

The Day's Wages
SAMPLE SAMPLE SAMPLE SAMPLE SAMPLE

By

Robby Van Arsdale

Matthew 20:1-16
Matthew 25:14-30

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Cast of Characters

<u>Mark/Sophie Cage:</u>	A used-car salesman and depressed magician.
<u>Jo:</u>	A young juggling enthusiast.
<u>Melizabeth:</u>	A conductor who is a bit oblivious to her friends, but good-hearted.
<u>Danthyony:</u>	A frustrated do-it-yourself-er (at first) with a bit of an obscure talent.
<u>Quentin:</u>	An Instagram influencer who's on a collision course for trouble.
<u>Hana:</u>	An employee of the RPotP
<u>Paulo:</u>	An employee of the RPotP
<u>The Richest Person on the Planet:</u>	Just what it says on the tin (except inside the tin, you find a metaphor for God)
<u>Uncle D(iablo):</u>	An old man who wants nothing more than to trap you at his B&B.

SUNDAY

Scene 1

Talents

ENTER Sophie RIGHT

He is carrying a prop car made from cardboard and sets it down center stage. We're on a used-car-lot.

SOPHIE

What a beautiful morning. Yet another day in which nothing will happen and I will accomplish none of my dreams.

Well! No time to feel down about it! I've got work to do!

EXIT Sophie RIGHT

ENTER Sophie RIGHT

He is carrying a second cardboard car.

Yes, indeed. Another totally normal day at Sophie Cage's Car Stage, the only used car lot that guarantees a magical visit each and every time! --each and every time, huh? Nothing ever changes.

Let's check the weather on the car radio.

ANNOUNCER

(offstage, into a microphone perhaps,
filtered if possible to sound distant)

--and that's why the richest person on the planet is inviting you to win an amazing prize. Yes, certainly something big is happening!

And in weather news, same as yesterday:
sunshiny-perfect, with a hint of spring flowers.
Tomorrow, more of the same!

SOPHIE

What did I say? Always the same around here. Yet another day in which nothing will happen and I will accomplish none of my dreams.

Well! I've got to get ready for the day, huh?

EXIT Sophie RIGHT

ENTER Winona and Westley LEFT

WINONA

Hello? Is anybody here?

WESTLEY

This car lot looks abandoned, Winona. I don't know about this. I'm getting shaky.

WINONA

Baking? I don't see what baking has to do with it. This is a car lot, Westley. There are no cakes, here. We just have to talk to this sales representative.

She turns to the prop car.

Excuse me, can you show us the sort of car we want to drive?

WESTLEY

That's not a person, Winona. What are you even looking at?

From backstage, an enormous crash.

Okay, I'm legitimately terrified. You know how much I hate surprises. If I scream, it's not my fault.

Winona grabs him.

WINONA

A cup of salt!?! Westley, if I've told you once I've told you a thousand times: this is a car lot, not a kitchen.

WESTLEY

You remember the last car lot we went to. It was run by-- it was run by *jugglers*.

WINONA

There's nothing wrong with jugglers. You live in a circus town, you're gonna get some circus people, okay?

WESTLEY

I hate jugglers. They always drop something and I shriek. And clowns. They're always suddenly shorter or taller than they were and you can't keep track of them. But you know who's the worst of the lot? Do you know who always jumps out to surprise you?

WINONA

Calm down. Certainly no one is going to jump out and surprise us.

ENTER Sophie CENTER

He is dressed like magician. He jumps out and surprises them. I like to think he does a forward roll and comes to his feet with a jump and a flourish, holding his hat.

SOPHIE

Ta-dah!

Westley screams.

WINONA

Oh, stop screaming.

SOPHIE

Welcome to the Sophie Cage Car Stage, the only used car lot in town that is guaranteed to dazzle your donuts each and every time. What kind of car can I show you today?

WESTLEY

Car? Ignore the car! I'm having a heart attack. I can feel my blood racing through my eyes. I think I'm dying. Do you have a glass of water?

SOPHIE

I don't, actually. But, wait, what's this? It looks like you do.

Sophie reaches behind Westley's ear and pulls out a cup. This is stage magic of the most inane kind and I'm very pleased when I think about it.

WESTLEY

Aaah!

(getting closer, suspicious and curious)

How did you do that?

SOPHIE

I'm Marc Cage, a salesman mage for the magic age. But it seems like you already knew that; you have my business card behind your ear.

Sophie reaches behind Westley's ear and pulls out a business card.

WESTLEY

AAH! Did you see, Winona?

WINONA

See what?

WESTLEY

The salesman, Winona. He did magic to me.

WINONA

I didn't see any magic, Westley. You must be making things up. I didn't see . . . anything.

WESTLEY

One of these days, Winona. We will go to an eye doctor and have your eyes looked at.

WINONA

Looped cats nothing, Westley. I'm here to pick out a car.

Sophie fans out a deck of cards.

SOPHIE

Pick a card, you say? Pick any card. I promise I won't look.

Sophie puts a hand over his eyes.

Winona walks over to one of the prop vehicles.

Westley is left standing between them, the audience foil, looking distressed.

WINONA

Well, I quite like this one on the end.

SOPHIE

(pulling one card from the deck with his eyes still closed)

This one?

WINONA

Yes, but I wonder if it's too flashy for me. What do you think, Westley?

WESTLEY

I think that if there's nothing wrong with your eyes, there's certainly nothing wrong with your ears.

WINONA

That's just what I've been saying all along, Westley.

SOPHIE

I'm a little confused. Are you still going to pick this card?

WINONA

Well, I don't know. It seems a little paper-thin.

Winona picks up the prop car and rotates it around so the audience can see it's made of cardboard.

SOPHIE

Well, yes, it's made of paper.

WINONA

Is that normal?

SOPHIE

Oh, sometimes they're made from plastic.

WINONA

Oh, my! What will they think of next?

WESTLEY

Okay, you two. The whole situation is getting just a little silly. It feels like it's building to a surprise, and I don't like that. Does anybody know what's going on?

SOPHIE

Yes, I know what's going on. You've come to Sophie Cage's Car Stage, the only used car lot in town that guarantees your car will not disappear each and every time.

WINONA

Well, that sounds good enough for me. This hunk of junk--do you think it can get us to Oregon? We're off on the Oregon trail and we need to get there fast.

WESTLEY

The word on the street is that the wealthiest person on the planet is set up there and she's just giving out money to anybody that shows up.

WINONA

So we've gotta get there, and fast, before the money is all gone.

WESTLEY

Right. And that's why we've got to have this car.

WINONA

The one on the end.

Sophie holds up the card again.

SOPHIE

This one.

WINONA

Yes.

WESTLEY

No.

Sophie and Winona speak at the same time, indicating different things.

SOPHIE

This one.

WINONA

This one.

WESTLEY

Yes. Wait, no. I mean no, but yes.

SOPHIE

Very good. Without peeking, I'll just shuffle it into the deck, like so, and ask you to stand back while I do a little magic. You see, at Sophie Cage's Car Stage, we're the only used car lot in town that guarantees to bend the rules of the universe each and every time. And! Was your card the ACE OF HEARTS?

WINONA

No, I've never heard of a spaceship car. This one looks like a Toyota.

SOPHIE

No, ACE OF HEARTS!

WINONA

No, it's definitely a Toyota.

Sophie opens his eyes and examines his cards.

SOPHIE

That's strange. This has never happened before. I've never failed a trick. Is there something wrong with these cards?

WESTLEY

Listen, friend. We're just looking to get a ride, not a surprise. I hate surprises.

WINONA

We like this one. We'll take it.

WESTLEY

So if we could just buy this car, we're going to Oregon to become rich beyond our wildest dreams.

