

THE YEAR OF THE CHILD



A Family Musical

Music, Book & Lyrics by
MICHAEL LANCY

CENTERSTAGE PRESS, INC.
Phoenix Arizona

"THE YEAR OF THE CHILD"

Copyright 1983 by Michael Lancy

Printed in U.S.A.

ISBN: 1-890298-12-3

WARNING: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that THE YEAR OF THE CHILD is subject to royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Empire, including the Dominion of Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional, amateur, motion pictures, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved.

Copying from this script, in whole or in part, by any means is strictly forbidden by law and the right of performance is not transferable. Particular emphasis is laid on the question of amateur or professional readings, permission and terms for which must be secured in written form from Centerstage Press, Inc. Whenever this play is produced the following notice must appear on all programs, printing and advertising for the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Centerstage Press, Inc." Due authorship credit must be given on all programs, printing and advertising for the play. No changes shall be made in the play for the purpose of your production unless authorized in writing.

For all rights apply to:

CenterStage Press • 23425 N. 39th Dr. #104-216 • Glendale, AZ 85310 • (602) 242-1123

CHARACTERS

ME: The host of the play. Although the character is certainly easy going and to an extent, fun-loving, Me also possesses a feeling of "all-knowingness." With some adjustments to the script, Me can be played by a male.

THE CHILD: Very exuberant and intelligent while also curious and, to a degree, innocent. The Child not only represents all the kids in the audience, but the child in all of us.

THE WITCH: A very strange and flamboyant woman indeed, the Witch looks like a witch, and often acts just like one, but is actually a frustrated rock-singer.

ODDITY NUMBER ONE (IRA): One of the witch's assistants, the big and dumb one to be exact.

ODDITY NUMBER TWO: The other assistant, much smaller than Ira. Although he (or she) acts dumb, it's really just a game.

THE LEADER: Can be played by male or female, the Leader is the smart kid in the Forest of Children.

KID ONE: Male or female, Kid One is the tough kid and rather a bully.

OTHER KIDS: There are numerous speaking and singing parts which can be divided at the Director's discretion.

WORRY: The sad and cynical kid in the Forest of Children.

MADAME MONETARY: The wealthiest woman in the Land of Richness and therefore the richest woman on earth. Cold, even cruel, Madame Monetary displays little, if any emotion.

BRINKS: The robot-like butler of Madame Monetary.

EMOTIONS: These people do the work for Madame Monetary; they are her emotions. They are: *Happy, Sad, Nervous, Mad, Inbetween, Obscene, Excited, and Bored.*

SONGS

(in order of performance)

PROLOGUE

"The Year Of The Child" . . .Me
"Rules" . . .Me, Child

AN EERIE PLACE

"The Terrifian, Scarifian Boogie Man"
. . .The Witch & Oddities

THE FOREST OF CHILDREN

"Ain't Life Just Like A Song" . . .Child, and Kids
"The Oath of Childhood" . . .Leader, Child and Kids
"Glad To Be A Kid" . . .Leader, and Kids
"Day Is Done" . . . Leader, and Kids
"When You're Young" . . .Worry
"My Life" . . . Child, and Me

THE LAND OF RICHES

"Money" . . .Madame Monetary and
Emotions
"Emotions" . . .The Emotions

EPILOGUE

"When You Love" . . .Child, and Me
"Together We Can Make It If We Smile"
. . . Company

PRODUCTION NOTE:

The Year Of The Child was originally presented on a national tour and therefore relies heavily upon characterization and just flat-out enthusiasm over and above costumes and props. Subsequently only those elements absolutely necessary to the story are mentioned. The actress who portrays ME also can play the WITCH and MADAME MONETARY. If this is not suitable for your production, there is an appropriate moment in the show for you to switch your actress portraying ME with MADAME MONETARY.

THE YEAR OF THE CHILD

AS THE CURTAIN GOES UP WE HEAR EERIE "SPACE" NOISE...

ME ENTERS BRISKLY AND WALKS DIRECTLY TO CENTER, WHERE THERE IS A LARGE SUNDIAL, TILTED SO THAT WE CANNOT SEE THE FACE OF IT. SHE (OR HE) SNAPS HER FINGERS AND THE SUNDIAL SLOWLY REVOLVES SO THAT WE CAN SEE IT. SHE SNAPS HER FINGERS AGAIN, AND IT TURNS BACK AROUND. SHE THEN NOTICES THE AUDIENCE, SMILES AND CROSSES DOWNSTAGE...

