia, everyone knows you're mad because they
 22 didn't make a voodoo doll in your likeness.
- 23 **PETUNIA:** Don't be ridiculous; I couldn't care less about
 24 some silly scarecrow.
- 25 **BRENDA MAE:** Petunia, did you hear the news? We're
 26 finally movin' to the city and leavin' this dump behind.
- 27 **GLENDA MAE:** And we're gonna cook on somethin' called a
 28 mink stove.
- 29 **OSWALD:** Mink stole. And you don't cook on it, you wear it.
- 30 **BRENDA MAE:** Yeah, and we're gonna be wearing diamond
 31 rugs.
- 32 **PETE:** Diamond rings! *(BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE*
 33 *begin to arrange the clothes on their respective scarecrows.)*
- 34 **PETUNIA:** Excuse me, but can't you all see I'm busy?
- 35 **ELKIN:** *(Walks over to PETUNIA.)* Cousin Petunia wants to be

- 1 left alone so she can read her fancy city magazine.
- 2 PETUNIA: Thank you very much.
- 3 ELKIN: (*Looking at the magazine*) Gol-ly! Look at that fancy
4 car right there. It sure does sparkle. I wish I could have
5 one of them.
- 6 OSWALD: That's just it, Elkin. You *can* have it.
- 7 PETE: You can have one hundred cars like that if you want.
- 8 ELKIN: I can?
- 9 OSWALD: It's time you country cousins realize your ship
10 has come in.
- 11 ELKIN: Then I'll buy it and we'll go fishin' next spring.
- 12 BRENDA MAE: (*Straightening the shirt on the scarecrow*) Are
13 you nice and warm now, Cousin Pete?
- 14 PETE: I'm fine, thanks.
- 15 BRENDA MAE: I was talkin' to Cousin Pete Junior, silly
16 boy. (*To the scarecrow*) The prettiest scarecrow in the
17 whole wide world.
- 18 GLENDA MAE: And Mimi is the best-dressed scarecrow in
19 all of Cricket County.
- 20 ELKIN: Now, girls, you don't need to be gettin' too attached
21 to them scarecrows. Once we move to the city, we won't
22 be needin' 'em anymore.
- 23 GLENDA MAE: Think of that, Brenda Mae. No more hoein'.
- 24 BRENDA MAE: No more pullin' weeds.
- 25 GLENDA MAE: Yep, 'cause we're goin' to be livin' in the lap
26 of lunacy.
- 27 ELKIN: This calls for a celebration. Let's walk down to
28 Jerry's Bait Shop and buy us a Moon Pie and bottle of
29 soda pop. And since we're so rich, I'm buyin'.
- 30 OSWALD: (*Putting on his coat*) Sounds good; we haven't
31 eaten.
- 32 PETE: Tomorrow we'll drive to the city and show you your
33 new home. (*To MIMI and PETUNIA*) You comin', girls?
- 34 MIMI: In a minute. I'm almost finished.
- 35 GLENDA MAE: (*As the BOYS and TWINS exit*) Pete, would