SOPHIE

Hold on; I just want to try again.

WESTLEY

No! No magic tricks.

SOPHIE

It'll work this time, you'll see. Pick a card, any card.

WINONA

We've already picked this one.

SOPHIE

Which one?

WINONA

This one.

SOPHIE

One where?

WINONA

No, one there.

SOPHIE

There can't be noone there. We're here.

WESTLEY

We certainly are: one, two, three.

SOPHIE

Three? You want three cards?

WINONA

A free car? Well, if you say so I won't complain.

SOPHIE

Complain all you want, but I need you to watch my magic trick!

WESTLEY

AAargh! Just . . . stop for a second. This is getting silly. You, magician? How can you even tell what's going on? You're supposed to be selling us a car or whatever and you have your eyes closed the whole time.

SOPHIE

I can tell what's going on just fine with my eyes closed. I can tell that you have on a blue shirt, for example.

Westley is not wearing a blue shirt on top; it is a shirt of some other color, but split down the back and with snaps put in down the new seam so it can perform this next magic trick.

WESTLEY

No, I don't.

SOPHIE

That's strange.

Sophie opens his eyes.

My magic tricks never fail. See?

Sophie reaches out and grabs Westley's shirt by the front and pulls it off him. Westley shrieks. If you've done a good job with the snaps in the back and if I'm not insane, the new back seam will give way and Westley's shirt can just fly off over his arms. It would be really lovely if the shirt underneath were an identical pattern, but blue (or whatever color Sophie has said). If not, no big problem. Just match the color of the script to the shirt.

It would be nice to pause here to let the audience notice that Westley has gone apoplectic.

WINONA

Sorry, Westley, say it again? I couldn't quite make it out.

WESTLEY

Gwaalnk.

WINONA

Yes, probably.

WESTLEY

Ogonga.

WINONA

I shouldn't think so. I mean, it's free after all.

SOPHIE

Now, if I could just perform this magic trick.

He covers his eyes and holds up the cards.

WESTLEY

Pobobobobo.

SOPHIE

Believe.

WINONA

Leave? Okay.

She shoves Westley towards the car.
Come on, Westley. No, you've got to drive. Remember my eyes? Not that side, that side!

WESTLEY

Epa--epaa.

While Sophie talks, the two get "into" the prop car. Westley is in the front seat "driving." He is still stunned, obviously. He starts to drive, slowly, and Winona screams directions at him from the backseat. Sophie interprets these as directions for him.

SOPHIE

This side? Okay. I've selected your card. Look at it carefully. I'm going to place it back in the deck. Where should I put it.

WINONA

Left! No, right! Your other left! Try left again! Not that left, the other way! Now you've got it. Go!

EXIT Westley and Winona LEFT

SOPHIE

Now! I will shuffle. I can hear that you're waiting for some real magic. Holding your breath. Everything is practically humming with silent anticipation for the master magician to reveal . . . Your! Card!

Big flourish. Long pause.

Wait. Where did they go? That's not what that card trick was supposed to do. I'm supposed to find a card . . . in the deck. But I made a car . . . disappear. I've never done such a big trick before, and never with my eyes closed.

Huh.

That's weird. I thought this would just be another day in which nothing would happen and I would accomplish none of my dreams.

He goes into a big think.

What if . . . what if today is the day something finally happens and I accomplish my dreams? Pfft. No. This is Sophie Cage's Car Stage, the only used car lot in town that is guaranteed to ensure nothing will happen and I will accomplish none of my dreams. Every time. Nothing ever changes.

Sophie picks up the other car.

EXIT Sophie RIGHT

(offstage)

Wait!

ENTER Sophie RIGHT

That fellow forgot his shirt! I've got to get it back to him.

Sophie scoops up the shirt.

EXIT Sophie LEFT

Scene 2

ENTER Jo LEFT

She is carrying a barstool or a high table.

JO

What a beautiful morning! Yet another day in which something will happen and I'll get a chance to accomplish my dreams. I've been waiting for so long. I just know I'll get a chance today.

She puffs up her chest and smiles.

Well, I guess I'll just check the time to see if I've got to open the shop yet.

She pulls out her phone.

Only three minutes until opening time. That means I have time to check notdroppings things dot com, the social networking site for jugglers.

Oh.

Haha! Juggmaster 2010, you shouldn't have.

Ooh, What's this? It says "The richest person on the planet blah blah blah . . . final destination Oregon, so on and so forth, riches beyond your wildest imaginations yada yada etcetera etcetera . . .

A talent show? Hold on: make your way to your local talent show to show off your own unique talent. You too could accomplish your dreams!

ENTER Pops LEFT

POPS

Jo, are you dilly-dallyin' around with some fiddle-faddle on your pocket computer?

JO

Oh, Pops. I'm just checking the juggling news.

POPS

Put that thing away; it's time to open for the day. Treetop Pop's Teacup Shop has never opened late once in the sixty years I've owned it. Today won't be the first time. Now git! You've gotta set up the display.

EXIT Jo LEFT

When will that girl learn that followin' your dreams is about as far-fetched as a turtle with a racin' stripe?

ENTER Winnifred RIGHT

WINNIFRED

Hello; is the shop open yet?

POPS

Not quite! We've got about thirty seconds until . . .

<gasp> Jo! Jo, speed it up! We've only got about thirty seconds until the shop opens for the day!

WINNIFRED

I can come back . . .

POPS

You wait right there. We'll open on time or my name's not Treetop Pop of the Teacup Shop.

WINNIFRED

I bet your name is Pop, right?

POPS

You wouldn't want to bet with me; I happen to know!

ENTER Jo LEFT

She is moving at high speed. She is carrying three cups but she "almost drops one" and starts to juggle them. I have no idea how this will go; juggling cups is hard enough when you're standing still and good at juggling. Honestly, if she drops them or maintains them, either is good.

JO

Oh, oop whoah, oh no! Hup hup uh oops--

How wonderful if Jo could maintain control of the cups slapping them one by one down on the table while she juggles the remainder, taking a bow with the last cup.

How hilarious if she just drops them all as she tries to do this. Honestly, I can't see that it matters, and introducing a bit of randomness to a play always brings it alive, right? RIGHT?

AGREE WITH ME

WINNIFRED

That girl's a natural-born juggler.

JO

Do you think so? Do you really think so?

POPS

Now listen here, uh, uh . . .

WINNIFRED

My name is Winnifred.

POPS

Right. Listen here, Wimblefrip. This youngun has enough bad ideas in her head without you goin' and givin' her one more. You don't understand.

Jo wanders to one side.

JO

There's a talent show in town.

POPS

I heard tell there's a talent show in town. She's liable to start thinkin' she could go.

JO

Maybe I could go! I tell you, something will happen, and I'll get a chance to accomplish my dreams!

POPS

If she goes, something's gonna happen, and she'll NEVER accomplish her dreams.

WINNIFRED

<gasp!>

POPS

<gasp!>

WINNIFRED

(whispered)

Wait, why are you gasping!?

POPS

(whispered)

I dunno. I thought you saw something suspicious!

JO

Pops?

POPS

(whispered)

Yes?

(not whispered)

I mean, Yes?

JO
I'm going to the talent show to try my hand at juggling professionally.

POPS
I wouldn't if I were you.

JO
I would if I were me, and that's just it: I am me. I'm going to go juggle my way to dreamland!

Jo pulls out her phone.

Oh, no! The competition has already begun! I've gotta go!

EXIT Jo RIGHT

POPS
Jo, wait, come back! Oh, fiddlesticks. That young woman is in for a nasty surprise.

WINNIFRED
What kind of surprise?

