SHLEMIEL CROOKS

The Musical

Book by Sean Hartley & Bob Kolsby
Music by Scott Ethier
Lyrics by Clay Zambo
Additional Music and Lyrics by Berl Olswanger

Based on Shlemiel Crooks and Chicken Bone Man by Anna Olswanger
Shlemiel Crooks
Copyright 2011
by
Sean Hartley, Bob Kolsby, Scott Ethier, Clay Zambo, Anna Olswanger and Berl Olswanger
All Rights Reserved

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that SHLEMIEL CROOKS is subject to a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional, amateur, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, and the rights of translation into foreign language are strictly reserved.

The amateur live stage performance rights to SHLEMIEL CROOKS are controlled exclusively by Drama Source and royalty arrangements and licenses must be secured well in advance of presentation. PLEASE NOTE that amateur royalty fees are set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. When applying for a royalty quotation and license please give us the number of performances intended and dates of production. Royalties are payable one week before the opening performance of the play to Drama Source Co., 1588 E. 361 N., St. Anthony, Idaho 83445, unless other arrangements are made.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid whether the play is presented for charity or gain, and whether or not admission is charged. For all other rights than those stipulated above, apply to Drama Source Company, 1588 E. 361 N. St. Anthony, Idaho 83445.

Copying from this book in whole or in part is strictly forbidden by law, and the right of performance is not transferable.

Whenever the play is produced, the following notice must appear on all programs, printing and advertising for the play, “Produced by special arrangement with Drama Source Co.”

Due authorship credit must be given on all programs, printing and advertising for the play.

No one shall commit or authorize any act or omission by which the copyright or the rights to copyright of this play may be impaired.

No one shall make changes in this play for the purpose of production without written permission.

Publication of this play does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised in their own interests to apply to Drama Source Company for written permission before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre.

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, videotaping or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.
Cast of Characters:

(in order of appearance)
JERRY, a dog
BERL, a boy
GERTIE, his older sister
REB ELIAS, their father
RABBI
MISS STOOTS, a voice teacher
PHARAOH, a ghost
BURT, a crook
ERNIE, a crook

PLUS various Neighbors, Dogs, Police and Ghost Police

Musical Numbers:

“Olive Street” Chorus
“In Eigenblick” Miss Stoots
“Chicken Bone Man” Berl
“Berl’s Blues” Berl
“Don’t Back Down” Jerry
“When Pharaoh Comes To Town” Pharaoh
“When Pharaoh Comes …” (reprise) Pharaoh
“It’s All For You” Miss Stoots and Gertie
“The Chase” Instrumental
“Chicken Bone Man” (reprise) Berl and Gertie
“Don’t Back Down” (reprise) All
Premiered on April 10, 2011
At Merkin Concert Hall
New York
(Olive Street, St. Louis, 1919. Three storefronts line the back wall: A bakery, a fish store, and in between, Reb Elias’s Kosher Wine. Stage right represents the interior of Miss Stoot’s parlor, with a (nonworking) piano that can be played by Berl. Stage left has a few crates or maybe a bench.

At rise, the CHORUS is milling about the street, getting ready for Passover. MOTHERS are shopping and stopping to talk on the street. CHILDREN are playing hopscotch and other games on the sidewalk. Two POLICEMEN are strolling around, keeping an eye on things. Two CHILDREN run on and accidentally bump into one of the MOTHERS, spilling the contents of her basket. The MOTHERS pick up the contents, while one of the POLICEMEN gives the CHILD a talking-to. In general, this is life as usual on a busy city street in 1919.

(JERRY enters. HE is a dog. HE addresses the audience.)

JERRY
Well, hello there. Welcome to 1919, the year so nice they named it twice. Here we are in Olive Street. What? You’ve never been to Olive Street before? It’s a great street. All the Jews in St. Louis live here. Come on, I’ll show you around …

(SONG: OLIVE STREET)

ALL OF US ARE NEIGHBORS,
ALL OF US ARE FRIENDS,
PEOPLE THAT YOU’D LIKE TO MEET.
COME ON, YOU’RE PART OF THE FAM’LY—
ALL OF US ON OLIVE STREET.

WELCOME TO ST. LOUIE!
MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME,
COME AND TAKE A COMFY SEAT.
SEE THE PARADE THAT GOES BY HERE—
ALL OF US ON OLIVE STREET.