- 1 you hold my hand so I won't slip and fall on the ice?
 2 **BRENDA MAE:** Hold my hand too, Cousin Pete, so I won't
 3 fall and break my neck.
 4 **GLEND A MAE:** You hold his hand and *I'll* break your neck.
 5 *(They exit.)*
 6 **PETUNIA:** *(Still flipping through her magazine)* I think
 7 Petunia would be a lovely name for a scarecrow.
 8 **MIMI:** *(Writing)* Your dearest love forever, Mimi. There.
 9 **PETUNIA:** What are you doing?
 10 **MIMI:** I just wrote Robert a letter.
 11 **PETUNIA:** Without a computer?
 12 **MIMI:** Sure, see? Read it so I can hear how it sounds.
 13 **PETUNIA:** *(Taking the letter)* Elkin Jennings, I love you with
 14 all my heart and miss you more than words can say ...
 15 **MIMI:** That's not funny.
 16 **PETUNIA:** That's what it says.
 17 **MIMI:** *(Looking at the letter)* Elkin's name was already on
 18 there.
 19 **PETUNIA:** *(Giggling)* I never knew you had eyes for Elkin.
 20 **MIMI:** Don't say that even in jest. The letter starts there.
 21 *(Points at the letter.)*
 22 **PETUNIA:** OK, but you'd better get Elkin's name off there
 23 or you'll be walking down the aisle with the wrong man
 24 on your arm. I don't want to read your boring love
 25 letter. Let's catch up with the rest of them and *(With a*
 26 *hillbilly drawl)* get us a Moon Pie and soder pop. *(In her*
 27 *normal voice)* Making fun of you has made me feel
 28 better.
 29 **MIMI:** *(Setting the letter on the table)* OK, let's go. *(To the*
 30 *scarecrow)* 'Bye, Mimi Two — you beautiful scarecrow,
 31 you.
 32 **PETUNIA:** I still don't know why they can't make a Petunia
 33 dummy.
 34 **MIMI:** *(Looking PETUNIA up and down)* Let's face it, honey,
 35 one Petunia dummy is enough. *(They exit.)*

1 **NARRATOR:** (*Entering*) Well, the deal was done. In the next
2 few days before Christmas, the country cousins will be
3 packing up and moving to the city for good. (*Looking*
4 *around*) Good-bye to their old home place. Good-bye to
5 blue skies and fresh air. Good-bye to the way things
6 have always been. (*Back to the audience*) About an hour
7 after the cousins walked to Jerry's Bait Shop, Fester
8 and Donna Jo returned with the Christmas tree. (*Exits.*)

9 **FESTER:** (*Enters speaking to DONNA JO and carrying the tree.*)
10 I think this is one of the prettiest trees we've had in a
11 long time. Did you see how my new ax cut it down with
12 one clean sweep?

13 **DONNA JO:** Yeah, that was real good. (*Looks around.*) I
14 wonder where ever'body is.

15 **FESTER:** I don't know; let's ask. (*To the scarecrow*) Cousin
16 Mimi, do you know where ever'body went off to?

17 **DONNA JO:** Fester, I think you need glasses; that's a
18 scarecrow.

19 **FESTER:** (*Taking a closer look*) I knew that all the time.
20 (*Turns to the other scarecrow.*) Didn't I, Cousin Pete?

21 **DONNA JO:** That's a scarecrow too.

22 **FESTER:** Well, if that's a scarecrow, and *that's* a scarecrow,
23 then ... (*Looks and points at DONNA JO.*)

24 **DONNA JO:** Don't worry, Fester, I'm real.

25 **FESTER:** Thank goodness. I thought they was ignoring me
26 like they always do. I wish they *was* real so I could tell
27 them a thing or two.

28 **DONNA JO:** You do?

29 **FESTER:** Yep. I'd say, (*Talking to the scarecrow*) Cousin Pete,
30 what's so important about havin' so much money? And
31 Cousin Mimi, why do we have to move to a big fancy
32 house? Why can't we just live like we always have right
33 here in Cricket county?

34 **DONNA JO:** That's how I feel, too. I don't want to leave.

35 **FESTER:** Leavin' is all they've been talkin' about lately.

1 New houses and fancy cars and how much money we
2 got. They ain't even actin' like it's Christmas at all.

3 **DONNA JO:** Right. Nobody *asked* us if we wanted to move.
4 They *told* us.

5 **FESTER:** We're supposed to get the Christmas tree as a
6 family. Maybe if we get it decorated before ever'body
7 gets back, they'll change their minds and want to stay
8 here for Christmas.

9 **DONNA JO:** You think so?

