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BRE'R RABBIT'S TRILOGY

Inspired by the Traditional Bre'r Rabbit Tales

by

John Byrne

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Bre'r Rabbit's Trilogy

Inspired from the Traditional Tales

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THE TALES

THE HARVEST THIEF

CHARACTERS: BRE'R RABBIT, WEASEL, and up to eight ADDITIONAL ANIMALS. This script assumes there are ten players but the number of ANIMALS can be adjusted.

SETTING: A barnyard

PROPS: Ears of corn, two blindfolds, and one jar of honey. Masks may be worn by players to represent each of the different animals.

HOME SWEET BOOM

CHARACTERS: BRE'R RABBIT and eight ADDITIONAL ANIMALS.

SETTING: Inside the barn

PROPS: Items used to decorate and clean a house such as curtains, house plants, table & chairs, pillows, bookcase, books, broom, feather duster, etc.

FOX'S TRAP

CHARACTERS: BRE'R RABBIT, FOX, and eight ADDITIONAL ANIMALS

SETTING: A wall near the barnyard; on top meanders a wild grapevine full of grapes

PROPS: A grape vine with a cluster of grapes, a wooden box, a sign that can be opened and closed on which is written, "WARNING: IF YOU TRY TO GET OFF THE BOX, A TON OF BRICKS WILL FALL ON YOUR HEAD. LOOK UP AND SEE YOUR FATE! STAY STILL. I WILL RETURN. FOX," and a second box or hanging basket suspended from a pole centered above the first box.

General Notes:

Except for BRE'R RABBIT, WEASEL, and FOX, characters are not identified by specific name or type providing an opportunity for players to choose and design their own animals. The gender and age of each character is irrelevant and the precise number of characters in each tale is easily adjusted. Any references to gender in the script can be easily modified. Characters in the three tales can be portrayed by the same or by different players creating additional flexibility in cast size.

THE HARVEST THIEF

by John Byrne

(AT RISE: A barn with a corn crib or storage bin. A painted backdrop may be used to represent the barn and the surrounding barnyard area. Inside the corn crib/bin is a bin filled with corn. WEASEL enters, tip-toeing quietly. He places most of the corn in a big bag. He motions to the Audience to say nothing and quietly tip-toes out. Shortly after WEASEL exits other ANIMALS appear. Each of the ANIMALS carries some ears of corn intended to be put into the corn crib.)

ANIMAL 1

With what we gathered before, this should be enough for our picnic.

ANIMALS 7

(Seeing the missing corn) Hey! Most of the corn we put here twenty minutes ago is gone!

ANIMAL 2

(Looking) Yeah, we put lots and lots in the bin.

ANIMAL 3

Where did it go?

BRE'R RABBIT

Someone must have stolen it!

ANIMAL 5

But that was the corn for our picnic.

(WEASEL enters unnoticed and without any corn.)

ANIMAL 6

Who would steal our corn?

ANIMAL 7

Who would be so mean?

ANIMAL 8

I bet you it was Weasel. You don't see Weasel around here do you?

WEASEL

Sure you see Weasel. Weasel's right here. *(Sarcastically)* And aren't you all so very nice? You think Weasel's not here so you blame Weasel. In fact, whenever anything goes wrong it's always, "Weasel did it!"

ANIMAL 1

Well, did you steal our corn?

WEASEL

And exactly what evidence do you have to justify asking such an offensive question?

ANIMAL 1

Well...I... You know

WEASEL

You know nothing and yet you are willing to bring my good name into dis-re-pute. Well, up with this I shall not put. I do not want to be in your company anymore, you mean and prejudiced fur balls.

(WEASEL exits.)

ANIMALS 4

Well, who did it, then?

BRE'R RABBIT

We don't know but it is not going to happen again. I'll guard the harvest.

ANIMAL 7

Bre'r Rabbit, you're too small to guard anything. You're just trying to get out of having to work in the field.

BRE'R RABBIT

That's not true!

ANIMAL 8

We need a strong guard and you're not strong enough.

ANIMAL 3

I am. I'm the strongest.

ANIMAL 7

I'm the strongest.

ANIMAL 3

No you're not, I am.

ANIMAL 7

No, I am.

ANIMALS 4

Let them both be the guards and the rest of us will get one more load of corn.

ALL THE ANIMALS

Good idea.

(ANIMALS exit except for ANIMALS 3 and 7. WEASEL slips back in as ANIMALS 3 and 7 settle into place.)

WEASEL

Well, which of you two is stronger?

ANIMALS 3 and 7

I am.

WEASEL

You can't both be stronger.

ANIMALS 3 and 7

I tell you, I am.

WEASEL

There's only one way to decide this.

ANIMALS 3 and 7

How?

WEASEL

You wrestle and the strongest will win.