EVERYTHING THAT YOU COULD ASK FOR,
ALL IN A FEW SHORT BLOCKS,
HERE IS WHERE YOU PICK UP YOUR BAGELS,
AND HERE’S WHERE YOU GET YOUR LOX!
Of course, you don’t buy bagels today—everyone’s cleaning house, getting rid of the chametz -- what, you don’t know what chametz is? Chametz is bread, cereal, anything made with flour. We gotta get rid of it all before Passover, on account of Moses and Pharaoh and I don’t really remember the whole story but I’m doing my part by eating all the dog biscuits I can find. Anybody got a biscuit they wanna get rid of? No? Just checking.

NEIGHBORS
Sweep out every cupboard,
All the chametz goes!
Every bit of leavened wheat!

MRS. GOLDBERG
Oats! Barley! Spelt! Or rye!

NEIGHBORS
We’re getting ready for Pesach—
All of us on Olive Street.

(BERL enters from stage left, carrying some music books.)

JERRY
See over there! That’s the kid I hang out with. Hey, Berl!

BERL
Hi, Jerry!

JERRY
He loves me. Everybody loves me around here, but with Berl, it’s something special.

BERL
Don’t bark so loud, Jerry, you’ll annoy the neighbors.

JERRY
That’s good, right behind the ear there. Yeah, that’s the spot.

(GERTIE enters.)

GERTIE
Come on, Berl, we’re gonna be late. Do you have the music?

JERRY
Yeah, sure, but I gotta ask you something …
GERTIE
Ask me on the way. I don’t want to be late.

(BERL follows her down the street.)

JERRY
That’s his big sister, Gert. She’s studying to be a collatura. You know what a collatura is? That’s a dame who sings so high even cats can’t stand it. She’s on her way to her lesson now, and my kid has to pound the piano for her.

(JERRY goes to follow BERL, but passes MRS. GOLDBERG, who stops to pat him.)

MRS. G
There’s my Jerry. Who’s a good boy? Who’s a good boy?

JERRY
I’m a good boy!

MRS. G
No barking, Jerry! The baby is sleeping.

JERRY
Well, you asked me …

MRS. G
Here, Jerry, I got something for you, what do you think? A cookie!

JERRY
Gee thanks, Mrs. G.

(JERRY gobbles it up as MRS. G exits.)

That’s the way it is around here – we all look out for each other.

NEIGHBORS
I LOOK AFTER YOUR KIDS,
YOU LOOK IN ON MINE,
GIVE THE CAT A BITE TO EAT.

JERRY
Cat? Where’s a cat?

ALL
WE TAKE GOOD CARE OF EACH OTHER,
ALL OF US ON OLIVE STREET.
SOME NEIGHBORS
SEE THE PRETTY STOREFRONTS,
SEE THE WINDOWS SHINE?
EVERYTHING IS NICE AND NEAT.
WE’RE GETTING READY FOR PESACH—
ALL OF US ON OLIVE STREET!

SOME NEIGHBORS
GET YOUR ROAST FROM MR. BIRNBAUM,
GROC’RIES FROM FINKLESTEIN,
LEPKIN’S SILVER BRIGHTENS YOUR TABLE,
BUT WHAT MAKES A SEDER SHINE?

ALL NEIGHBORS
REB ELIAS’S KOSHER WINE!

(REB ELIAS enters, carrying a crate of wine.)

JERRY
Oh, look over there, That’s my kid’s father, Reb Elias. He owns the store where
they sell kosher wine. And you know what you need kosher wine for, don’t
you? The seder. So he’s hoping to do good business this year, right Reb E?

REB ELIAS
Stay out of the way now, Jerry. I don’t want to drop these bottles. You see this,
everybody?

(HE holds up a large crate)
Those bottles came all the way from the Land of Israel.

MRS. RUBIN
The Land of Israel? You don’t say?

(The RABBI enters and starts to walk by.)

MRS. PERLMUTTER
Hey, there’s the rabbi. Maybe he should say a blessing?

REB ELIAS
Good idea. Rabbi …

RABBI
What is it, Reb Elias?

REB ELIAS
Would you like to say a special blessing for my new wine from Israel?

RABBI
BLEST ARE YOU, LORD OUR GOD,
WHO HAS BROUGHT US FORTH FROM THE EARTH.
BLEST ARE YOU WHO HAS NURTURED US
FROM THE MOMENT OF OUR BIRTH.
BLEST ARE YOU, ALMIGHTY,
WHO CREATES THE FRUIT OF THE VINE
AND BLEST OUR FRIEND REB ELIAS,
WHO PROVIDES OUR PASSOVER WINE.

ALL
Amen.