10 **FESTER:** It's worth a try. Fetch the decorations right over
11 there and we'll get started. (*As they decorate the tree, the*
12 **NARRATOR** *enters the city house.*)

13 **NARRATOR:** Fester and Donna Jo were determined to try
14 their best to keep the family traditions intact. (*Looking*
15 *around*) This is the new house that the country family
16 will be moving into — a very beautiful place in a very
17 nice part of town. A far cry from the humble rural
18 world of Cricket County. (*MRS. SMITH* *enters holding a*
19 *clipboard.*) That's Mrs. Smith, the real estate agent who
20 sold them the house. (*MRS. SMITH* *looks at the*
21 **NARRATOR**. *NARRATOR* *waves.*) Don't mind me, I'm
22 just the narrator. (*MRS. SMITH* *stares at the NARRATOR*
23 *until he or she becomes embarrassed.*) I'll just leave now.
24 (*NARRATOR* *exits. MRS. SMITH* *pulls out her cell phone*
25 *and dials a number.*)

26 **MRS. SMITH:** Paul? Jacy. Were you able to get a Santa?
27 Fabulous! That will give this whole house closing a nice
28 little Christmas touch. They just called and said that
29 they wanted to be in the house by Christmas, so we're
30 having to rush everything up a bit. Right. Oh, it will be
31 ready. They're helping their cousins from Cricket
32 County — wherever that is. OK, I'll talk to you later.
33 (*Hangs up and looks around the room.*) This commission
34 check will be a nice little Christmas present for me. (*She*
35 *crosses to the Upstage wall and exits. FESTER and DONNA*

- 1 *JO have finished decorating the tree with old-fashioned*
2 *handmade decorations.)*
- 3 **FESTER:** Here's the star, Donna Jo. Be careful with it; we
4 made it way back before you was born. (*DONNA JO*
5 *takes the homemade star and places it on top of the tiny tree.)*
6 **There. That's the prettiest tree we've ever had.**
- 7 **DONNA JO:** Can I get the Nativity costumes?
- 8 **FESTER:** Sure. They're right there in that box.
- 9 **DONNA JO:** Dressing up and acting out the birth of Jesus
10 is my favorite part of Christmas.
- 11 **FESTER:** Mine too. Just spread 'em out a little to get rid of
12 the musty smell. (*ELKIN, BRENDA MAE, and GLENDA*
13 *MAE enter wearing fancy coats.)*
- 14 **ELKIN:** (*Waving out the door as he enters*) OK, 'bye y'all! See
15 you soon!
- 16 **FESTER:** Are they leavin' already?
- 17 **ELKIN:** Yeah, they had to go back to the city and meet with
18 the woman who's sellin' us our new house.
- 19 **BRENDA MAE:** Did you see how Cousin Pete was lookin' at
20 me, Glenda Mae? I think he's gettin' ready to pop the
21 big question.
- 22 **GLENDA MAE:** The only question he's goin' to ask you is
23 how in the world did you come to be so simple-minded.
- 24 **BRENDA MAE:** Oh, yeah?
- 25 **GLENDA MAE:** Yeah!
- 26 **ELKIN:** I told you girls over and over again, Pete ain't
27 wantin' to marry either one of you.
- 28 **BRENDA MAE:** You don't know that.
- 29 **GLENDA MAE:** Yeah, you don't know that.
- 30 **ELKIN:** He comes from a different world than you do. Pete
31 is gonna end up with a city girl.
- 32 **FESTER:** Look, Elkin, we got the Christmas tree decorated.
- 33 **GLENDA MAE:** (*To ELKIN*) We're about to move to the city.
- 34 **BRENDA MAE:** So that will make us fancy city girls. I even
35 learned how to hold my pinky out when I drink sweet