ANIMALS 3 and 7

Okay.

(ANIMALS 3 & 7 start wrestling.)

WEASEL

No, no, not here. Outside. In here, you'll destroy everything.

ANIMALS 3 and 7

You're right.

(ANIMALS 3 & 7 leave the corn crib and start wrestling. WEASEL follows a few steps but then turns around, scoops the corn into a bag and disappears. ANIMALS 3 & 7 continue wrestling as the OTHER ANIMALS come back with more corn.)

ANIMAL 1

What are you two doing?

ANIMALS 3

We're wrestling.

ANIMAL 7

Yeah, to see who is strongest.

(The WEASEL appears behind the animals.)

WEASEL

And I'm judging the match.

(ANIMAL 2 goes into the barn.)

ANIMAL 2

Most of the corn we dumped here is gone!

(The ANIMALS all rush into the barn.)

ANIMAL 6

What happened?

ANIMALS 3 and 7

We were here all the time.

WEASEL

And so was I. Only we were all outside.

ANIMAL 5

The thief must be fast.

BRE'R RABBIT

I tell you, I'll guard the corn this time.

ANIMAL 8

You can't guard the corn, Bre'r Rabbit. We'll have to leave the fastest animal to guard the corn and you're not very fast.

ANIMAL 2

I'm the fastest.

ANIMAL 6

No you're not. I'm the fastest.

ANIMAL 1

We'll leave you both here while we get more corn.

ALL THE ANIMALS

Good idea!

(All the ANIMALS leave except for ANIMALS 2 and 6. WEASEL leaves but then turns back.)

WEASEL

I heard everyone saying you two are the fastest animals in the forest.

ANIMAL 2 and 6
 We are.

WEASEL
 But you're not faster than a weasel.

ANIMAL 6
 Oh, that's ridiculous.

ANIMAL 2
 No silly Weasel can run so fast as us.

WEASEL
 You're wrong.

ANIMALS 2 and 6
 No, we're not.

WEASEL
 Prove it.

ANIMALS 2 and 6
 How?

WEASEL
 We'll run to that big oak tree over there and back. That's how. And I'll beat you both.

ANIMALS 2 and 6
 But we're supposed to be here guarding the corn.

WEASEL
 If you are so fast, you'll be back before anyone can steal it.

ANIMAL 2
 You're right.

ANIMAL 6
 Yeah and you'll be so far behind, we won't even be able to see you.

WEASEL
 That's just talk. C'mon, I'll even give you a head start. To that tree and back.

ANIMALS 6
 Let's go!

(They all take off, ANIMALS 2 and 6 get a quick lead, WEASEL turns back, scoops much of the new corn into a bag and disappears. ANIMAL 2 comes back huffing and puffing.)

ANIMAL 2

I won! I won! (*Goes inside and sees the corn is gone*) Help! Oh no! Someone's stole our corn.

(*ANIMAL 6 staggers in.*)

ANIMAL 6

Oh, no! Help! Help! Someone stole the corn!

(*The other ANIMALS rush in. Some have newly harvested corn.*)

ANIMAL 3

What happened?

ANIMAL 6

We were racing Weasel and

(*WEASEL comes in huffing and puffing.*)

WEASEL

I'm pooped. You were right, you're faster. Way faster.

ANIMAL 4

You left the corn to race Weasel?

(*The ANIMALS all look at WEASEL.*)

WEASEL

Sorry—I thought I was faster. But that was fun. Uh... You don't seem to agree so I'll leave and you can blame me for what happened.

(*WEASEL exits.*)

ANIMAL 7

Do you think Weasel's taking the corn?

ANIMALS 6

Weasel couldn't be. We were all out there racing and we were ahead of Weasel all the time.

ANIMAL 8

I'm suspicious.

BRE'R RABBIT

Let me guard the corn this time.

ANIMAL 4

But we need a guard who is more clever than the thief. I don't think that's you, little rabbit.

ANIMAL 1

I'll guard it. I'm the smartest animal in the meadow.

ANIMAL 5

You are not. I'm the smartest. I can hide and the thief won't know I'm there until I am on top of him.

ANIMAL 1

I can do that better.

ANIMAL 5

Cannot.

ANIMAL 1

Can so.

ANIMAL 4

Stop it, you two. We'll leave you both here to guard the corn while we harvest more.

ALL THE ANIMALS

Good idea!

(The ANIMALS exit. When they are gone, WEASEL appears.)

WEASEL

There's no way you two could hide from me.

ANIMAL 1

(Startled) Weasel! Where did you come from?

WEASEL

I was nearby enough to hear you two bragging.

ANIMAL 5

I didn't brag. I told the truth. I'm good at hiding.

ANIMAL 1

Me too. Only I'm better.

WEASEL

Oh, I could find either of you in flash no matter where you hid.