POPS
A nasty one!

WINNIFRED
I mean . . . what's going to happen?

POPS
It's a long story; perhaps you'd like some tea out of one of my finest teacups?

WINNIFRED
Maybe later. You were saying?

POPS
Well, a long time ago, long before you were born, I was known as Treetop Pop.

WINNIFRED
They called you pop? How old were you?

POPS
Don't interrupt. Anyhow, I was working at the circus as a trapeze artist. Oh, was I good. BUT! At that time, a legend arrived at the circus. I never got a good clean look at their face, but they were about yea tall and they had an enormous belly out to here and they were better at every blessed thing in the circus than everyone else. This tall fool out-juggled the jugglers, out-cycled the elephants, out-lifted the strongman,

(MORE)

POPS (cont'd)
out-shaved the bearded lady, and even out-trapezed me,
Treetop Pop.

Pause.

WINNIFRED
And?

POPS
Well, that's just it, you see? That's the end of the
story, really. We were all out of business and out of a
job. This circus town hasn't been the same ever since.
And I hear tell the tall stranger is goin' to the
talent show. Jo don't stand no chance.

WINNIFRED
Okay, so first: that really wasn't that long of a
story.

Pops makes an indignant noise.
Secondly, you're--well, forgive me for saying so, but
you're ancient. Wouldn't this circus-ruining expert
also be getting old? They can't be that strong and
skilled anymore.

POPS
Oh, can't they? Huuwah! Shooo! Haaaaa.

Pops makes like he's on a trapeze.

WINNIFRED
Right. So, essentially: you're saying that nobody has a
chance as long as this mysterious stranger is in town.

POPS
No, you've got it all wrong. I'm saying that as long as
this mysterious stranger is in town, nobody has a
chance!

WINNIFRED
Okay. Well, are you going to stop Jo from competing, or
. . . .?

POPS
Oh, right! Quick! Help me pick up these here cups, and
we'll be on our way, Winderflim!

WINNIFRED
Winnifred, but sure.

POPS

Hurry up! Maybe we're not too late!

Pops picks up the cups and rushes off-stage

EXIT Pops RIGHT

Winnifred looks at the table, shrugs, and picks it up to follow.

EXIT Winnifred RIGHT

Scene 3

The talent show is already underway, of course.

ENTER Announcer and Sandy CENTER

ANNOUNCER

The talent show is well underway, and we're on to our sixtieth contestant. Our next act is Sandy the Strong. Everybody--give it up for Saaaaandyyyyyy!

We're relying on the audience cheering. Sandy can ad-lib something to get them excited.

Sandy is going to lift seven hundred pounds directly overhead, a feat that only Sampson and Hercules could dream of. Alright everybody, a drumroll for Sandy.

The announcer can get everyone to drumroll on their knees.

From CENTER, Sandy rolls out a weight. I'm going to use a pvc pipe painted silver or black with big bits of black or grey foam on the end. I'm lucky enough to have those in my props shed, but if you don't, bon chance.

Sandy makes a big show of silencing the crowd, adopts a serious look, and then struggles mightily to get the weight off the ground.

As this is happening, the Stranger enters. They are clearly two people in a trenchcoat. To reinforce this, they say all their lines together, which is a bad idea and cannot but end badly with one of them flubbing or getting out of sync, which is not a bad idea at all DON'T YOU AGREE??

It's very funny is the point.

I'm thinking about how to do this, since a trenchcoat wouldn't actually cover two people with the knees and all that at the "midsection" and no trenchcoat would come down far enough. So maybe I'll extend a trenchcoat by tearing out the back seam and adding an expansion panel and then extending the bottom with some comparable material another three feet or so. We'll see. The bottom person also needs to be able to see, so we'll see might not be accurate.

Brooke (my sister, a celebrated genius) had a great idea. Two trenchcoats would do it. If the top person wears a trench coat and then buttons a second trench coat around their waist, that should have the same function as a very long trench coat. It'll be torturously hot for the bottom person, so maybe we'll figure out how to do that a little better. Still thinking.

Just as Sandy lifts the weight up, the Stranger reaches out with one hand and lifts the weight even higher.

STRANGER

Puny little weakling! You'll be looking up to me for the rest of your life!

ANNOUNCER

Ooh, Sandy. Sorry about that. It looks like we have another contestant shown up by this tall stranger. Will anyone be able to show a skill that they cannot immediately elevate?
Better luck next time, Sandy.

STRANGER

Hahaha get on my level!

EXIT Sandy CENTER

ANNOUNCER

Who will be next to try their luck?

ENTER Lion Tamer and Lion CENTER

LION TAMER

I bet you can't do *this!*

ANNOUNCER

An act with a big cat! Let's see this!

The lion tamer and lion pose, looking away from each other, bow, and then snap into kung-fu poses. The tamer has their chair up, and the lion roars.

The tamer often lowers the chair, and the lion jumps forward two steps to roar, and the tamer whips the chair up again. The lion dances back. This dance takes place three times, then the tamer yells, and the lion roars, and both bow to the audience again.

STRANGER

Get out of my way. Watch how a master does it.

LION TAMER

If you think you've got what it takes, then I'll give you a shot.

The lion tamer holds out the chair and the stranger walks directly between the tamer and the lion, turns, and pushes the lion out of the way. The stranger pauses and then snaps into the lion's kung-fu pose (or something like it).

The tamer looks a lot less composed this time around. Each time the stranger dances forward and roars, the tamer looks like they are legitimately protecting themselves from the stranger. Finally, the stranger takes their final steps back and really lets loose a double-throated roar, then bursts into laughter.

STRANGER

Hahahaha! You'll be looking up . . . my name in the record books.

EXIT Lion and Lion Tamer CENTER

ANNOUNCER

Well, that was our last talent show contestant. Will there be anyone else? It doesn't look like anyone has signed up.

ENTER Sophie LEFT

Aha, a new face. What's your talent, sir?

SOPHIE

Me? Oh, nothing.

ANNOUNCER

Surely you must be excited for something to happen as you try to accomplish your dreams!

SOPHIE

I'm just looking for a man who's not wearing this shirt. Has anyone seen a man not wearing this shirt?

ANNOUNCER

You're not here to show off your talent?

SOPHIE

I'm really just here to give his shirt back. I just work at Sophie Cage's Car Stage, the only used car lot in town guaranteed to rev your engines each and every time.

ANNOUNCER

I guess that's it, then. There's no one else willing to face the tall stranger, is there?

JO

(offstage)

There's one more!

ANNOUNCER

Who could that be?

ENTER Jo RIGHT

This puts the Announcer and Stranger at center stage and Jo and Sophie on either side.

JO

It could be Jo!

ANNOUNCER

But is it Jo?

JO

(suddenly hesitant)

Y-yes. Was that not clear?

ANNOUNCER

What is your talent, young person whose name, I guess, is Jo?

JO

I'm a juggler! I just know that today something will happen, and I'll accomplish my dreams!

SOPHIE

Woah, what is this incredible energy? She seems unstoppable. I wish I were like that.

ANNOUNCER

What are you proposing to juggle?

JO

Yes.

ANNOUNCER

Juggle what?

JO

Wait, I was supposed to bring that with me? Nuts. Well, something will happen.

STRANGER

It seems you're short . . . a few beanbags in the brain!

JO

Dear Jesus, it turns out I need something to juggle. I'm just going to have faith that you have a plan for me to thrive in this moment. Amen.

Everybody pauses.

SOPHIE

Now what?

JO

I don't know. It'll either happen or it won't.

ENTER Pops and Winnifred RIGHT

Pops is still carrying the cups. Winnifred is still carrying the table/barstool.