- 1 muscadine juice.
- 2 GLENDA MAE: And you'll never catch me chasin' a bear
3 through the woods in a dress no more.
- 4 FESTER: We went ahead and started airin' out the Nativity
5 costumes for Christmas Eve.
- 6 GLENDA MAE: (*Ignoring FESTER*) And we're wearin' fancy
7 fur (*Or leather or suede*) coats, so that makes us city girls,
8 too.
- 9 DONNA JO: I put the star on all by myself, see?
- 10 ELKIN: Fester, Donna Jo, come here. We've got some
11 excitin' news to tell you. We got to talkin' over at the
12 store just now, and we have decided to go ahead and
13 move to our fancy city house this weekend instead of
14 waitin' 'til after Christmas.
- 15 BRENDA MAE: It will be our very first Christmas in our
16 new fancy city house.
- 17 FESTER: This weekend?
- 18 DONNA JO: I don't want to move away.
- 19 GLENDA MAE: Sure you do. We're gonna be movin' on up.
- 20 BRENDA MAE: And drivin' fancy cars.
- 21 ELKIN: (*Crosses to the tree.*) And we'll have big tall fake
22 Christmas trees that go all the way up to the ceiling
23 and look real.
- 24 FESTER: But ...
- 25 GLENDA MAE: And you know how Santa never found us
26 way out here? Well, he knows where ever'body is in the
27 city.
- 28 FESTER: But I like makin' scarecrows.
- 29 ELKIN: (*Crossing to FESTER*) And you won't have to carry
30 around this ax no more, 'cause there won't be any trees
31 to cut.
- 32 BRENDA MAE: (*Grabs the ax.*) That's right, so put that ax
33 down. We don't want you to embarrass us once we get
34 to the city. We gotta act rich and suffocated.
- 35 ELKIN: I think the word's so-phis-ti-cated. Fester, how come

- 1 you ain't put on your new clothes our city cousins
2 bought for us?
- 3 **FESTER:** 'Cause I like what I'm wearin'.
- 4 **BRENDA MAE:** Elkin, if he wears them rags to the city, he
5 will embarrass us to no end.
- 6 **GLENDA MAE:** Donna Jo, you like your new fancy clothes,
7 don't you?
- 8 **DONNA JO:** Not no more.
- 9 **ELKIN:** *(Standing between FESTER and DONNA JO, placing*
10 *his arms around their shoulders)* Now listen, you two. You
11 don't want to disappoint our city cousins, do you? They
12 went to a lot of trouble helping us get suffocated.
- 13 **GLENDA MAE:** So-phis-ti-cated.
- 14 **FESTER:** I can't help it, Cousin Elkin. I like scarecrows and
15 gardens and my old clothes. And most of all, I like my
16 ax, and anybody who tries to take it away from me
17 might just get theirself a conk on the head.
- 18 **ELKIN:** But Fester, the city has air conditioning.
- 19 **FESTER:** What's wrong with fresh air?
- 20 **BRENDA MAE:** And grocery stores.
- 21 **FESTER:** I like homegrown vegetables from the garden.
- 22 **GLENDA MAE:** Think about the bright lights of the city.
- 23 **FESTER:** Think about the fireflies that fly over Mr.
24 Hawkins' pond in the summertime.
- 25 **ELKIN:** Well, you'll change your mind once we get to our
26 new home.
- 27 **FESTER:** No, I won't, 'cause I ain't leavin'.
- 28 **GLENDA MAE:** Of course you are.
- 29 **FESTER:** No, I ain't. I'm stayin' right here in Cricket County
30 where I belong. *(He plops down in a nearby chair and*
31 *crosses his arms.)*
- 32 **DONNA JO:** Me, too. *(She sits and does the same as FESTER.)*
- 33 **ELKIN:** Fester, what are you sayin'?
- 34 **GLENDA MAE:** Donna Jo, you get in there right now and
35 put on them fancy city clothes and start acting

1 suffocated.

2 **BRENDA MAE:** You're gonna be a fancy city girl like me
3 whether you want to or not. (*DONNA JO tightens her*
4 *crossed arms and looks straight out.*)

5 **ELKIN:** Fester, you're bein' a bad influence on Donna Jo.