JERRY
I tell you it’s a great place to live.

ALL
NEW YORK MAY BE BIGGER,
PHOENIX HAS MORE SUN.
MAYBE WE CANNOT COMPETE.
STILL, YOU COULD DO WORSE THAN TO JOIN US,
JOIN US FOR THE SEDER!
PULL UP TO THE TABLE!
EVERYBODY’S WELCOME!
ALL OF US ON OLIVE...

I LOVE, YOU LOVE—
WHAT’S NOT TO LOVE?
ALL OF US
ON OLIVE STREET!

IT’S PASSOVER ON OLIVE STREET!

(GERTIE and BERL enter again.)

GERTIE
Come on, Berl. You know Miss Stoots hates it when we’re late.

BERL
Just wait a minute, Gertie. I gotta ask you something. Tomorrow night is
Amateur Night at Loew’s Palace.
GERTIE
Loew’s Palace? That vaudeville house?

BERL
Aw, it’s great! You remember how we used to sneak in and see the acts?
Princess Rajah and Her Snakes.
(JERRY imitates a snake dance.)
Debutante Darla and Her Dancing Dogs.
(JERRY does a dance)
I was thinking maybe you and me could sing one of my new songs.

GERTIE
I don’t sing jazz any more, now that I’m studying with Miss Stoots.

BERL
Yeah, but I was thinking just this once …

GERTIE
And besides, tomorrow night is Miss Stoots’ student recital.

BERL
She has a recital every month. Couldn’t we miss it just this once? It’s really important, Gert. I’ve got a feeling about it. We’re gonna win this year’s Amateur Night, and they’re gonna give me a real live job playing piano for the shows. It’s all I ever wanted in life. Please?

(MISS STOOTS enters. SHE is a very snooty grande dame voice teacher.)

MISS STOOTS
Ah, there you are, Gertrude, darling. Come in at once, there’s a chill in the air, and we don’t want you to catch cold. You, too, Berl.
(SHE lets them into her studio but keeps JERRY out.)
Jerry, you stay out here.

JERRY
(talking through the screen door)
Hey, kid, it just so happens I’m friendly with a frosty blonde by the name of Hortense. She’s one of the dancing dogs down at the Vaudeville Revue. You want me to get her to talk to the owner about you? I figure she goes woofle-woofle in the right party’s ear, you’re a shoo-in at the Amateur Night auditions.

MISS STOOTS
Stop that barking immediately!

BERL
I think he just wants to come inside, Miss Stoots.

MISS STOOTS
That mangy dog will never enter my nice, clean parlor. Now begin your warm-up, Gertrude, and remember: pear-shaped tones, pear-shaped tones.

GERTIE
Mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi.

MISS STOOTS
That was banana shaped, Gertrude. I want pear-shape.

GERTIE
Mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi.

MISS STOOTS
Better. Now try again, like this.
(SHE sings)
Mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi.
Proceed.

GERTIE
Mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi mi.

MISS STOOTS
Lovely, lovely, breath support, breath support –
(BERL starts improvising in a jazz idiom on the piano.)
Berl, pay attention, where’s your mind this morning?

BERL
Sorry, Miss Stoots. I was just thinking about Amateur Night.

STOOTS
And what, I shudder to ask, is Amateur Night?

BERL
It’s a tryout, down at the Loew’s Palace Vaudeville Revue.

STOOTS
That den of vulgarity, where they perform jazz?

BERL
Aw, gee, Miss Stoots, jazz is swell. All the young kids today are crazy for jazz.

STOOTS
Opera, Berl, that’s the only real music. Verdi, Puccini, Wagner and the greatest of them all … von Gluckenpuper!

JERRY
Here we go again.

STOOTS
Gertrude, you may rest your vocal chords a moment while I rhapsodize about Herbert von Gluckenpuper.

GERTIE
Yes, Miss Stoots.

STOOTS
As I may have mentioned to you before, I once sang the lead role of Little Inka in the world premiere of von Gluckenpuper’s magnum opus, Die Bluckenstockershmerz.

BERL
Yeah, I think you did mention it …

JERRY
About a thousand times.

STOOTS
We performed his opera for one night only, at the Knights of Columbus Banquet Hall. There were some minor problems with the scenery for act nine, when the castle exploded. But none of the audience members who made it through the entire eleven hour performance will ever forget it. As Little Inka, I was transplendent.

GERTIE
I’m sure you were Miss Stoots.

STOOTS
I believe I remember a bit of Inka’s final aria, as she is about to jump into the crocodile pit. Berl, if you please …

(SHE takes out a huge accordion of music and puts it on the piano in front of BERL.)