SONG: "THE YEAR OF THE CHILD"

ME: Let me tell my story to ya,
 let me say it just right;
 It's a story for everybody,
 you'll listen if you are bright.
 Oooo Oooo-oooo-oooo it's the year of the child.
 It's coming just for you, the year of the child.

 Merriment and marvels you will see,
 magic tricks and fun for you and me;
 Make a wish to travel to your dreams,
 they're closer than it seems.
 Oooo Oooo-oooo-oooo it's the year of the child.
 It's coming just for you, the year of the child.
 Yes, it's true, it's the year of the child.

ME: (DIRECTLY TO THE AUDIENCE, BRIGHT AND CHEERY) Hello! I'm glad you could be here today. (PROUDLY) This is *THE YEAR OF THE CHILD*. What that means is, this play is called "The Year of the Child." It's a celebration, a jubilee, and it's just for you... (POINTS TO A KID IN THE AUDIENCE)... and you, and you, and you... (THINKS) And me, too. Oh, by the way, that's my name... Me. (TAKES) It really is. It's easy to remember, just think you and me... (SINGS) Mi... mi... mi... (LIKE AN OPERA SINGER) Mi!!!!.... Anyway, our play is just like any other, it has to have three things: An audience, that's you... A stage, that's this... And a story...

THE CHILD APPEARS IN A SHAFT OF WHITE LIGHT UPSTAGE, WITH HER (OR HIS) BACK TO THE AUDIENCE.

ME: (CONT'D, POINTING TO THE CHILD) That's her [him]. This is her story. A year in

the life of...

THE CHILD HAS TURNED AROUND, OBVIOUSLY LOOKING LOST, AND IS CROSSING DOWN TO ME,

CHILD: Excuse me, do you work here?

ME: Well, sort of.

CHILD: (LOOKING AROUND) Uh, then could you tell me something? Where am I?

ME: That's easy. (POINTS) You're right over there.

CHILD: No, I mean where am I? What is this place?

ME: Oh. Well, today we're in *[name of place]* (THE CHILD DOESN'T UNDERSTAND) *[name of city]*... (STILL DOESN'T UNDERSTAND) *[name of state]*...?

CHILD: (CONFUSED) *[name of state]*? What are we doing here?

ME: Well, I know what I'm doing here.

CHILD: That's just great, but what am I doing here?

ME: Didn't you wish to come here?

CHILD: (THINKS) Not that I know of...

ME: (LEADING HER/HIM ON) Are you sure?

CHILD: What do you mean, "am I sure"? Of course I'm... (REALIZES) Oh... (EXCITED) Oh! Is this that place?

ME: Right.

CHILD: (BIGGER) Oh wow! I never thought I'd get to... (LOOKS AT ME, REALIZING) Oh, then you must be--

ME: Yep, that's me. (WINKS AT THE AUDIENCE)

CHILD: Oh wow! (SHAKES ME'S HAND... A LOT) I'm so glad to meet you, I never thought that I'd really get to come here! (STILL PUMPING) Oh, this is super, I can't believe it!

ME: (VOICE SHAKING FROM THE HAND PUMPING) We-ell it's go-od to ha-have you... (PULLS FREE)

CHILD: (LOOKING THE PLACE OVER) Oh, I'm so excited, I never dreamed that it would be like this. This is great, just great. (TURNS TO SHAKE HANDS AGAIN)

ME: (PULLING HER HAND AWAY, JUST IN TIME) I'm glad you like it.

CHILD: (LOOKS AROUND) Oh I do, I really do. (LOOKS AT ME, PAUSE) So you're really her.

ME: (DISTRACTED) Well no, I'm actually Me.

CHILD: (LAUGHS, DOESN'T UNDERSTAND) Well of course you're you.

ME: No I'm not.

CHILD: Not what?

ME: Not you.

CHILD: (PUZZLED) I didn't say you were...

ME: Yes you did. Just a second ago, you said...

CHILD: Yes, I said "You must be her".

ME: (SIGHS) Oh dear, I thought we cleared that up.

CHILD: (FRUSTRATED) Cleared what up?

ME: I am not her, I am ME.

CHILD: (SLOWLY) I know that...

ME: (FRUSTRATED) Well then, why are we talking about this?

CHILD: (PUZZLED) I.. uh... don't know. I just... (GETS AN IDEA) Ahem.What's your name?