6 **FESTER:** Maybe I'm bein' a good influence.

7 **ELKIN:** You two are as stubborn as a couple of one-
8 hundred-year-old mules.

9 **GLENDAMAE:** Just leave 'em alone, Cousin Elkin. They'll
10 change their minds in the mornin'.

11 **ELKIN:** They'll have to, 'cause tomorrow we're headin' to
12 the city for good.

13 **BRENDA MAE:** Don't we have to pack?

14 **ELKIN:** Remember, Brenda Mae, we're rich now. We're
15 payin' somebody to do all the dirty work for us.

16 **GLENDAMAE:** In that case, (*Takes a bandana from her pocket*
17 *and drops it to the floor*) they can just get that, too.

18 **BRENDA MAE:** Ain't you goin' to bed, Fester?

19 **FESTER:** Nope.

20 **GLENDAMAE:** Donna Jo?

21 **DONNA JO:** Double nope.

22 **ELKIN:** Suit yourself. I'm tired of dealin' with you. 'Night,
23 y'all.

24 **BRENDA MAE:** Remember, Elkin. We got to start talkin'
25 fancy.

26 **ELKIN:** You're right. (*With his nose in the air*) I mean, mighty-
27 night. (*Exits.*)

28 **BRENDA MAE:** Mighty-night. (*Exits.*)

29 **GLENDAMAE:** Caviar. (*To the audience*) That's French for
30 mighty-night. (*She exits.*)

31 **FESTER:** Mighty-night, Donna Jo.

32 **DONNA JO:** Caviar, Fester. (*The lights fade to blackout.*)

33

34

Scene 2

35 (*DONNA JO is still asleep in her chair. FESTER is sleeping*)

1 *sitting up between the two scarecrows. ELKIN enters still*
2 *wearing his overalls, but he has put on a nice navy blazer*
3 *over them. He has his unlit pipe clenched between his teeth.*
4 *He yawns and crosses to DONNA JO.)*

5 **ELKIN: Donna Jo?** *(Shakes her gently.)* **Donna Jo? Wake up.**
6 **Where's Fester?**

7 **DONNA JO:** *(Rubbing her eyes)* **I don't know. He was here**
8 **last night.**

9 **ELKIN: There's nobody here but you and the three**
10 **scarecrows.**

11 **DONNA JO: I thought there were only two scarecrows.**

12 **ELKIN: Nope, three.** *(Pointing)* **Cousin Mimi, Fester, and**
13 **Cousin Pete.** *(Does a double take.)* **Fester?** *(Crosses and*
14 *shakes FESTER.)* **Fester? Get up from there. This is the**
15 **day we move to our new house in the city.**

16 **FESTER:** *(Stands and stretches.)* **Huh? Oh, yeah. Come on,**
17 **Donna Jo.**

18 **ELKIN: Now you're talkin'.**

19 **FESTER: We need to go get some more firewood. It's gonna**
20 **be another cold one.**

21 **ELKIN: You don't need to get no firewood, 'cause we ain't**
22 **gonna be here to sit by the fire.**

23 **FESTER: You might not, but we are.**

24 **ELKIN: Fester, I know movin' to the city is a little scary, but**
25 **you'll get used to livin' in the lap of lunacy; then you'll**
26 **really like it. And you will too, Donna Jo.**