We’ll begin at measure six thousand, nine hundred and eighty seven.

JERRY
(to the audience)
I’d cover my ears if I were you. This could get ugly.

(Reluctantly, BERL begins to play a teutonic dirge. MISS STOOTS begins to sing in a wobbly soprano.)

MISS STOOTS
IN EIGENBLICK! IN EIGENBLICK!
EIN RICKENBLUCKEN BESHMERZ!
GEVALT, GEVALT, GEVALT, GEVALT!

GERTIE
Oh, Miss Stoots, that was wonderful. How could I ever sing like that?

JERRY
Stick your finger in the electric socket.

BERL
Yeah, that was real interesting, Miss Stoots, but like I said, there’s this Amateur Night tomorrow night and I want to enter. I got a new song I wrote. You wanna hear it?

GERTIE
I don’t think that’s a good idea, Berl.

BERL
It’ll only take a minute. I wrote it about Princess Rajah. I read in the paper that she charms her snake with an old-timey rag on the piano. And what do you think she feeds her snakes? Chicken bones!

(HE plays and sings: CHICKEN BONE MAN)

BERL
I DON’T LIKE SOUP BONES IN MY SOUP,
OR HAM BONES IN MY HAM.
WHEN THE COFFEE’S MAKIN’, DON’T FIX ME BACON.
I’M THE CHICKEN BONE MAN.
I DON’T WANT RABBITS IN MY HAIR,
OR SARDINES OUT OF THE CAN.
GIMME WHAT’LL CACKLE
WITH A CRUNCH AND A CRACKLE.
I’M THE CHICKEN BONE MAN.

Come on, Gertie, join in.

GERTIE
I’ll sit this one out.

BERL
I DON’T LIKE T-BONES IN MY TEA,
OR LAMB CHOPS ON THE LAMB.
I WON’T AD LIB WITH A BARBECUE RIB
I’M THE CHICKEN BONE MAN!

I DON’T WANT OYSTERS ON THE SHELL,
OR FROG LEGS IN MY HAND.
I JUT MY CHIN AND I DIG RIGHT IN.
I’M THE CHICKEN BONE MAN.

A BREAST, A WING, A THIGH, A LEG—
YOU KNOW WHAT I LIKE,
DON’T MAKE ME BEG.
I’M THE CHICKEN BONE MAN!

(BERL finishes.)

So what do you think?

MISS STOOTS
I shudder to think what Maestro von Glickenpuper would have said. Tomorrow evening, when you accompany your sister in her recital …

BERL
But that’s what I’m trying to tell you. Tomorrow night is Amateur Night.

STOOTS
You will not play in this Amateur Night, you will accompany your sister in my student recital.

BERL
But, Miss Stoots …

STOOTS
Enough! Ein blickenstick! I have spoken. The lesson is over!

(SHE exits dramatically. GERTIE and BERL gather up their music and exit her parlor toward center stage.)

GERTIE
Oh, Berl. Why did you play “Chicken Bone Man” for Miss Stoots? You knew she wouldn’t like it.
Because I think it’s good.

It is good!

You’ll never convince Miss Stoots.

Who needs her?

Yeah, but I didn’t think I’d have to convince you. Oh, come on, Gertie, you have lots of recitals. Amateur night comes only once a year.

That’s right, kid, stand up for yourself.

Jerry’s driving me crazy with his barking.

Why don’t you come with me? With the way I play and the way you sing, we could win big!

I don’t sing blues anymore. And if I did, I wouldn’t sing about chickenbones!

Oh, yeah? Well then, who needs you?

I’ve got an idea. Why don’t you ask Jerry to sing with you? It couldn’t sound any worse.

That was a low blow.

You leave Jerry out of this. He’s got more taste for music in his front paw than you and Miss Snooty Stoots put together.
That’s telling her.

(SONG: BERL’S BLUES)

OTHER
THAT STUPID MISS STOOTS!
SHE MAKES ME SO MAD!
MY DUMB SISTER GERTIE
IS THREE TIMES AS BAD!
THE MUSIC I PLAY,
IT COMES FROM MY SOUL!
I MIGHT AS WELL THROW MYSELF
INTO A FORTY-FOOT HOLE!

JERRY
Wait a minute! Are you giving up on account of that snooty dame?