ME: Me.

CHILD: Yes, you.

ME: I said, Me.

CHILD: (GETTING ANGRY) Noooo! Who are you?

ME: That's "Who is You" and I really don't know the fellow well enough to talk about him.

CHILD: (GOING CRAZY) Talk about who!?!

ME: Who? How did he get into this?

CHILD: What? (GLARES) What is all this? Are you her?

ME: No.

CHILD: Well then... Who... are...you?!

ME: (CALMING DOWN) Now look, it's very simple. You doesn't come around here very much anymore, Her is in the Bahamas on vacation and Who is playing professional baseball somewhere.

CHILD: (THINKS SHE HAS IT) So... Then you must be--

ME: Me.

CHILD: Right. Sure. You're me.

ME: That's it!! (GLAD THE CHILD FINALLY UNDERSTANDS)

CHILD: Well, if you're me, then who am I?

ME: Maybe that's what we're here to decide.

CHILD: (AMAZED) Maybe so.

ME: Oh, don't worry. Things are a bit confusing at first. But you'll get the hang of it.

CHILD: I hope so. (SLOWLY) This is the right place isn't it? This is that secret Magic Place that I read of... ?

ME: (MORE UNDERSTANDING) Yes, this is it.

CHILD: Phew, good. I was worried there for a second. I thought this was the Twilight Zone or something.

ME: (LAUGHS) Oh, I'm sorry... I really haven't told you much about this place, or why you're here, have I? (CHILD SHAKES HER HEAD) Well, let me explain. (SITS THE CHILD DOWN) This is the place where dreams are made. You've seen it many times before, but always in a different way. You see, this place can be anywhere you want. And it's my job to make it become wherever you want it to be.

CHILD: Really?

ME: Yes. Just think of it as being able to go anyplace in the world without having to walk a single step. Everywhere is here, and Here is always here no matter where you are.

CHILD: I see. I think. But how did I get here?

ME: (SIMPLY) It was your turn.

CHILD: Does that mean everybody gets a chance to come here?

ME: Uh-huh, just once. But only if they want to, or need to.

CHILD: Hmmm, I see.

MUSIC CUE.

ME: (BRIGHTER, FASTER) Well then, let's get started, shall we?

CHILD: (EAGER) Sure!

ME: First, let me explain the rules.

CHILD: Are there rules?

ME: Of course, there are always rules.

CHILD: (DISAPPOINTED) Ah, I was hoping this wasn't going to be like school.

ME: What do you mean?

CHILD: Rules, you know..."Don't do this" and "Don't do that."

ME: Well I'm afraid that the rules are necessary.

SONG: "RULES"

ME: These are the rules that you must know
 that are guaranteed to get you where you want to
 Don't be one of the fools:
 you've got to memorize these rules.

CHILD: (SPOKEN) Memorizing? Hey, I'm really good at memorizing. When I was three I knew my alphabet, five my numbers, then when I turned seven I knew my gazentas.

ME: (SPOKEN) Wait a minute, what are gazentas?

CHILD: (SPOKEN) Don't you know "gazentas"? You know...
Five gazenta ten twice,
three gazenta nine three times--

ME: (CUTTING HER OFF) Well I'm sure you have a very good memory...
(SINGS) Rule number one requires that each and every time
 you want to visit someplace new
 you got to make up a rhyme;
 Just like Edgar Allan Poe,
 You got to rhyme so you can go, go, go!

CHILD: (SPOKEN) Okay, make up a rhyme.

ME: Rule number two says to learn something new
 from all the people you meet.

CHILD: (SPOKEN) Learn something new.

ME: And if your kind I'm sure you'll find
 that everyone will lend a hand
 to the stranger in the land.
 Now do you think you can remember those?

CHILD: (SINGS) Now let me see:
 I gotta make up a rhyme about the place I want to be,
 Like ol' Bob Frost, without a rhyme I would be lost, lost, lost.

ME: (SPOKEN) Not bad.

CHILD: (SPOKEN) Well it's better than "Go, go, go."

ME: (SPOKEN) Alright...
(SINGS) Ah, but rule number two--

CHILD: It says to learn something new,
from all the people I meet, and all the things that I do.
And I'll be kind in my heart--
Now c'mon let's start!

ME: (SPOKEN) Now hold on a minute...
(SINGS) There's just one more thing you must recall,
this is just a play and not real at all;
Sometimes it's hard to see
just what's a play and what's reality.