27 **FESTER: We won't.**

28 **ELKIN: You will.**

29 **FESTER and DONNA JO:** *(Together)* **We won't.**

30 **ELKIN: You will!**

31 **FESTER and DONNA JO:** *(Together)* **We won't.**

32 **ELKIN: You will!**

33 **FESTER and DONNA JO:** *(Together)* **We will!**

34 **ELKIN: You won't!**

35 **FESTER and DONNA JO:** *(Together)* **We will!**

- 1 ELKIN: OK, you win, you *will* enjoy livin' in the city. So
2 come on, let's go.
- 3 FESTER: Wait a minute, you tricked us.
- 4 ELKIN: Well, at least let's go and eat some breakfast. The
5 twins have it all ready.
- 6 FESTER: We ain't hungry — right, Donna Jo?
- 7 DONNA JO: Wrong. I'm hungry.
- 8 FESTER: Me too. Let's eat. (*They exit. As ELKIN exits, he sees*
9 *the letter left behind by MIMI and picks it up and begins to*
10 *read it.*) What's this? "Elkin Jennings, I love you with all
11 my heart and miss you more than words can say ..."
12 (*He looks wide-eyed out to the audience.*) Mimi's done went
13 and fell in love with me. I woulda never thought ... I
14 guess she must like me now that I'm suffocated. I think
15 this city livin' is gonna suit me just fine. (*He throws his*
16 *shoulders back and struts out the door. Immediately MRS.*
17 *SMITH enters the city house with OSWALD.*)
- 18 MRS. SMITH: Well, Mr. Tipinhimer, it looks as though
19 everything is in order.
- 20 OSWALD: (*Looking around*) This should suit our country
21 cousins very nicely.
- 22 MRS. SMITH: I'm looking forward to meeting them. When
23 will they arrive?
- 24 OSWALD: Pete stayed in Cricket County last night. The
25 moving truck is there now. They should be back here
26 later this afternoon.
- 27 MRS. SMITH: Perfect. I'm so glad they will be able to move
28 in by Christmas. I have a little surprise. (*She darts to the*
29 *door Upstage, opens it, and pulls out a small artificial*
30 *Christmas tree, lavishly decorated.*) I thought they may not
31 have the chance to go out and buy one, being busy with
32 the move and all.
- 33 OSWALD: That was very kind of you, Mrs. Smith.
- 34 MRS. SMITH: I know. (*PETUNIA and MIMI enter the city*
35 *house. PETUNIA carries a scarecrow dressed as she is.*)

- 1 **PETUNIA:** Come along, now. I'll put you in here and you
2 can rest.
- 3 **MIMI:** Get back, Petunia. I don't want that thing touching
4 me.
- 5 **MRS. SMITH:** Oh, dear.
- 6 **OSWALD:** Petunia, what in the world is that?
- 7 **PETUNIA:** It's not a what, it's a who. Her name is Pretty
8 Petunia.
- 9 **OSWALD:** Good grief.
- 10 **MIMI:** She's still mad about the scarecrow thing back at the
11 cabin.
- 12 **PETUNIA:** I am not! I just thought having a scarecrow
13 around might make them feel more at home, that's all.
- 14 **MRS. SMITH:** It doesn't really go with the decor, does it?
- 15 **OSWALD:** Petunia, you can't leave that thing in here.
- 16 **PETUNIA:** It can sit right here against the wall so they can
17 see it when they walk in the door.
- 18 **MRS. SMITH:** But it's staring at me.
- 19 **PETUNIA:** Isn't that cute? I drew the eyes in a way that no
20 matter where you walk, they follow you.
- 21 **OSWALD:** You girls are going to be the death of me.
- 22 **MIMI:** What a beautiful artificial tree! It looks so real.
- 23 **MRS. SMITH:** Doesn't it? I have another little surprise for
24 your cousins when they get here to their new house.
- 25 **PETUNIA:** What is it?
- 26 **MRS. SMITH:** This place we're standing in.
- 27 **PETUNIA:** No, I mean what's the surprise?
- 28 **MRS. SMITH:** You'll see, you'll see. No matter how many
29 times you ask, I'll not tell. You can beg, plead, bribe, or
30 torture me, but I'll never divulge my little Christmas
31 secret.
- 32 **OSWALD:** (*Shrugs his shoulders.*) OK.
- 33 **MRS. SMITH:** He wears a red suit and a long white beard,
34 rides in a sleigh pulled by eight tiny reindeer — but
35 that's all I'm saying.