(SONG: DON’T BACK DOWN)

JERRY
DON’T BACK DOWN
WHEN THEY TELL YOU “DOWN, BOY!”
DON’T STAND STILL
WHEN THEY TELL YOU, “STAY!”
BUDDY, YOU GOTTA
CHASE YOUR DREAM!
GET THAT DREAM!
DON’T BACK DOWN, KID,
DON’T LET IT GET AWAY.

GOT THE SCENT?
PURSUE IT!
THAT’S THE WAY WE’RE BORN AND BRED.
GET THE BONE,
GRAB HOLD AND DON’T LET GO,
DON’T ROLL OVER AND PLAY DEAD!

NO, DON’T BACK DOWN,
WHEN THEY CALL YOU “BAD DOG!”
DON’T SLOW UP,
WHEN THEY TELL YOU, “HEEL!”

SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA
MAKE A FUSS,
CHASE A BUS
AND TAKE THE TOWN!
GET UP AND GO!
OH, DON’T BACK DOWN

(HE howls and a chorus of DOGS enter from everywhere: the house, stage right and stage left.)

Look, here are some of my friends!

DOGS, JERRY

WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!
WHEN THEY TELL YOU, “DOWN, BOY!”
WOOF! ARF! GRRR!
WHEN THEY TELL YOU, “STAY!”
BUDDY, YOU GOTTA
CHASE YOUR DREAM,
LIKE A RABBIT! GET THAT DREAM!
RUN AND GRAB IT!

DOGS, JERRY

DON’T BACK DOWN, KID,
DON’T LET IT GET AWAY!

JERRY

GOT THE SCENT?
PURSUE IT!

DOGS

roof! roof!

JERRY

THAT’S THE WAY WE’RE BORN AND BRED.

DOGS

aroo! aroo!

JERRY

GET THE BONE,
GRAB HOLD AND DON’T LET GO.

JERRY & DOGS

DON’T ROLL OVER AND PLAY DEAD!

JERRY

YEAH!
DON’T BACK DOWN,
WHEN THEY CALL YOU “BAD DOG!”
DON’T SLOW UP,
WHEN THEY TELL YOU, “HEEL!”

JERRY, DOGS

SOMETIMES YOU GOTTA
BARK TOO LOUD –

JERRY

WAKE THE NEIGHBORS,

JERRY, DOGS

WAKE THE TOWN!
GET ON YOUR WAY, KID!

JERRY

GET UP AND PLAY, KID!

JERRY, DOGS

OH, SEIZE THE DAY, KID!
DON’T BACK DOWN!

(DOGS say goodbye and exit happily. REB ELIAS enters with a case of wine.)

JERRY

Look, Berl, it’s your Pop. Maybe he can help. Hey, Reb Elias.

REB ELIAS

No barking, Jerry.

BERL

(running over to him)

Hey, Pop! Can I talk to you?

REB ELIAS

(showing BERL a wine bottle)

Look at this, Berl. This bottle came all the way from Eretz Israel.

BERL

Israel? I thought that was just a place in the Torah.

REB ELIAS

No, Berl. The British have promised to make a homeland for the Jews in the Land of Israel. Jews from all over the world have started settling there …

BERL

Pop, I gotta talk to you about something …
JERRY
That’s right, kid, don’t back down.

REB ELIAS
This year, I ordered all the Passover wine from Eretz Israel because I want to support those settlers. It’s a big gamble. If people don’t buy it, we could be out on the street by Shavuos. We won’t even be able to buy food for Jerry.

JERRY
Back down, kid! Back down!

REB ELIAS
Will you come and help me unpack the bottles?

BERL
Sure thing, Pop, but first there’s something I gotta talk to you about.

REB ELIAS
All right. But I only have a minute.

BERL
Well, tomorrow night there’s this audition at Loew’s that I really, really want to go to but Gert says I have to play for her stupid recital.

REB ELIAS
Well, if your sister really needs you …

BERL
Yeah, but I wanna …

REB ELIAS
Berl, I’ve told you before, we are not here on this earth to serve ourselves, but to serve others. If your sister needs you, you must help her.

BERL
But—

REB ELIAS
I’m sorry, I have to get back to work. Come help me if you can.

(HE exits.)

BERL
Aw, gee. You don’t want me to give up on Amateur Night, do you Jerry?

JERRY
No.
BERL
So you know what we’re gonna do? We’re gonna run away.

JERRY
Run away??

BERL
Yeah, that’s it! I’ll go pack.
(HE exits.)