POPS

No, stop! They're too much for you! You'll never be able to out juggle them!

JO

Treetop Pops! But what about the Teacup Shop? You never open late!

POPS

I ain't never opened late, but I've closed early more times than I can count. I had to come save you, Jo!

STRANGER

You again, old man?

POPS

Yes, it's me again, tall . . . person.

(to Winnifred)

You see what I mean? They're just on a higher level than everyone else.

JO

Just because they're taller doesn't mean they're better at stuff. I'm not afraid. Besides, God answered my prayer.

SOPHIE

He did?

ANNOUNCER

He did! How?

Jo takes the three cups from Pops and walks out to center stage, putting the Announcer and Stranger on the side with Sophie and Pops and Winnifred on the other side.

Alright then, folks. One more drumroll, please!

Jo signals for silence and lightly juggles the cups. If this ends disastrously, so be it. It would be nice if she could actually juggle the cups at least a little.

ANNOUNCER (cont'd)

Incredible!

SOPHIE

Amazing!

STRANGER

Child's play!

The stranger walks up and takes two cups from Jo with their hands and then snakes a third hand out between the buttons of the coat to take the third one. The stranger then lightly tosses each cup up and down in their hands while laughing wildly.

Hahahahahahahahahahaha

I have shown my superiority to everyone in this town. No one can defeat me in feats of physical skill!

JO

Wait . . . I thought . . . I thought that today something was going to happen and I was going to accomplish my dreams!

ANNOUNCER

Well, I guess that's the end of the talent show.

JO

No, that can't be how it ends!

ENTER Winona and Westley LEFT

They are still carrying the cardboard car.

Everyone watches them as they "drive" across the stage and then throw their car slowly off the front of the stage.

WINONA

Left! No, still more left! Are you listening to me!?

WESTLEY

No, of course not. I'm not panicked anymore, I'm just driving. And you can barely see where we're going.

WINONA

Well, you should go left when I tell you to go left!

WESTLEY

Okay, we'll go left, then.

*At this, Westley turns and slowly drives the car
of the front of the stage.*

Happy now?

WINONA

No, actually. You ruined our free car. Are we in Oregon yet?

WESTLEY

I'm afraid not.

SOPHIE

Oh, hey!

ANNOUNCER

Well, if there's nobody else, I suppose we should wrap up this talent show. I have one important announcement to make. If I could just have everyone's attention:

SOPHIE

That's the fellow who's not wearing this shirt!

WESTLEY

You again!?

SOPHIE

Me again. Here's your shirt back.

WESTLEY

I don't want it back. I bet you've put magic in it somehow. A deck of cards or a glass of water or something. Well, I don't want it back. You can keep it.

ANNOUNCER

Hello!?! Are you even listening?

POPS

Young man, are you quite finished? We have to learn how embarrassed young Jo was by this very tall stranger.

WINNIFRED

Yeah, the story has to end in disaster and sadness for every character involved. Jo doesn't get to juggle, Pops had to close his shop, those two lost their car, and you are stuck with a shirt you never wanted.

STRANGER

Except me! I get to win!

SOPHIE

Okay. I guess if that's how it ends. I should at least give back the shirt, though.

This is the kicker. Westley's second shirt, the blue one or whatever color, is ALSO RIGGED TO TEAR AWAY, and Sophie puts the hand with the first shirt up and grabs the collar of the new shirt and pulls, popping the blue shirt off and revealing a carbon copy of the first shirt underneath.

It would be nice to have four of the shirts; one copy that tears away and one copy that goes underneath. Costume change between.

There you go. Well, I don't feel so guilty, now.

(pause)

Wellp. Guess I'll go home now.

Westley slowly faints directly into Winona's arms, trust-fall style.

EXIT Sophie LEFT

There's a one beat-two beat pause.

ALL

Wait!

ENTER Sophie LEFT

He pops his head back around, confused.

JO

First, that was amazing.

ANNOUNCER

Second, you said you didn't have any talents.

WINONA

Third, I think Westley is fine. Everybody, he's fine.

WINNIFRED

Fourth, does anybody mind if I set this down yet?

POPS

Fifth, hello, I don't think we've met. My name is Pops.
Treetop Pops, they call me, and--

STRANGER

And finally, you can't just leave! You have to give me
a chance to defeat you in a show of skill! Come here!

Sophie walks over to the Stranger.
Behold!

Stranger pulls on Sophie's shirt.

STRANGER DOWN

(hissing)

Try again.

STRANGER UP

(returning the hiss)

I am doing my best. Be patient.

STRANGER

BEHOOOOOOOOLD!

*Stranger pulls on Sophie's shirt again, but
nothing happens.*

STRANGER DOWN

Nothing's happening!

STRANGER UP

Uh . . . maybe if I try my own shirt.

*Stranger Up starts unbuttoning the overcoat,
starting with the buttons at Stranger Down's face
level. Hopefully the audience can see this.*

STRANGER DOWN

Wait, stop! What are you doing?

STRANGER UP

Oh, right, stop! Don't look!

*Stranger Up holds their hands down in front of
stranger Down's face, and the whole Stranger spins
around and does up their buttons.*

Everyone is staring at them.

STRANGER DOWN

You always do this!

STRANGER UP

When was the last time I did this?

STRANGER DOWN

You remember the Longhorn Affair?

STRANGER UP

That wasn't my fault!

STRANGER DOWN

We can never go back to Texas.

Stranger spins around and yells together:

STRANGER

You may have gotten the best of me this time, but I'll always be looking down my nose at you!

Stranger makes their way carefully off stage.

ANNOUNCER

Well, that was strange. I'm sorry that the Stranger left. I was about to make my big announcement. Can I get all the contestants back, please?

ENTER Sandy and Lion Tamer and Lion CENTER

Well, I have such good news: the richest person on the planet has offered an incredible prize. She is trying to determine who wants to go to Oregon for the next phase of her plan to change the world for good.

SANDY

Of course.

LION TAMER

You don't have to remind me.

JO

Wait . . .

SOPHIE

What are you talking about?

JO

I just wanted a chance to achieve my dreams.

ANNOUNCER

Well, great news: If you showed a talent today, you are eligible to show up in Oregon for the next phase of her plan to change the world for good.

SANDY

Woohoo!

LION TAMER

High five!

Exit Sandy, Lion, and the Lion tamer CENTER

ANNOUNCER

Alright! I'm off to the next town. Bon voyage!

EXIT Announcer RIGHT.

Pops rushes to Jo and hugs her.

POPS

Why, Jo, you rascally young whippersnapper. I never thought you'd really pull it off, but here you are, showing your true talents at last. You're destined for bigger things than this podunk one-ring circus town.

JO

Thanks, Pops! But my adventure isn't over yet.

POPS

What do you mean?

JO

Only that . . . I don't have a way to get to Oregon yet.

SOPHIE

Wait! I have cars. I'm a used car salesman, or at least, I was. I never knew I could do magic and people would like it.

JO

Right! But you always suspected that you could juggle, I mean, you could do magic, and people would love it! So you always kept your chin up and looked for every opportunity to achieve your dreams!

SOPHIE

Actually, no. I was a real downer. I didn't think that anything would ever happen to me, and I guess I let that attitude change the way I acted for years. But then, I saw you do that thing where you talked to God, and . . . I felt a little like it wasn't all my job to do anymore. Can I . . . could you teach me how to do that, too? I'll take you to Oregon as trade.

JO

Oh, you're gonna love thriving.

POPS

Come on, kids. Let's go pack your things and get you gone to Ore-gon!

EXIT Jo, Sophie, and Pops LEFT

WESTLEY

(coming to)

Wait . . . where'd everybody go? Did I miss anything?