- 1 MIMI: Santa Claus is coming?
2 MRS. SMITH: Who told you?
3 PETUNIA: What a great idea. And he can hand out
4 expensive gifts, right?
5 MRS. SMITH: I'm not saying another word. But to give you
6 a little hint, yes.
7 PETUNIA: What a fun Christmas this is going to be. The
8 country bunch won't know what to say.
9 OSWALD: (*Looking at his watch*) Pete should be arriving at
10 the cabin any time now to bring them to their new
11 home.
12 MRS. SMITH: Come to the kitchen; I want to show you the
13 new wallpaper. (*They exit out the Upstage door. FESTER*
14 *rushes into the cabin, followed by PETE. FESTER holds a*
15 *bundle of sticks as firewood.*)
16 PETE: But Fester, you can't be serious about staying here.
17 Your new life is waiting for you in the city. It's your
18 destiny.
19 FESTER: I ain't goin'!
20 PETE: But you've got to.
21 FESTER: No! (*He drops his sticks on the floor. DONNA JO*
22 *enters carrying a doll wrapped in a blanket.*)
23 PETE: Donna Jo, I'm glad you're here. Please talk some
24 sense into Fester here.
25 DONNA JO: OK. (*Turns to FESTER.*) Fester?
26 FESTER: What?
27 DONNA JO: You don't want to go to that big, dirty, crowded
28 city, do you?
29 FESTER: I sure don't.
30 DONNA JO: (*To PETE, shrugging*) I tried.
31 PETE: But if I don't go back to the city with all of you,
32 Oswald will kill me.
33 FESTER: There's nothing to worry about, Cousin Pete.
34 PETE: Really? Does that mean you'll go to the city?
35 FESTER: No, but if Cousin Oswald kills you, I'll go to your

- 1 funeral.
- 2 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Entering in her new coat, talking as fancy as*
3 *possible*) Cousin Pete, the moving men told me to inform
4 you the truck is all loaded and ready to go forth.
- 5 **PETE:** (*Turning to FESTER*) Did you hear that, Fester? The
6 truck's loaded and ready to go. What do you say?
- 7 **FESTER:** Have a good trip. (*Sits.*)
- 8 **DONNA JO:** Yeah, have a good trip. (*Sits beside FESTER.*)
- 9 **BRENDA MAE:** Fester, you get out of here right now and
10 crawl in that fancy limousine that Cousin Pete was nice
11 enough to bring out here for us.
- 12 **FESTER:** I ain't goin'!
- 13 **BRENDA MAE:** You are!
- 14 **FESTER:** I ain't!
- 15 **BRENDA MAE:** Donna Jo, I hear they have a whole closet
16 full of new clothes they have bought just for you.
- 17 **DONNA JO:** I don't care.
- 18 **BRENDA MAE:** And another closet full of brand-new shoes
19 just for you.
- 20 **DONNA JO:** I don't care.
- 21 **BRENDA MAE:** And a whole truckload of new dolls just
22 waitin' for you.
- 23 **DONNA JO:** I don't ... dolls?
- 24 **FESTER:** Don't give in, Donna Jo; you already have a doll.
- 25 **DONNA JO:** (*To BRENDA MAE*) I already have a doll.
- 26 **BRENDA MAE:** But that one is old and dirty. The ones in
27 the city are brand-new.
- 28 **DONNA JO:** (*Hesitantly*) They are?
- 29 **BRENDA MAE:** And they laugh and cry and eat and sing
30 songs and crawl around on the floor. They even have
31 one that stands up and salutes ever' time it sees the
32 American flag.
- 33 **DONNA JO:** Really?
- 34 **FESTER:** Don't give in, Donna Jo. You love your doll.
- 35 **BRENDA MAE:** All your doll does is lay there. What's so



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