JERRY
Oy Vey! And just when you thought things couldn’t get worse … they do!
(PHARAOH enters.)
You know who this is, don’t you? Anybody? That’s right, it’s Pharaoh. You
know the guy Moses got away from?
(to PHARAOH)
But what the heck are you doing here anyway? This is St. Louis, Missouri,
1919. Haven’t you been dead for thousands of years?

PHARAOH
I’m here because I’m a ghost. See? Boo! And every year I return to the land of
the living to try to stop Passover.

JERRY
You can’t stop Passover! The Jews have been celebrating it for thousands of
years.

PHARAOH
Well, I can’t stop it completely. But every year, I visit one city or one town, and
I stop it there. And this year, I have decided to stop it in St. Louis.

JERRY
But why would you want to stop Passover?

PHARAOH
Why? WHY, you ask me? Because I hate Passover! I hate the seder, I hate the
matzoh, and most of all I hate Moses!

(SONG: WHEN PHARAOH COMES TO TOWN)

PHARAOH
HE DONE ME WRONG,
THAT MOSES SPOILED MY FUN.
IT WASN'T FAIR TO PHARAOH,
SO SOMETHING MUST BE DONE.
DON'T LOOK SO MEAN,
DON'T SHAKE YOUR HEADS AND JUDGE.
I'M JUST YOUR AVERAGE EGYPTIAN KING
WITH A GIANT ROYAL GRUDGE.
AND HERE'S THE LAW
I'M LAYIN’ DOWN:
PASSOVER WILL BE ROTTEN
WHEN PHARAOH COMES TO TOWN.

ALL AROUND THE WORLD I’VE WORKED MY MISCHIEF
TO MAKE UP FOR THE PLAGUES OF LICE AND FROGS.
ONE YEAR, I PUT YEAST IN ALL OF THE MATZO
AND THREW THE SHANKBONE TO THE NEIGHBOR’S DOGS.

I’M THE ONE PUT HAM IN THE CHAROSSET.
I HID THE AFIKONEN IN THE RABBI’S MOTHER’S WIG.
ONCE I USED THE SEDER PLATE AS A FRISBEE…
BUT THIS YEAR, I NEED SOMETHING REALLY BIG!

NO MORE LITTLE PRANKS FOR ME!
I NEED A GREAT DESIGN
SO EVERYONE WILL TRULY SEE
REVENGE WILL BE SWEET AS KOSHER WINE!

That’s it! I’ll steal Reb Elias’s shipment of wine from Israel! Without that wine, they can’t have their seder dinners. Ha ha!

THIS YEAR, WHAT I’M GONNA DO IS
PLUNDER PESACH IN ST. LOUIS!

I’LL CAUSE SUCH GRIEF
WITH ALL MY SNEAKY TWISTS.
AT EVERY SEDER THEY’RE GONNA SAY,
“THIS NEVER HAPPENS TO METHODISTS!”
I’M BACK ON TOP!
I WEAR THE CROWN!
PASSOVER WILL BE RUINED
WHEN PHARAOH COMES TO TOWN!

THEY’LL GNASH THEIR TEETH,
THEY’LL RIP THEIR CLOTHES—
IT’S ALWAYS LIKE THIS,
HEAVEN KNOWS,
WHEN PHARAOH,
NEFARIOUS PHARAOH,
THAT TERRIBLE PHARAOH,
UNBEARABLE PHARAOH
COMES TO TOWN!

And now, I have some wine to steal. Of course, being a ghost, I can’t steal it myself. I need to find some humans to do my dirty work for me. humans with big strong muscles

(HE looks into the audience.)
You look pretty strong. But no, you look too intelligent. I need to find some big strong humans with tiny little minds …

(BURT and ERNIE, a couple of not very bright “loose characters,” enter.)

ERNIE
What do you want to do, Burt?

BURT
I don’t know. What do you want to do, Ernie?

ERNIE
I don’t know. What do you want to do, Burt?

PHARAOH
Perfect! Now, they can’t see me, they don’t know I’m here, but if I whisper things in their ears, I can make them do what I want! Watch this.

(whispering insinuatingly into ERNIE’s ear)
Why don’t we steal something?

ERNIE
Hey, why don’t we steal something?

BURT
Steal something? Are you crazy?

(PHARAOH whispers into his ear.)

PHARAOH
Good idea!

BURT
Good idea! What should we steal?

PHARAOH
(to ERNIE)
Wine.

(ERNIE looks confused)
Wine!!!
ERNIE
(in a whiny voice)
I’m hungry. I don’t want to go to bed.

PHARAOH
Not that kind of whining! The kind of wine you drink, you idiot!

To read more, please purchase the script.