ANIMALS 1 and 5

Could not.

WEASEL
 Could so.

ANIMAL 1
 You're wrong.

ANIMAL 5
 Yeah, you're wrong.

WEASEL
 I am not wrong.

ANIMAL 1
 Just give me 30 seconds and I'll hide so well you couldn't find me for a week.

ANIMAL 5
 Me, too, but I only need 15 seconds.

WEASEL
 Okay big mouths. I'm counting. One...two...three...
(ANIMALS 1 and 5 run off.)

WEASEL
 ...four...five...six and a lot more ears of corn.
(WEASEL scoops up the ears and disappears. ANIMAL 5 comes back in.)

ANIMAL 5
 Weasel never found me! Oh, no. Help. The corn is gone.
(ANIMAL 1 comes back.)

ANIMAL 1
 What do you mean gone?

ANIMAL 5
 I mean gone. Most of the corn is gone.

ANIMAL 1
 Where's Weasel?

ANIMAL 5
 Weasel's still looking for us.
(WEASEL enters.)

Found you! WEASEL

Doesn't count. This is base. ANIMAL 5

And when we were playing, someone stole the corn. ANIMAL 1

Not again! WEASEL

(The rest of the ANIMALS come in with armloads of corn.)

What, not again? ANIMAL 8

Someone stole the corn! ANIMALS 1 and 5

Oh no! ALL THE ANIMALS

Where were you Weasel? ANIMAL 6

You can't suspect me! I was playing hide and seek with them. WEASEL

Well I suspect you. ANIMAL 8

That's unfair! WEASEL

Let me guard it this time. BRE'R RABBIT

We need a guard who has a great sense of smell and will know if anyone comes near. That's not you, Bre'r Rabbit. ANIMAL 2

That's me. I have the best nose in the forest. ANIMAL 4

Your nose may look good but mine works better. ANIMAL 8

Does not. ANIMAL 4

Does so. ANIMAL 8

Stop arguing. ANIMAL 2

Yeah, we can leave you both here. ANIMAL 5

Now we have to pick one more load of corn. ANIMAL 3

But this time we'll make sure we keep what we've already picked. ANIMALS 4 and 8

(The ANIMALS except for ANIMALS 4 and 8 and WEASEL wearily exit.)

So which of you two has a better sense of smell? WEASEL

I do. ANIMALS 4 and 8

You both can't both have the best sense of smell. WEASEL

I do. ANIMAL 4

No, I do. ANIMAL 8

I think we should resolve this dispute. WEASEL

How? ANIMALS 4 and 8

Well, do you know the smell of honey? WEASEL

Of course. ANIMALS 4 and 8

WEASEL

Could you find it blindfolded?

ANIMALS 4 and 8

Sure. That's easy.

WEASEL

Well, I know that there is fresh honey just outside the barn. Let's see who can find it first.

ANIMAL 4

I will!

(ANIMAL 4 starts to run off.)

ANIMAL 8

No, I will. *(Grabs ANIMAL 4)*

WEASEL

(Stops BOTH) But first, I'll blindfold you two.

(WEASEL puts blindfolds on ANIMALS 4 & 8 and as they bumble around, takes the corn and goes off. ANIMAL 4 finds a jar of honey, takes the blindfold off and yells.)

ANIMAL 4

Found it. Told you I was better.

(ANIMAL 8 takes the blindfold off. WEASEL has come back.)

ANIMAL 8

I didn't find anything. *(Goes inside)* Hey, the corn's gone.

WEASEL and ANIMAL 4

Oh no!

ANIMAL 8

Oh yes! It's gone!

(The other ANIMALS come back just as ANIMAL 8 says "It's gone!")

ALL THE ANIMALS

Not again!

ANIMAL 1

Where were you?

ANIMALS 4 and 8

We were here all the time.

ANIMAL 7
And where was Weasel?

WEASEL
I was with them.

ANIMALS 4 and 8
Yeah, he was with us as we sniffed out the honey.

ANIMAL 3
You were supposed to be watching the corn, not looking for honey.

ANIMALS 4 and 8
We tried.

ANIMAL 5
What can we do?

BRE'R RABBIT
You could ask me to guard it.

ANIMAL 8
You think you can do something I couldn't do?

BRE'R RABBIT
Yes.

ANIMAL 1
And you think you can do better than me?

BRE'R RABBIT
Yes.

ANIMAL 6
Well, let Bre'r Rabbit try and fail. Meanwhile, we have to get even more.

ALL THE ANIMALS
Oh no!

ANIMALS 7
Just be careful.

BRE'R RABBIT
I will.

(The ANIMALS exit.)

WEASEL

What can you do that they can't do?

BRE'R RABBIT

I can hop.

WEASEL

And what good is that?

BRE'R RABBIT

I can hop farther than any other animal in the whole world.