CHILD: Now I know all three!

BOTH: There are just a few rules that you have to know
that are guaranteed to get you where you want to go.

CHILD: I'll always keep my cool.

ME: (SPOKEN) Uh-huh, that's good.

CHILD: And I'll remember, like in school.

ME: (SPOKEN) Now you're thinking like you should.

CHILD: And I'll never be the fool

ME: (SINGS) --never be the fool

BOTH: 'Cause now I know the rules!

CHILD: (VERY ANXIOUS) Okay, I know the rules. Let's do it!

ME: Not just yet. There's one more thing.

CHILD: (EAGER) Well c'mon, c'mon, what is it?

ME: (PULLS OUT A CARD AND READS) "The term of this agreement shall be one year.
At the end of which time the party of the first part"... that's you... "must return to the
party of the second part"... (SMILES) That's me... "for transportation back to the point of
origin."

CHILD: No problem. A year's along time. I can do a lot in a year.

ME: Well... A year is a long time where you come from, but Here... time just seems to
fly.

CHILD: But how will I now when a year is up?

ME: You can use this.

THE SUNDIAL SLOWLY TURNS AROUND AND A SHAFT OF LIGHT HITS IT. NOW WE CAN SEE THAT, INSTEAD OF HOURS PRINTED ON IT, THERE ARE THE TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR.

CHILD: A sundial.

ME: Right.

CHILD: I know how this works. (SHE CROSSES TO IT) As the sun moves across the sky, it casts a shadow and where the shadow falls, it shows you what time it is.

ME: This one's a little different, though. Rather than hours, it tells the months of the year.

CHILD: Hmm... But how will I be able to see it when I'm away from here?

ME: (CHUCKLES, THEN) You forgot. You're not really going anywhere. The places you want to visit are coming Here.

CHILD: Oh, that's right. (RECITES) "Here is always here no matter where you are".

ME: I'm glad to see you remembered something.

CHILD: (FAST) Oh I remember everything, I just forgot, that's all. Now can we get started, please?

ME: Well, there is one more thing.

CHILD: (EXASPERATED) Now what!?!

ME: Your first rhyme, remember?

CHILD: (EMBARRASSED) Oh yeah, sorry, (THINKS) Now let's see. ..., I can pick any place?

ME: Any place at all.

CHILD: Hmm, . Now where do I want to go first? Oh, there are so many things I'd like to see and do. (SHE HAS IT) I know! I want to go to a place of magic and enchantment; with spirits and, and witches and monsters... Just like the old fairy tales, and...

ME: Ahem.

CHILD: What?

ME: Rhyme please.

CHILD: Okay. (THINKS) Alright. I'm ready.

ME: Fine, Now, stand right over there. (ME TAKES THE CHILD CENTER?... And close your eyes. Think hard about the place you want to visit... Now, recite your rhyme.

CHILD: (CONCENTRATES? A simple journey is never tragic if on the other end is magic; So take me to a strange new place, where spirits haunt and witches pace.

ME WAVES HER HANDS SLOWLY ABOVE THE CHILD AND SHAFTS OF PULSATING LIGHT APPEAR... THE LIGHTING THEN ALTERS TO SUGGEST A DARK AND SHADOWY PLACE. WE HEAR STRANGE FOREST SOUNDS; MAYBE AN OWL OR PERHAPS A HOWLING WOLF.

ME: (BACKING AWAY, EXITING) Call me if you need me...

THE CHILD OPENS HER EYES AND LOOKS AROUND. SHE IS CURIOUS BUT NOT AFRAID. SUDDENLY THE WITCH APPEARS, PARTIALLY HIDDEN IN THE SHADOWS BUT IN VIEW OF THE AUDIENCE. BUT THE CHILD DOESN'T SEE HER. SHE SNEAKS UP ON THE CHILD AND IS ABOUT TO POUNCE ON HER WHEN SHE TURNS AROUND. THIS SCARES THE WITCH TO DEATH AND SHE GIVES OUT A BLOOD CURDLING SCREAM WHICH, IN TURN, SCARES THE CHILD.

WITCH: Aaaaaiiiiiieeee!!!! Don't ever do that!! You scared me half to death!

CHILD: I'm sorry, but you frightened me.

WITCH: Frightened you? Baby, you scared the socks off me!

CHILD: I didn't mean to. I just turned around and you were there.