WINONA

Well, I'm not honestly sure. A big blur yelled at a little blur for a while, and then the little blur yelled at the big blur, and then everybody went away, or maybe they just got really small. I can't tell.

WESTLEY

We really need to get your eyes checked.

WINONA

No, I don't need to knit my flies specked. I need somebody to look at my eyes. Haven't you noticed I can't see worth anything?

WESTLEY

Okay, Winona. You win.

WINONA

Let's go, Westley.

EXIT Winona and Westley LEFT

Winnifred is left holding the barstool.

WINNIFRED

What's going on? Why did everyone leave so suddenly?

There is a long moment of silence. If your camp does bows after the play, everyone should rush past Winona to do the bow, then rush back, leaving Winona on the stage alone as the lights fall.

If your camp is not the sort that does bows after, just leave Winnifred on stage until the lights fall.

Make sure to let the humor ride for just a moment; just long enough that everyone who already knows the joke feels like it would be uncomfortable in five more seconds, then wait those five seconds, then go. Remember: the audience doesn't know the joke. They need more time to let it settle.

WINNIFRED (cont'd)

(in the dark)

Goodbye, I guess.

FRIDAYScene 1

In this play, all the travelers arrive in Oregon and begin to goof it up trying to figure out what it is the Richest Person on the Planet even wants. When she finally arrives, she reveals that she didn't want anything after all, and she was just hoping to change the world for good.

Paulo (or Paul) and Hana and Everett and (RP).

ENTER Sophie and Jo LEFT

They have their car. As soon as they stop driving, Jo jumps out and stretches.

JO

Wow! Oregon! I can't believe we finally made it.

SOPHIE

Yeah; it was a terribly difficult trip. I almost thought we wouldn't make it, and yet we made it just in time! Listen to the radio:

Sophie leans over and turns up the radio. Jo dances/practices juggling as the announcer speaks.

ANNOUNCER

(recorded)

. . . finally here, as the contestants arrive. Hundreds of thousands have given up on their dreams, or tried to do it all by themselves and failed to make it to Oregon. Yes, it's a terribly sad story. But many others are arriving for the final stage of the richest person's plan to change the world for good. What will happen next? Maybe only the richest person on the planet knows! But by the end of the day, the rest of us will have found out, too.
Now for the weather: It's hot!

JO

Wow. It's too bad so many people gave up. It would have been nice to see them all here.

SOPHIE

Just imagine the crowds if they did all show up! Hey--look! Somebody else.

ENTER Paulo and Hana RIGHT

They're wearing matching shirts of some kind. A simple black tee would suffice nicely.

HANA

Good morning! You must be the first contestants! I'm Hana, and this is--

PAULO

Paulo. We're so thrilled to see you. You have no idea.

JO

Do you--

PAULO

No. Really. You have no idea.

HANA

So thrilled.

JO

. . . yeah. Do you work here? Then do you know why there are so few contestants?

HANA

No! We thought there would be a lot more, actually.

SOPHIE

(breaking in)

Maybe they'll all just . . . appear!

He gestures broadly as though someone is about to show up. There's a brief pause as everyone blinks.
Maybe not. That usually works for me.

PAULO

Pretty much everybody was invited, but it seems like a lot of them thought it was too much work.

HANA

I guess she knew what she was talking about.

SOPHIE

Who? She? Who?

HANA

The richest person--

PAULO

--on the planet. She's the one who invited you here, and she wanted everyone to be here, too. But it's like she always says: the road is narrow . . .

HANA

And only a few people will end up thinking it's worth the trouble.

SOPHIE

Well, I'm Sophie, and this is my friend Jo.

JO

Hai!

HANA

Hi!

Everybody just stands around for a second.

JO

So, now what?

HANA

What now what?

JO

Like, what happens next?

PAULO

Oh, we're just as lost as you are. We have no idea what's supposed to happen.

SOPHIE

But something's bound to happen, right?

HANA

Oh, yeah, definitely. Something will happen. And soon.

ENTER Vicky LEFT

Vicky is wearing a headband and carrying a sporty water bottle.

VICKY

(yelling)

First! Vicky wins again! I want to thank my mother and hydration.

She sprays herself in the face with her water bottle a little.

First, baby.

ENTER Fitzwilliam, Laramie, Zedda and Issac LEFT

They are all out of breath.

Fitzwilliam is wearing big chunky black glasses and a button-up shirt and belt. He looks formal and business-like.

Laramie (m/f) is wearing cowboy boots, a cowboy hat, and a flannel shirt (I am going to have to cast around this limitation or only use wranglers who have their own boots, because the boots in my props shed are quite small).

Zedda (m/f) is carrying a book that gets pulled out whenever there's a lull in their lines and, if only I had my shirt that says "get lit," wearing that.

Issac is wearing a long sleeved shirt but otherwise is very normal. The long-sleeved shirt is important for the visual gag that he pulls his whole sleeve up every time he announces his talent.

Hana and Paulo are in the center. The five newcomers are clumped very closely on one side, and Jo and Sophie are standing near their car on the other.

FITZ

It's not fair. Hello? Are you in charge? It's not fair.

HANA

Sorry, what's not fair?

FITZ

Well, her talent is literally sheer physical speed. How am I supposed to compete with that? I propose we don't start the competition until we know what the competition is.

ZEDDA

Indubitably. It refutes the concept of competition if we start before we start.

LARAMIE

Well, now that I've arrived, let's get a move on. Let's start now that we're starting.

HANA

Okay, so, um . . .

PAULO

Right. So, we work here . . .

VICKY

Where's the richest person on the planet? We're supposed to meet her!

HANA

Well, um . . . She went to go prepare the prize.

All the newcomers gasp and lean in.

ALL

(all whispered)

The prize . . .

VICKY

I bet it's diamonds and rubies . . .

FITZ

A bag of gold coins . . .

ZEDDA

A luxurious domicile . . .

LARAMIE

A house for my mother . . .

pause

ISSAC

A lifetime supply of gummy bears.

*The other four turn to look at him, incredulous.
He doesn't seem to quite notice.*

I just hope the competition is easy, because getting here was mighty difficult.

HANA

Well, I can't tell you what the prize is, but I can reassure you that getting the prize is very easy. Why, the richest person on the planet always says it's as easy as, uh, as . . . what was it?

PAULO

(confident)

As easy as sewing with a horse.

The all contestants pause and strike a confused pose and hold it until Issac speaks.

ISSAC

(a little too loud)

What?

PAULO

Getting the prize is easier than sewing with a horse.

SOPHIE

I may be a magician, but even I couldn't do that.

JO

Oh, Sophie. You're better than you think. I bet you could figure something out.

FITZ

It's got to be a riddle!

LARAMIE

Well, I'll be a saddle-sore son of a gun! That's gotta be it! A stumper. And whoever solves it moves on to the next stage towards the prize!

HANA

I don't think . . .

VICKY

Then that's no fair! I may be fast, but I'm no good with words.

ZEDDA

And I may be good with words, but I'm not fast. What if the next stage is a race?

JO

We could all team up!

FITZ

But what team do I wanna be on? My name is Fitzwilliam and I can add two ten digit numbers in my head.

JO

Hi, Fitzwilliam!

FITZ

What can you all do?

JO

Well, my name is Jo, and I can juggle anything.

SOPHIE

I'm Sophie, and I'm a magician who's doing his best.

VICKY

You all know I'm Vicky, and I'm fast fast fast.

ZEDDA

My name is Zedda, and I can spell anything.
A-n-y-t-h-i-n-g. Anything.

LARAMIE

The name's Laramie, and I can spit further than any other human being. Hock! Ptw!