WEASEL

That's not true.

BRE'R RABBIT

Oh yes it is.

WEASEL

Oh no it's not. Even I can hop farther than you.

BRE'R RABBIT

That's not true and I'll prove it's not true.

WEASEL

How will you do that?

BRE'R RABBIT

I will hop from this bin into that box and you won't be able to.

WEASEL

Of course I can.

BRE'R RABBIT

No you can't.

WEASEL

You go first, then, and show me.

BRE'R RABBIT

Okay.

(BRE'R RABBIT hops but lands shy of the box.)

WEASEL

Silly rabbit! You can't even jump that little distance. Now watch me do it.

(WEASEL jumps into the box. BRE'R RABBIT slams a lid on it and sits on the lid.)

WEASEL

Hey, let me out of here! Let me out right now.

BRE'R RABBIT

I think both you and the corn are in safe places.

(The ANIMALS come back in with more corn.)

ANIMAL 4

The corn was not stolen this time!

ANIMAL 2

Now we have enough for our party.

ANIMAL 8

Bre'r Rabbit, what did you do?

BRE'R RABBIT

Nothing special. Just sat here.

ANIMAL 5

Where's Weasel?

WEASEL

Hey! Let me out! Let me out!

ANIMAL 2

Who's in there?

BRE'R RABBIT

Someone who doesn't need any more corn.

ANIMAL 8

I think I'm beginning to understand.

ANIMAL 3

Me too.

ANIMAL 8

And I think it's best that Weasel stays in there.

ANIMAL 7

It's time to start our picnic!

ANIMAL 4

No more work today!

ALL THE ANIMALS

Let's picnic!

THE END

Continue to next page for "HOME SWEET BOOM"

HOME SWEET BOOM

By John Byrne

(AT RISE: Inside the barn. ALL ANIMALS except BRE'R RABBIT are turning the barn into a house. They are hanging curtains, bringing in house plants, setting a table, placing books on a bookshelf, sweeping, dusting, etc. After a moment, BRE'R RABBIT appears.)

BRE'R RABBIT

What's going on?

ANIMAL 1

We're making a home out of this barn.

BRE'R RABBIT

Who is it for?

ANIMAL 2

It's for all of us animals.

ANIMAL 6

We want someplace really nice, especially for winter time.

BRE'R RABBIT

That's a great idea.

ANIMAL 3

Everyone should help, including you, Bre'r Rabbit.

BRE'R RABBIT

Oh, I can't help today. I'm way too tired.

ANIMAL 5

Only those who help can use the house.

BRE'R RABBIT

That sounds like the Chicken Little rule.

ANIMAL 6

It is. So pitch in if you want to have a place in the house.

BRE'R RABBIT

Oh, alright. What do you want me to do?

ANIMAL 7

You could sweep or you could put those books on the bookshelf.

BRE'R RABBIT

I'll put the books on the shelf.

(BRE'R RABBIT picks one book to put on the shelf and then opens the next book and stops to read it. A moment later, BRE'R RABBIT is asleep.)

ANIMAL 8

Look at Bre'r Rabbit.

ANIMAL 1

(Sarcastically) We must have worked him too hard.

ANIMAL 4

Our house is looking good. We're almost done.

ANIMAL 3

Let's get the pillows for our bed.

ANIMAL 2

They're over here.

(The ANIMALS all pile up the pillows for a bed.)

ANIMAL 1

Perfect.

ANIMAL 6

It's comfortable. I want to stay here forever.

ANIMAL 8

We can't all live here at the same time.

ANIMAL 7

It's big enough for two but not more than two.

ANIMAL 6

So who gets it?

(BRE'R RABBIT wakes up and listens.)

ANIMAL 5

We share it. Two animals have it for one night. Two more the next night, until all of us have had a turn and then we'll start all over.

ANIMAL 4

How do we decide?

ANIMALS 3

I'll go first.

ANIMAL 2

No me, I worked the hardest.

ANIMAL 1

I should go first, it was my idea.

BRE'R RABBIT

You all argue too much. Let me test the house out first and you can decide some system for picking the animal to take my place once I make sure it is all right.

ALL THE ANIMALS

No way are you going first!

BRE'R RABBIT

Why not? I helped put it together.

ANIMAL 7

You did one thing and then you fell asleep.

ANIMAL 8

I am not even sure if you should ever get a chance.

BRE'R RABBIT

Well, if that is the way you are going to be about it, you can take your stinky house. I'm going back to my briar patch. See if I will ever help you again.

(BRE'R RABBIT exits.)

ANIMAL 6

Well, who is going to stay tonight?

ANIMAL 3

I say we draw straws. The two with the shortest straws get to stay the first night.

ALL THE ANIMALS

Okay.

ANIMAL 7

I have straws here in my hand and two are short.