WITCH: Yes, I know (SLOWLY LOOKS HER OVER) Hey... Who are you anyway? You from the I.R.S.?

CHILD: Well, no... I--

WITCH: (JUMPING IN) Now look, I told you guys that thing in Vegas was just an accident; I didn't know those stupid slot machines were gonna do that. I mean I was just cruisin' by. It wasn't my fault!

CHILD: I, uh... I'm not with the I.R.S.

WITCH: You're not?

CHILD: Nope.

WITCH: (RELIEVED) Phew, good. (LOOKS SUSPICIOUSLY AT THE CHILD) Well then who are you? What are you doing here?

CHILD: Well, I just thought it would be a nice place to visit so I..

WITCH: Oh no, not another one of those,

CHILD: Another one of what?

WITCH: Tourists! (OBVIOUS DISTASTE IN HER VOICE) You tourists are a real pain. Always snoopin' around into my business, taking pictures, makin' a lot of racket... What a hassle!

CHILD: Well I...

WITCH: Don't you know this is a dangerous place to be?

CHILD: Dangerous?

WITCH: (TRYING TO MAKE IT SOUND SCARY) Sure... Dangerous...

CHILD: I don't see anything dangerous around here.

WITCH: (IMPERSONATING BORIS KARLOFF) Oooo but there is...

CHILD: What?

WITCH: All kinds of spirits and monsters, and witches like me. OOOOOOooooowowww
wwwooooo!!!! (TRYING TO BE AS FRIGHTENING AS POSSIBLE, BUT THE CHILD IS
NOT IMPRESSED) Aren't you scared of me? (EVIL LAUGH)

CHILD: (PAUSE) I don't think so.

WITCH: (HURT) Well I never.

THE WITCH STARTS TO STORM OFF POUTING, BUT THE CHILD TRIES TO FLATTER
HER INTO STAYING.

CHILD: Alright, alright... I'm frightened of you; I mean you are really scary. Look, see?

I'm shaking all over... (SPAZZES IT UP A BIT)

WITCH: Well that's better. You should have a little more respect for a working member of the guild.

CHILD: Guild? What guild?

WITCH: FOW!

CHILD: FOW?

WITCH: Yes, the Fraternal Order of Witches, Local One Eighty-two. (SHOWS HER BADGE)

CHILD: Oh. Say, do you know anything about magic?

WITCH: (BRAGGING) Do I know anything about magic? Do pigs have wings?

CHILD: (PUZZLED) No.

WITCH: Huh? Oh no, I mean do birds have wings...

CHILD: Well, sure.

WITCH: Well, alright then. See?

CHILD: See what?

WITCH: (NOSE-TO-NOSE) Look kid you're getting on my nerves. Now do you want to see some magic or not?!!!!

CHILD: Sure I do. I'd love to.

WITCH: Okay then, I'll go get my stuff. I'll be right back. Here, amuse yourself with this until I get back. (SHE HANDS THE CHILD A BOX, VERY NEATLY WRAPPED) But what ever you do... don't open it.

CHILD: Why not?

WITCH: (BAITING THE CHILD) It's a surprise.

CHILD: Oh, I won't.

THE WITCH EXITS--- WITH A KNOWING GLANCE TO THE AUDIENCE.

CHILD: (LOOKING AT THE BOX) Hmm... It's a surprise, huh? Wonder what it is... ? (SHE LOOKS AT THE BOX FROM ALL ANGLES. FINALLY THE TEMPTATION BECOMES TOO GREAT AND SHE OPENS THE BOX, HALF EXPECTING RUBBER SNAKES TO COME FLYING OUT. SHE LOOKS INSIDE)... It's empty.

WITCH: (ENTERING) Surprise, surprise..

THE WITCH CROSSES DOWN STAGE TO THE CHILD, FOLLOWED BY HER TWO ASSISTANTS; VERY STRANGE LOOKING FELLOWS WHO RESEMBLE A MONSTERESQUE LAUREL AND HARDY, WHO ARE CARRYING A LARGE TRUNK.

CHILD: (GUILTY) Oh, uh... It was an accident, really, I uh...

WITCH: (NOT CONVINCED) Sure kid, sure.

CHILD: (PICKING UP THE SCRAPS OF PAPER) Uh... I can wrap it back up .

WITCH: Don't worry about it kid ? I got a million of 'em. (TAKES THE BOX AND HANDS IT TO ONE OF THE ASSISTANTS) Here, Ira.