Off-stage, a bell rings. I have a cowbell.

HANA

Was that a bell?

Paulo shrugs.

ISSAC

And my name is Issac, and I have a really cool talent that I don't think anybody else on earth can do, but it's really cool and I'll just . . ., if I can just show you . . .

Issac pulls his sleeve up while he's talking, but everyone else ignores him and starts moving around as he finishes up.

Hey, guys?

VICKY

Zedda, with me.

FITZ

Laramie.

JO

Sophie, team up?

ISSAC

Hey, guys!? I'm not on a team.

JO

Oh, can't we get him on a team?

FITZ

Okay, we'll all pick again. Jo?

VICKY

Sophie.

FITZ

Laramie.

VICKY

Zedda.

ISSAC

Guys?

FITZ

Wait--how many of us are there?
onetwothreefourfivesixseven . . .
If my calculations are correct . . .

He does some ticking on his fingers, looking concentrated.

Seven can't be divided by any other number! We'll NEVER have even teams!

SOPHIE

So what do we do?

VICKY

I don't know. But I have my team, and we're gonna figure out how to sew with a horse. Come on!

EXIT Vicky, Zedda, and Sophie LEFT

FITZ

How could she!? Come on, team!

EXIT Fitzwilliam and Laramie and Jo RIGHT

Paulo or Hana takes the cardboard car and sets it to one side.

Scene 2

This leaves Hana, Paulo, and Issac on the stage. As Issac gets progressively weepier, Hana tries to prompt Paulo silently by gesturing to Issac. Paulo keeps raising his shoulders like "what am I supposed to do?"

ISSAC

Oh, beans. Oh, nuts. Oh, no, dude. Oh, no, man. Oh, nutsy beansy. Oh, no, man. Oh, no oh beans oh nuts. Oh, beans, man. Oh . . .

He goes like this until Paulo interrupts.

PAULO

So, Issac . . .

ISSAC

(sudden, like he was expecting it)
--yeah?

PAULO

I think when the richest woman on the planet said that getting the prize was "as easy as sewing with a horse" what she meant was that she would make such an impossible task look easy.

ISSAC

That doesn't make any sense!

HANA

Well, sewing with a horse sounds really difficult, right?

ISSAC

Yeah! I don't even know what it's supposed to mean!

HANA

But winning the prize is possible. So if such an impossible thing is actually possible, she means that she'll make sewing with a horse easy, or something like that.

ISSAC

That doesn't even make any sense. Oh, man. Oh beans. Oh, beans and nuts. Listen, thanks for trying to help, but I guess I got to figure this out on my own.

EXIT Issac CENTER

PAULO

I don't think any of them got it, Hana.

HANA

It's a metaphor. It doesn't mean exactly what the words say.

PAULO

But I get why they were confused at first. She can really say some confusing stuff sometimes.

HANA

But it's always simple once you know what it means!

PAULO

Exactly!

ENTER Vicky, Zedda, and Sophie LEFT

ENTER Fitzwilliam, Laramie, and Jo RIGHT

Vicky has a needle.

Jo has a hula hoop (how wild if she could juggle three of them huh) and Fitzwilliam has a mischievous look on his face (and a horse mask).

JO

Hi, Sophie!

SOPHIE

Hey, Jo.

VICKY

Fitzwilliam, Laramie. I hope you're prepared to be absolutely stunned at what we've come up with.

FITZ

Not half so stunned as you're about to be, Vicky. You and Zedda better stand back so as to not be ashamed. Behold! As I transform . . .

Fitz pulls the horse mask over his head.

JO

Into a horse!

Jo holds the hula hoop and Laramie straddles Fitz. They crawl through the hoop. Fitz takes the mask off and looks pleased.

Voila! Sewing with a horse!

ZEDDA

A brummagem substitute for the genuine article!

VICKY

Yeah! It was fake. Watch us do it for real!

SOPHIE

(a little embarrassed)

So, uh, it's actually an easy magic trick to shrink anything down as small as you need it to be. You just have to take a real horse and sort of push on it lightly until it gets smaller and smaller, and then, uh . . .

He holds out his hand into the center of the semicircle, and everyone gathers at his shoulders. Of course I can't make a tiny horse for the stage, so what do you want!? But let's make-believe. Vicky holds out the needle and everybody, even Paulo and Hana, lean in to watch the microscopic horse run through the needle.

ALL

Oooh.

JO

That's great! You're really making your dreams come true!

SOPHIE

Yeah, I kind of am.

VICKY

So!? We win this stage. Give us the next challenge.

HANA

No, no. You didn't get it before, so Paulo and I are going to try to explain. When she says this stuff, the richest person on the planet is using a metaphor.

PAULO

Like a word picture!

HANA

Exactly. So she doesn't mean exactly what she says, but something else, and she's just trying to help you understand.

PAULO

Like when she explained how nobody can get the prize unless they become a baby again--

At this, Vicky, Zedda, Laramie, and Fitz take off running.

VICKY

Become a baby, Zedda. Let's go!

LARAMIE

I've got an idea, Fitzwilliam!

*EXIT Vicky, Zedda LEFT
EXIT Laramie, Fitzwilliam RIGHT*

JO

Isn't this fun, Sophie?

SOPHIE

Yeah, Jo. I guess so. It's kind of silly.

JO

Maybe it will make sense at the end.

*EXIT Jo RIGHT
EXIT Sophie LEFT*

HANA

I'm not holding my breath.

PAULO

They really just don't get it, do they? Maybe if they just met the richest person on the planet--

HANA
She could explain! She's always so clear. When I listen to her, I just get it.

PAULO
And where is she?

HANA
I'm going to go get her.

Hana takes off, but Paulo grabs her elbow.

PAULO
Hana, wait! You don't know where she is!

HANA
I'll just go find her!

PAULO
Hana, remember the story about the flashlights!

HANA
Ooooh, the flashlights.

Hana and Paulo act out the story a little bit in pantomime as they tell it.

PAULO
Exactly. There was a boss who left to get ready one afternoon, and hired six people to hold flashlights in case it was dark when the boss got back. Three of those people brought extra batteries, but three did not.

HANA
The boss took so so so so so so so so so long to come back that the flashlight batteries died! And then, suddenly, the boss arrived! Hollering in the dark: "Where are my flashlights!"

PAULO
The people with extra batteries left to go light the way but the people without batteries were fired and lost their jobs!

HANA
Exactly. Wait. So, the boss is the boss. And we're the flashlight carriers, but what does that mean? Which one of us has the batteries, and what are the batteries, anyway?

PAULO
Are the batteries just patience? So you're not supposed to go looking for her; she'll come back to us. Just have . . . uh. . . batteries.

HANA

It was so much clearer when she said it the first time.

PAULO

Maybe Fitzwilliam and Vicky have a point? Maybe metaphors are hard to figure out? I kind of wish I had remembered to bring my flashlight.

HANA

Paulo, you know it's not a real flashlight.

PAULO

But just in case! Anyway, you were about to run away to find her even though you don't even know where she's gone.

HANA

Just imagine: if the two of us were so confused, running off and getting flashlights, what do you think those confused contestants are even *doing*?

Fitzwilliam and Vicky stick their heads in from the sides.

FITZ

We're baaaaack! And we have transformed into babies so we can be ready to win our prize!

VICKY

Dream on, Fitzwilliam! You know I'm going to win the prize! I'm going to out-baby you!

FITZ

Impossible! I am a better and more attractive baby than you will ever be!

*ENTER Vicky, Zedda, Sophie LEFT
ENTER Fitzwilliam, Laramie, Jo RIGHT*

VICKY

Come on, gang! Let's be babies!