(Each ANIMAL draws one straw.)

ANIMAL 5

I drew a really short one!

ANIMAL 1

So did I.

ANIMAL 4

So you two get to stay tonight and two others get it when you're done.

ANIMALS 1 and 5

Hooray!

ALL THE REST OF THE ANIMALS

Good night, you two.

ANIMAL 1

I'm tired from all that work.

ANIMAL 5

So am I. I'm ready for bed.

(They stretch out. As they do, BRE'R RABBIT comes near the house carrying a small air bag used to cushion shipments. BRE'R RABBIT gestures to the audience to be quiet and then tiptoes behind the house.)

ANIMAL 1

Good night.

ANIMAL 5

Sleep tight.

(Just then BRE'R RABBIT jumps on the air bag. SFX: BOOM!)

ANIMAL 5

What was that!

(SFX: BOOM!)

ANIMAL 1

An explosion! This place is haunted. I'm getting out of here.

(The TWO ANIMALS run out and run into the OTHER ANIMALS running toward the house.)

ANIMALS 8

What happened?

ANIMALS 1 and 5

There are ghosts in the house. We don't want to stay in the house.

ANIMAL 3

There aren't any ghosts. You just heard a little noise. I'm not afraid.

ANIMAL 7

I'm not afraid either.

ANIMAL 8

Okay, you two stay, tonight. Everyone else should go back to the meadow.

(ANIMALS 3 and 7 settle in as the rest of the ANIMALS exit. BRE'R RABBIT sneaks back with more air bags. BRE'R RABBIT gestures to the audience to be quiet and then goes behind the house where he pops the air bags.)

(SFX: BOOM, BOOM!)

ANIMAL 7

What was that?

ANIMAL 3

Ghosts! The others were right.

ANIMAL 7

I'm getting out of here.

ANIMALS 3

Me too.

(ANIMALS 3 & 7 run out and meet the OTHER ANIMALS running toward the house.)

ANIMAL 8

What happened?

ANIMAL 7

It was awful. Ghosts were shooting at us.

ANIMAL 3

And we're not staying there.

ANIMAL 2

I'm not afraid of any ghosts.

ANIMAL 3

You should be.

ANIMAL 6

I'm not afraid either.

ANIMAL 8

Then you two stay there. *(Aside to ANIMAL 4)* I have an idea of what's going on but I need you to help me. *(To REMAINING ANIMALS)* Let's go back to the meadow and let these two have the house.

ALL THE ANIMALS

Okay.

(ANIMALS 2 and 6 go into the house and get ready for bed. The OTHER ANIMALS exit.)

ANIMAL 6

Are you scared?

ANIMAL 2

A little.

ANIMAL 6

Well, I'm not.

(ANIMALS 8 and 4 creep back near the house. They hide themselves. BRE'R RABBIT then enters with new air bags, gestures to the audience to stay quiet and goes behind the house. Soon, BRE'R RABBIT stamps on the air bags.)

(SFX: BOOM BOOM!)

ANIMAL 6

Aaaaaaaa! I'm scared now.

ANIMAL 2

Me too.

(ANIMALS 2 & 6 rush out and meet with the rest of the ANIMALS rushing toward the house.)

ANIMAL 6

It's haunted. It's haunted!

(BRE'R RABBIT appears.)

BRE'R RABBIT

Why aren't you in your beautiful new home?

ANIMAL 2

It's haunted. It's scary. We can't stay there.

BRE'R RABBIT

It can't be haunted.

ANIMAL 7

It is. We all heard explosive noises. It's awful.

BRE'R RABBIT

So, you don't want the house anymore?

ANIMAL 1

No. We can't use it.

BRE'R RABBIT

I'll take it, then. I'll sleep there.

ANIMAL 8

That's a good idea.

ANIMAL 4

Let's go back to the meadow and leave this haunted place to Bre'r Rabbit.

(ALL ANIMALS except BRE'R RABBIT exit away from the house.)

BRE'R RABBIT

Hee. Hee. Hee.

(BRE'R RABBIT goes into the house and gets ready for bed. The OTHER ANIMALS have stopped a bit away from the house. They talk together and ANIMALS 8 and 4 hand out air bags to each of them. They tiptoe back to the back of the house.)

BRE'R RABBIT

This is comfortable. I am soooooo smart. *(Settling into the pillows)* Aaaaaaaaaa.

(As BRE'R RABBIT settles down to sleep, the OTHER ANIMALS pop the air bags.)

(SFX: BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM!)

BRE'R RABBIT

Help. This house is haunted. Let me out of here.

(BRE'R RABBIT runs out. When BRE'R RABBIT is gone, the OTHER ANIMALS all gather beside the house.)

ANIMAL 4

Wow, that Bre'r Rabbit is fast!