IRA TAKES THE BOX AND OPENS IT. THIS TIME A LARGE SNAKE FLIES OUT AND THEY ALL JUMP. THE OTHER ASSISTANT PICKS IT UP AND STARTS TO EAT IT. THEN IRA JOINS IN, BUT THE WITCH SMACKS THEIR HANDS. NEEDLESS TO SAY THESE TWO ARE REALLY DUMB.

WITCH: Cool it, it's not time for dinner yet, (THEY POUT AS SHE TURNS HER ATTENTION BACK TO THE CHILD) Now like I was saying... I've got a million of 'em. Any kind of magic trick there is, I know how to do. Go ahead, try me. Ask me to do anything.

CHILD: Uh... (POINTS TO THE AUDIENCE) Can you make them disappear?

WITCH: Uh, no Would you like to see me pull a chicken out of my hat?

CHILD: No. I want you to make them--

WITCH: (THREATENINGLY) I said, would you like to see me pull a chicken out of my hat?!!

CHILD: Sure. Sure!

WITCH: Alright then, stand back. (SHE AND THE ASSISTANTS HUDDLE AROUND HER HAT, SHE BEGINS THE INCANTATION) Abracadabra... Zingo... Zango... Fritz!!! (THERE IS A FLASH AND A PUFF OF SMOKE. THEY ALL COUGH) Now,there... you

see? Nothing up my sleeve. (SHE PULLS IT UP TO REVEAL FOUR ACES) Oooops! Well, almost nothing. Anyway, now... (REACHES INTO THE HAT) As I promised... A chicken!!! (SHE PULLS OUT A BIG CHICKEN LEG, KENTUCKY FRIED) Hmmmm? (EMBARRASSED) Must have been a bit warm in there. Uh... How about another trick?

SHE THROWS THE CHICKEN LEG OVER HER SHOULDER AND ONE OF THE ASSISTANTS CATCHES IT AND EATS IT.

CHILD: (PUZZLED) Okay...

WITCH: I know. I'll show you how to make something disappear. Where's my hat? (GLANCING AROUND?)

CHILD: (REAL FUNNY) It disappeared.

WITCH: (TAKES) Ha, ha. Cute kid, (THE ASSISTANT FINISHES THE CHICKEN LEG, TOSSES IT INTO THE HAT AND HANDS THE HAT TO THE WITCH) Ah, yes... Here it is. Thank you, Ira. (HE CURTSIES) Now..I am going to make this chicken leg disappear. Would you like that?

CHILD: (LOSING INTEREST) Swell.

WITCH: (INCANTING) Abracadabra.. . Wart... Navel... itch... (DRAMATICALLY SHE REACHES INTO THE HAT AND PULLS OUT THE HALF EATEN LEG) Ta Da!!! (SHE TAKES) Well at least I made most of it disappear... (GIVES A GLARE TO IRA, IRA POINTS TO THE OTHER ASSISTANT AND HE, IN TURN, POINTS TO IRA, WHO BELCHES COPIOUSLY) Gesundheit! (SHE PATS IRA ON THE HEAD, THEN TURNS TO THE CHILD) Now, how about one more?

Child: Well, I...

WITCH: Now, let's see, what else can I do?

CHILD: Uh... I know you're busy and probably don't have much time, so... uh, you don't have to...

WITCH: Nonsense, nonsense. I'd love to. (SHE THINKS) Hmmmm, I know. I'll do the trick where I saw one of my assistants in half. Yes, that would be a nice closing routine. (THE ASSISTANTS START SNEAKING AWAY; SHE SEES THEM) Now, which one of you would like to try it this time?!?!

THEY BOTH GRUMBLE AND POINT TO THE OTHER.

CHILD: Really, I don't want to put you to any trouble.

WITCH: No trouble at all. (IRRITATED) Now which of you will...

CHILD: (INTERVENING) Uh, perhaps you'd like to try something a bit simpler...

WITCH: Like what for instance?

CHILD: Oh, I don't know. Maybe you could, uh...

WITCH: (AGGRESSIVE) I know, I could turn you into a frog!

CHILD: No, that's okay. You see I really have to be going and I can't...

WITCH: Oh no, you must stay awhile, please. Besides, it's been a long time since I've had someone to practice on.

THE ASSISTANTS AGREE.

CHILD: Practice?!

WITCH: Of course. You know the old saying: "Practice makes practice."