The two groups are wearing onesies or white towels wrapped up like diapers. If you have or make gigantic diaper pins, that's good. If you have bonnets, more the better. And I am going to try to make big colorful pacifiers out of cardboard.

I wish I could tell you how funny this is in my head. You're picturing it? It's about 70% funny.

Jo, Sophie, Zedda, and Laramie look really awkward. Laramie is still wearing the cowboy hat.

FITZ

Wah wah waaaah!

VICKY

Yeah, you should be crying. You're going to lose and I'm going to win the prize!

The two groups are standing on either side of the stage, and Vicky and Fitzwilliam start moving on each other, but Hana and Paulo push them back.

FITZ

You should talk. You look very natural in that get up. Are you sure those aren't your normal clothes?

VICKY

Do you kiss your mama with that mouth? Mama mama mama!

Hana and Paulo push them back so it's the two in the middle and the three on the sides.

PAULO

Look at yourselves!

HANA

This is out of control. Would the richest person on the planet actually want you to dress like a baby!?

PAULO

No! This is supposed to be a serious thing! And you're making it into a disaster instead.

LARAMIE

I told y'all! This is some kind of dumb.

ZEDDA

Our behavior is incomprehensible! I thought we came here to showcase our talents.

SOPHIE

Yeah. I wanted to show my favorite card trick to the richest person on the planet.

JO

And I wanted to achieve my dream of becoming a real juggler!

LARAMIE

And here we all are, gone stir-crazy and dressin' up like childurns. When am I gonna get to spit for real!?
HOOOCK PTU!

The bell dings.

ENTER Issac CENTER.

Everyone turns to look at him as he wanders out between Paulo and Hana.

ISSAC

(loud whisper, like he'd lost his voice)
Oh, don't mind me. Just planting some corn. Just putting some seeds in the ground, get it? Sowing some corn over here, but I've lost my voice, and I can't talk because of an illness, get it? I'm sowing with a hoarse voice? Get it?

FITZ

Issac, we all stopped sewing horses like five minutes ago.

ISSAC

Oh, come on! Oh, beans. Oh, nuts. I knew my talent was going to put me at a disadvantage. What good is a person whose talent is--well, it's hard to explain it, exactly. I'll just show you.

Issac goes to pull up his sleeve again, and pauses with his elbow held up next to his ear. He turns and looks at the six others wearing diapers.

Wait. Why are you guys wearing that stuff? AUGH! Are we supposed to be babies now? The things I do for that gummy bear prize!

*Issac stomps off.
EXIT Issac CENTER.*

The six take off their baby costumes.

LARAMIE

You know, that Issac fellow brings up a good point. We all got here because we wanted to show our talents, and we ain't shown our talents here at all.

ZEDDA

Did your circuitous employer give you a prospective arrival time?

PAULO

No.

VICKY

So all we can do is wait?

Everyone is out of their baby gear by now and just stands around looking dull. Whereas before, they may have looked like three units standing on the stage, now they look like eight individuals who want nothing to do with each other.

Hey. Sophie. Do you know any good card games we can play with those cards of yours?

SOPHIE

Oh-- No. But I do know a very good card trick I was hoping to show to the richest person on the planet.

VICKY

Let's see it!

SOPHIE

Oh, I couldn't. It's too embarrassing.

FITZ

You're willing to show it to the richest, most influential, most important person on the entire planet, but you won't show us?

LARAMIE

Come on, pardner.

JO

You can do it, Sophie!

This begins the talent show section of the evening. After every performance, Paulo and Hana clap, and if the audience joins in, more the merrier. They shouldn't necessarily be encouraged, however, since this could go on forever.

SOPHIE

Oh, alright.

Everybody gathers around, becoming a unit again.

Now, I don't know any good card tricks, really. I know one that would work really well that ends with the cards all getting thrown BAM out towards the person watching and the magician is left holding the chosen card. I would like to do that one (on our stage, the cards have a really good chance of falling through the cracks, though, so maybe onto the carpet and etc.)

After the trick, there is a moment of stunned silence.

SOPHIE (cont'd)
So, that's the trick.

LARAMIE
That just about shocked my socks clean off, exceptin'
I'm wearing tall boots that held them on. That's
somethin' else.

JO
Laramie, you said you could spit.

LARAMIE
Sure shootin'.

JO
Can we see?

*Laramie holds out their hands and takes two steps
back from the group. They work up a big fake
mouthful of spit, take a big, deep breath of air,
and then spitspitspitspitspitspit.*

*The cowbell rattles bingbangbongboongbung.
Wouldn't it be nice to have cowbells tuned to a
decending chord?*

Jo claps her hands in glee.

VICKY
Your turn, Jo. Let's see what you've got.

JO
Okay, Vicky. I've been practicing since we started the
trip to Oregon.

*Juggling silks? Painted sticks? Glow in the dark
balls? Who knows?*

ZEDDA
If only I could control my hands that well. All they're
good for is turning pages in books.

FITZ
But you've gained a talent from reading all those
books, haven't you?

ZEDDA
Well, yeah. Pick a word, Fitz.

FITZ
Mm . . . let's try . . . uh . . . [a long word that the
actor playing Zedda is more than welcome to pick,
otherwise try "iridocyclitis" because it's funny to me]

ZEDDA

[Spells the word]

FITZ

That is just . . . beyond. How do you do that?

ZEDDA

But, you said you could multiply ten digit numbers in your head! I may be able to spell, but . . .

FITZ

Oh, it's simple. Just pick any ten digit number.

ZEDDA

Okay . . . uh, just a random number? Three billion, sixteen million, eight hundred six thousand.

FITZ

Somebody give me another one! Quick!

SOPHIE

uh, uh, five zero three . . .

JO

Eight five zero!

LARAMIE

Three five six two!

Fitz does some quick calculations on his fingers.

FITZ

That's 15 quintillion, 200 trillion, 187,776 billion, 862 million, 970 thousand.

ZEDDA

Now that's impressive.

VICKY

But what good is it? I could run back and forth really fast to impress you all, but where is the richest person on the planet with my prize?

FITZ

What, you think you'd just win, just like that?

VICKY

Uh, yeah. Obviously. I've been part of the winning team every time we do one of these contests.

FITZ

Excuse me? I think our group had a much better sewing horse than yours did.

VICKY

I guess we'll find out when the richest person on the planet gets here.

LARAMIE

Well, the sun is setting on that one, pardner.

ZEDDA

I guess our progress is stymied.

The contestants go sit with their feet dangling off the stage.

SOPHIE

Something's bound to happen.

JO

And we're all going to achieve our dreams, I just know it!

HANA

That's right! Don't give up hope!

PAULO

She'll be back. She always comes back!

There's a long pause. Things are settling, feeling more hopeless. Zedda starts to read her book again. Vicky looks over to see Laramie preparing to pick their nose.

VICKY

Don't pick your nose!

LARAMIE

I wasn't gonna pick my nose!
(pause)

I did think about it.

There's another big pause.

ENTER Issac CENTER

He is wearing a bonnet or a silly oversized hat and a sign around his neck that says "baby."

ISSAC

Hey, where did you find all those diapers? Hello?

No one responds. Issac walks up and squeezes between the middle two people sitting on the front of the stage.

What's goin' on? Are we not being babies anymore?

FITZ

You look pretty silly, Issac.

ISSAC

Thanks. Are we . . . just waiting?

LARAMIE

Just waitin' for the contest to end.

Another pause.

ISSAC

Hey, does everybody want to see my talent?

JO

Sure!

Everybody leans in.

ISSAC

Prepare your mind to be amazed! As I! Lick! My! Elbow!