ANIMAL 7

I don't think we'll see Bre'r Rabbit around here for a long while.

ANIMAL 8

And I don't think we have to worry about ghosts or explosions anymore.

ANIMAL 6

Thanks to you two.

ANIMAL 5

And you two should be the first to spend a whole, quiet night here.

ANIMALS 8 AND 4

Sounds good to us. Good night.

ALL THE OTHER ANIMALS

Sleep tight!

THE END

Continue to next page for "FOX'S TRAP"

FOX'S TRAP

by John Byrne

(AT RISE: An overturned wooden box with a second box or basket hanging overhead. A grapevine meanders over a wall beside. There is a full cluster of grapes on top of the wall. A sign reads, "Warning: If you try to get off the box, a ton of bricks will fall on your head. Look up and see your fate! Stand still. I will return. Fox." The sign is situated in such a way that it can be opened and closed, revealing its warning if someone steps on the wooden box. FOX stands near the wall, checking the overturned wooden box, the sign and the box/basket overhead.)

FOX

(To Audience) I claim all these wild grapes as mine. Someone has been eating them and I'm going to put a stop to that. I want them all to myself. If the thief comes back, he or she will have to get on the box to get at the grapes and once they are on the box, they will have to stay put or else a ton of bricks will fall on them. If they stay, I'll catch them. If they leave... well...they won't ever come back. Hee. Hee. Either way, no one but Fox will get to eat these grapes.

(FOX "closes" the sign, laughs and backs off the stage. For a moment, there is no one on the stage. ANIMAL 1 appears, looks around furtively and then eyes the grape cluster.)

ANIMAL 1

Fox claims those wild grapes. Ha. I have just as much right as Fox. I'll climb up here and take some.

(ANIMAL 1 steps on the box and reaches toward the grapes. As ANIMAL 1 does this, the sign flops open.)

ANIMAL 1, Continued

What? Eeek! This sign says that a ton of bricks will fall on me if I step off this box. Ha! That's a bluff. *(Looking up)* Or maybe it's not a bluff. That looks like a load of bricks up there. If I step off, I'll be crushed. If I stay here, Fox will come back and grab me. Now, that's a problem.

(ANIMAL 2 comes along oblivious to the sign.)

ANIMAL 1

And there's an opportunity.

(ANIMAL 1 sees ANIMAL 2.)

ANIMAL 2

Hi, friend. What are you doing there?

ANIMAL 1
Shhhhhh!

ANIMAL 2
Why? What are you doing?

ANIMAL 1
I'm listening to fantastic music and you are messing it up with all your chatter.

ANIMAL 2
I don't hear anything.

ANIMAL 1
You would if you stood where I'm standing.

ANIMAL 2
Oh. Can I stand there?

ANIMAL 1
No!

ANIMAL 2
Please?

ANIMAL 1
Okay. Okay. Just for a moment. Now put your foot down right here.
(ANIMAL 1 indicates the spot and then leaps off the box as soon as the ANIMAL 2's foot is there.)

ANIMAL 2
I still don't hear anything.

ANIMAL 1
Maybe reading the sign will help.

ANIMAL 2
A ton of bricks will fall... *(Looks up)* Hey, you tricked me!
(ANIMAL 1 starts to leave.)

ANIMAL 2, *Continued*
Hey, come back here. *(ANIMAL 1 exits)* Fox will think I tried to steal the grapes. Now what am I going to do?
(ANIMAL 3 comes along.)

ANIMAL 2
I have an idea.

ANIMAL 3
Hi. What are you doing there on that box?

ANIMAL 2
I'm earning money. A lot of money.

ANIMAL 3
You are? *(Aside)* Ooooh I like money and I should be able to trick him (her) out of it. *(To ANIMAL 1)* Who is paying you, how much and what for?

ANIMAL 2
Fox is paying a dollar a minute for me to stand here and chase birds away from the wild grapes.

ANIMAL 3
Can I do that, too?

ANIMAL 2
No! It is my job.

ANIMAL 3
I could stand next to you on the box and help.

(ANIMAL 3 gets up on the box.)

ANIMAL 2
Get off!

ANIMAL 3
I think I'd rather...shove you off. Hee. Hee.

(ANIMAL 3 shoves ANIMAL 2 off the box.)

ANIMAL 2
You win but you might take a look at that sign before you gloat.

(ANIMAL 2 exits. ANIMAL 3 notices sign.)

ANIMAL 3
...A ton of bricks over my head. I've been tricked. Fox will say I tried to steal the grapes.

(ANIMAL 4 approaches, also oblivious to the sign.)

ANIMAL 3
But there may be a way out.

ANIMAL 4
What are you doing up there.

ANIMAL 3
(Haughtily) I'm looking at the future.

ANIMAL 4
(Looking around) I can't see any future. All I can see is the same stuff I always see.