CHILD: Well, I've never heard it put quite that way before. But really I must be--

WITCH: Tut-tut-tut, my friend. You wouldn't want me to get upset at you... now would you?

THE ASSISTANTS GESTURE "NO" TO THE CHILD.

CHILD: No. But...

WITCH: No "buts"! (TO ASSISTANTS) Just put her over there. (GESTURES TO A LARGE TABLE WHICH APPEARS CENTER)

CHILD: (AS THE ASSISTANTS GRAB HOLD OF HER) Hey! What's going on? What are you doing?!

WITCH: Now, now, there's nothing to get upset about. I've done this many times before.

CHILD: (UPSET) I don't care, I...

WITCH: Oh, you really must care; it won't work out right unless you care.

CHILD: Alright, I care!

WITCH: You know, that's the biggest problem nowadays. No one really cares anymore. Now back when I was starling out in "show-biz"...

CHILD: (TRYING TO GET HER ON ANOTHER SUBJECT) Oh? Show-biz? You mean you were in show business?

WITCH: Oh sure. But that was quite awhile ago... Before I became a licensed witch. (DREAMY) Ahhh, those were the good 'ol days. Up at dawn, then practice, practice, practice...

CHILD: 'Practice makes practice.'

WITCH: Yeah. (CAUGHT UP IN A WAVE OF NOSTALGIA) What a life. Six shows a week, bookings pouring in from all over the country... .recording offers, T.V. commercials... Ah we were really something else.

CHILD: I'll bet you were. But you said "we"?

WITCH: Yeah, me and the boys here. We had a group.

CHILD: A group?

WITCH: Yeah, you know a singing group. (THE ASSISTANTS ARE NOSTALGIC TOO) We were called The Oddities, and we were the hottest thing going at the time, weren't we boys? (THEY RESPOND... SORT OF) Me singing lead, the boys playing rhythms and doing back-ups. Why we had more hits than anybody else. Top sellers too! Like:"Kiss Me Drac, My Tonsils Itch." Remember that?

CHILD: Sorry, missed it.

WITCH: Too bad. Oh, and there was (SINGING) "I Left My Heart Down in The Laboratory". (TO THE ASSISTANTS) Remember that one? (THEY GRUNT WITH EXCITEMENT) Oh!!! And do you remember our greatest hit of all!?!?!? "The Terrifian, Scarifian Boogie Man"? Let's hit it, boys!

THEY PULL OUT MICROPHONES AND GUITARS FROM THE TRUNK AND START TO WAIL.

SONG: "THE TERRIFIAN, SCARIFIAN BOOGIE MAN"

WITCH: Walkin' past the graveyard, gettin' on midnight,
watch yourself or you might get a sudden fright;
'Cause there's a spirit lurkin' and he roams the land,

and he will try to get you if he thinks he can!

WITCH & ASSISTANTS: He's a real cool boy,
mama's pride and joy,
The terrifian, scarifian boogie man!
The boo-boo-boo-boo-boo boogie man!

ASSISTANT: Bop-doowah (etc.)

WITCH: Once upon a time they say he wasn't bad,
but someone tried to catch him and that made him mad;
So now he frightens everyone, no "ifs" or "ens"
and no one knows just how to stop his evil plans.

WITCH & ASSISTANTS: He's a real flip-out,
I ain't jokin' about,
The terrifian, scarifian boogie man!
The boo-boo-boo-boo-boo boogie man!

Ooooo he's comin! Can't keep a good boogie down.
If you see him, you'd better head right out of town!

(DANCE BREAK WITH "AIR" GUITAR SOLO)

ASSISTANTS: Oooooooo he's comin'!
WITCH: Comin'! Comin'! Comin'!
ASSISTANTS: Can't keep a good boogie down!
WITCH: Boogie down, down!
ALL THREE: If you see him, you better head right out of town!

WITCH: You know he's gonna find you in the dark someday,
ASSISTANTS: Bop-doowah! (etc.)
WITCH: No one knows just how but he has his ways;
So baby if you even want to stand a chance,
you'd better not be there when he comes out to dance.

WITCH & ASSISTANTS: If you're walkin' alone,
you better get on home!
The terrifian, scarifian boogey man!
The boo-boo-boo-boo-boo boogey man!
The boo-boo-boo-boo-boo boogey man!
The boo-boo-boo-boo-boo boogey... .
... Man!!!!

<End of excerpt>