ANIMAL 3
That's because you are not up here.

ANIMAL 4
Oooh, can I get up there?

ANIMAL 3
Are you sure you want to see the future? It could be scary.

ANIMAL 4
Yes. I want to see it.

ANIMAL 3
Okay. Climb up here, then.

(ANIMAL 4 climbs onto the box. ANIMAL 3 gets off.)

ANIMAL 4
I don't see any future. Where is the future?

ANIMAL 3
Right behind you on that sign. You should read it carefully. Bye.

(ANIMAL 3 exits.)

ANIMAL 4
A ton of bricks will fall on me if I move off this box. That's not the future that I want. But I can't get off. And, Fox will think I tried to steal his grapes. I have to get off!

(ANIMAL 5 comes along not seeing the sign.)

ANIMAL 4, *Continued*
Maybe help is on the way.

ANIMAL 5

Hello! What are you doing there on that box?

ANIMAL 4

It's special. You have no reason to know.

ANIMAL 5

Tell me. Tell me.

ANIMAL 4

You promise not to tell anyone else?

ANIMAL 5

Oh, yes.

ANIMAL 4

I'm getting a foot massage. It is the best thing for tired feet and did I ever have tired feet.

ANIMAL 5

I have tired feet, too. Really tired feet. Can I get a massage?

ANIMAL 4

Oh, I knew you would ask. The answer's "No".

ANIMAL 5

Please. Please.

ANIMAL 4

Okay. But only because you asked so nicely. Now, only one animal at a time can stand here so put your foot right here ...

(ANIMAL 5 puts a foot on the box and ANIMAL 4 jumps off.)

ANIMAL 4, *Continued*

...and I will jump off.

ANIMAL 5

I don't feel anything.

ANIMAL 4

You will when you read that sign. Bye.

(ANIMAL 5 turns toward the sign as ANIMAL 4 exits.)

ANIMAL 5

I've been tricked. And I feel something alright. Anger. And...well...fear. I have to get off this. But how?

(ANIMAL 6 enters and speaks before seeing ANIMAL 5.)

ANIMAL 6

It is nothing but hot today and I am hot and tired.

ANIMAL 5

(Aside) I've found a way. *(Loudly but not obviously toward ANIMAL 5)* This breeze is nice. It's cool up here.

ANIMAL 6

Huh? I don't feel any breeze. I only feel the heat.

ANIMAL 5

(Looking at ANIMAL 6) That's because you are down there and I am up here. It's cool at this height.

ANIMAL 6

Can I come up there?

ANIMAL 5

And steal my breeze? No way. Besides, the box will break if there's more than one on it.

ANIMAL 6

Just for a few minutes. Please. I'm hot.

ANIMAL 5

Minutes? Oh dear. It's so nice up here, I forgot to watch the time. What time is it?

ANIMAL 6

Getting on 2 o'clock.

ANIMAL 5

Well aren't you lucky. You can have my space. I have to go. Come here and put your foot right here and I'll help you up...

(ANIMAL 6 gets up and ANIMAL 5 hops down.)

ANIMAL 6

I don't feel a breeze.

ANIMAL 5

Be patient. It will probably start again. In the meantime, you ought to read the sign. Bye. I have to be off.

ANIMAL 6

Let's see. The sign says ... I could be killed! I have to get off. But I can't get off. What will I do? Fox will claim that I tried to steal those grapes when all I wanted was a bit of breeze. Help!

(ANIMAL 7 enters.)

ANIMAL 7

Did you call for help?

ANIMAL 6

Yes, oh, yes. I'm stuck up here. My foot is stuck and I can't pull it up. But you probably aren't strong enough to help me.

ANIMAL 7

Sure I am. I'm really strong.

ANIMAL 6

I don't think you are strong enough.

ANIMAL 7

I am. Let me try.

ANIMAL 6

(Reluctantly) Okay. Get up here and grab my leg and pull.

(ANIMAL 7 gets up on the box and pulls at ANIMAL 6's leg. ANIMAL 6 springs off the box.)

ANIMAL 5

That was perfect. Thanks.

(ANIMAL 7 starts to get off the box.)

ANIMAL 6, *Continued*

But don't get off that box until you read the sign behind you.

ANIMAL 7

(Turns toward sign) A load of bricks. An angry fox. You tricked me!

ANIMAL 6

I did and now I am going to leave.

(ANIMAL 6 exits.)

ANIMAL 7

What will I do? I'll starve to death up here or Fox will eat me.

(ANIMAL 8 enters.)

ANIMAL 7, *Continued*

(Aside) But maybe help is arriving.

(ANIMAL 7 takes up a wrestling position and moves slowly as if practicing.)

ANIMAL 8

You look weird. What are you doing?

ANIMAL 7

I am doing small space wrestling. And I do not look weird. Small space wrestling is the newest craze. Everyone who is anyone is doing it.

ANIMAL 8

How do you do it?

ANIMAL 7

Two animals wrestle side to side on the top of a small box. The one who throws the other off wins.

ANIMAL 8

I could do that.

ANIMAL 7

I doubt it.

ANIMAL 8

Let me get up there and try.

ANIMAL 7

No. You don't know what you are doing and it would ruin my practice.

ANIMAL 8

Oh please. I'll let you show me how.

ANIMAL 7

Oh, alright.

ANIMAL 8

Thank you.

(ANIMAL 8 leaps onto the box. ANIMAL 7 shows ANIMAL 8 the wrestling hold as ANIMAL 7 talks.)

ANIMAL 7

We stand to the side and intertwine our arms and push or pull...

(ANIMAL 7 pretends to be thrown off the box, leaving ANIMAL 8 alone on its top.)

ANIMAL 7, *Continued*

You're good!

ANIMAL 8

Beginner's luck. Come up and we'll do it again.

ANIMAL 7

No thanks. I have to get going. In the meantime, you should take a careful look at the sign that is behind you. Bye.

(ANIMAL 7 exits. ANIMAL 8 looks at the sign.)

ANIMAL 8

Above me? *(Looks up)* Oh, no. I've been tricked. I have to get off this box before Fox comes back. But how?

(BRE'R RABBIT enters.)

ANIMAL 8, *Continued*

Here comes Bre'r Rabbit. *(Aside)* Perhaps there is a way.

(ANIMAL 8 starts moving its back as if it is rubbing against the wall, all the while pretending not to notice the approach of BRE'R RABBIT.)

ANIMAL 8, *Continued*

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah. Oooooooooooooooooo. Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah. That feels good.

BRE'R RABBIT

What are you doing?

ANIMAL 8

Oooooooooooooooooo. That's nice. I'm rubbing my back. Aaaaaaaaaah. This wall has magic in it. My back was so sore and now, Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah.

BRE'R RABBIT

My back is sore.

ANIMAL 8

Well, good luck at finding as good a place as this to scratch it.

BRE'R RABBIT

Can I use that place?

ANIMAL 8

No way. It's mine.

BRE'R RABBIT

I could get up next to you and we could share.

ANIMAL 8

No! Go find your own place. I'm not giving this up and I am not sharing.

BRE'R RABBIT

There's plenty of room. See, I could get up this way.

(BRE'R RABBIT gets on the box next to ANIMAL 8 who jumps off.)

ANIMAL 8

All yours. But I would advise you to read the sign.

(BRE'R RABBIT turns and looks at the sign.)

BRE'R RABBIT

You tricked me! And now I'm going to die.

ANIMAL 8

Only if you try to get off or if Fox finds you. Bye.

BRE'R RABBIT

You can't do this!

ANIMAL 8

(As leaving) Just did.

(After ANIMAL 8 exits, FOX is seen approaching.)

BRE'R RABBIT

Oh, no. That's Fox. Fox will never believe that I was not trying to steal the grapes. That rapacious old Fox will...Ooooooh that gives me an idea.

(FOX sees BRE'R RABBIT.)

FOX

So you're the one who has been stealing my grapes. You'll pay for it now!

BRE'R RABBIT

I have not been stealing grapes. I wouldn't touch one of your grapes.

FOX

Then what are you doing there?

BRE'R RABBIT

Looking for a dollar coin.

FOX

(Warily) Dollar coins don't grow on grape vines.

BRE'R RABBIT

This dollar coin flew over here.

FOX

You expect me to believe that?

BRE'R RABBIT

I don't care what you believe but the truth is that I had the dollar coin in my hand and I was hurrying to the store when I tripped over a root and the coin flew out of my hand and it landed at the back end of this box between the box and the wall and I am trying to find it.

FOX

Not if I find it first.

BRE'R RABBIT

It's my dollar!

FOX

I claim the box, the wall, and the grapes so the coin is mine!

BRE'R RABBIT

Oh, be fair.

FOX

Finders keepers is fair. Now where did you think it landed?

BRE'R RABBIT

At the back side of this ... oh, I'm not going to tell you.

FOX

A wink's as good as a word. I've got what I need. I'll just get up here and reach...

(FOX gets on the box, BRE'R RABBIT leaps off.)

FOX

Hey! You can't do that. There's a ton of bricks...right... over...my...head.

BRE'R RABBIT

And I would advise you to stay where you are.

FOX

But I just wanted to find your coin.

BRE'R RABBIT

Oh, you can keep it if you find it. But I have to be off. Good hunting.

FOX

Stop. Don't leave me here. This can't end this way.

ALL THE ANIMALS EXCEPT FOX

But it does.

THE END