Issac pulls his sleeve up above his elbow and stretches out. He sticks out his tongue and slowly goes to lick his elbow. He is stymied, of course. He adds his other hand. Nothing. He continues to try in increasingly frenetic ways, maybe even twisting away from the stage as though to hide that he's freaking out.

Everybody leans back out again, unimpressed.

I don't understand. I should be able to lick my elbow.

Scene 3

JO

Welp. I guess that's it, then. Come on, Sophie.

Jo stands up, and so does Sophie.

SOPHIE

What's happening now?

JO

(matter-of-fact)

We're leaving. Nothing's happening and I'm not going to achieve my dreams.

SOPHIE

Don't say that!

JO

Why not? It's just reality. If the richest person on the planet really wanted us here, why didn't she greet us? Why didn't she let us know when she was coming back? Why didn't she tell us what she was doing?

SOPHIE

But she did invite us to join her in Oregon.

JO

And we showed up! But now, nothing's happening and I'm ready to go home.

SOPHIE

No.

JO

Come on, Sophie.

SOPHIE

No. I'm not going. See, I may be a magician, but I'm also a car salesman. And I know that sometimes the trick is not being a clever salesman or using bigger signs or playing fun music or anything. Sometimes the trick is just waiting for the right person to walk through your door!

As Sophie says this, he gestures at the door at CENTER. Everybody sitting on the front of the stage turns to look at the door. Nothing happens.

JO

You really expected her to just appear, didn't you.

SOPHIE

Yeah. Just . . . magician's instinct for the dramatic.

He turns away from CENTER to monologue.

Sometimes, when I say "Is this your card!?" or "There's a coin behind your ear!" it just appears in my hand. I expect to just yell "walk through the door!" and suddenly she's there like magic.

The richest person on the planet walks through the door. Sophie keeps monologueing (how does one spell that? Where's Zedda?). He is oblivious (so am I).

ENTER RP CENTER

But no matter how many times you say [ENTER RP] "There she is, the richest person on the planet," it doesn't make it true.

She waves.

JO

Sophie?

SOPHIE

But apparently my card tricks and coin disappearances aren't the same as making a full-blown person suddenly appear from nowhere.

JO

Sophie!?

SOPHIE

I guess she'll never show up. What do you need, Jo?

Jo just points.

RP

Hello, everyone!

Everyone scrambles to their feet. Hana and Paulo stand on either side of the Richest person and everyone else stands in a big line out to either side.

I'm so sorry; it took me an awfully long time to get back to you, didn't it?

ISSAC

Ages!

RP

I've just been preparing your prize.

Everyone gasps and leans in.

The richest person takes off her big sunglasses and folds them and puts them away.

ALL

(all whispered)

The prize . . .

VICKY

Diamonds and rubies . . .

FITZ

Gold coins . . .

ZEDDA

A luxurious domicile . . .

LARAMIE

A house for my mother . . .

RP
Actually, none of those, and better!

ISSAC
Gummy bears?

RP
The prize is getting to live with me.

HANA
Where?

RP
Here.

PAULO
Here?

RP
Oregon. I've purchased the whole state of Oregon and I'm making it a haven for anyone who wants to live with me. This is the next phase of my plan to change the world for good, and it starts with you.

VICKY
I accept.

RP
What do you accept?

VICKY
The prize. Oregon. it sounds good enough to me; I'll take it.

RP
Good! Oh, I'm glad you like it.
(to Zedda)
How about you?

ZEDDA
Me? But prizes are mutually exclusive.

RP
Would you like it too?

ZEDDA
Yes, I would like it too.

RP
Then you have it too.

VICKY

But she wasn't the fastest!

RP

(to Fitz)

And you?

FITZ

Yes, us too, please.

VICKY

But they weren't even on my team!

ISSAC

What about me?

RP

Of course!

VICKY

He can't even lick his elbow!

ISSAC

Yeah, what if I can't lick my elbow? I don't even have a talent at all. How can I win the contest?

RP

I don't think I understand. What contest?

VICKY

The contest, the contest to win the prize! We all rushed to get here and competed to solve your silly riddles. We sewed with horses and became babies just so we could become filthy filthy rich!

HANA

(trying to explain to RP)

They did that stuff for real.

RP

Oh! Those stories weren't supposed to be for real. That's a metaphor.

PAULO

We tried to tell them so.

RP

Oh, that's not what I meant to have happen. No, I meant that the prize seems like it should be impossible, but it can be made possible, like putting a horse through a needle.

HANA

Exactly!

RP

I mean that to get the prize, you had to give up all your ideas and learn everything again, the way babies learn.

PAULO

Exactly!

RP

It seems like it would be impossible to offer a prize like this to more than one person, but just like sewing with a horse, I am offering the prize to everyone. And if you're having trouble understanding it, become like a baby and relearn what's possible.

VICKY

(this needs to be slow in order to land)

A prize for everyone? Just like that? I mean . . . as long as I still win the prize. Just because Fitz wins doesn't mean I won any less. Relearn what's possible, huh?
Okay.

RP

I hope you understand that everything I've said has been a metaphor for something else, something that applies to your life in a very real way. Even the number of people who receive the first part of the prize is metaphorical. See? There are onetwothreefourfivesixseveneightnine . . . wait. Where are the others?

HANA

Others?

RP

Yes, there are supposed to be twelve. Quick, everyone, scatter out and find the other three! Go! What are you waiting for?

Everyone but Vicky (who folds her arms in frustration) looks very unsure of themselves and moves as though to start looking. (Hands over eyes, awkward arms, shuffling feet, etc)

Then, from the back of the audience, the three who were held up by Uncle D(iablo).

ENTER Melizabeth, Danthony, and Quentin FROM AUDIENCE REAR

MELIZABETH

Here we are! Don't start without us!

DANTHONY

The journey was jolly well difficult.

QUENTIN

But we made it at last!

As they make their way up onto the stage:

RP

That's our twelve. Congratulations, everyone. You've won the prize in my plan to change the world for good.

There are now thirteen people on stage. Arranging this so it looks good will be a challenge. I think:

RP, Hana and Paulo standing behind her in the center.

Vicky by herself on one side. On that side, Sophie and Zedda in a group and Melizabeth, Danthony, and Quentin in a group.

On the far side, Fitzwilliam, Laramie, and Jo.

Melizabeth, Danthony, and Quentin introduce themselves to everyone on the stage. There is much shaking of hands and expaining of talents. This lasts about ten seconds before the richest person gets everyone's attention again.

Okay, everyone. Now, there are only twelve of you right now, which is far too few! Hana, Paulo, do you remember the story I told you about the very rich person who had a feast and too few people showed up?

PAULO

Right, the rich person had everyone go out into the highways and streets to get more guests for the feast.

HANA

But what is the metaphor? If you say highways and streets, hmmmmmmmmmm . . .

RP

This time, I'm not being metaphorical. I want all of you to go gather everyone from everywhere, even people that you meet on the street, so that they can all live without worry forever. I want to offer the prize to everyone!

She pauses.

Well!? What are you waiting for? Let's go!

SOPHIE

Wait, everyone?

JO

Like, everyone everyone?

RP

(pointing at people in the audience)

Like that person, there. And their friends, and their friends' friends, and everyone they know, and everyone that those people know, and everyone.

Well? Go invite them to get the best prize they'll ever receive!

This is kind of fun and I like it: the cast spread out into the audience and invite them to accept the prize. Boy wouldn't it be good to have some sort of physical token that we could give to every camper but BOY wouldn't it be a pain in the tuchus and very expensive, so I'm not doing it. I hope this bit isn't too hokey. I think it's fun.

After a moment of cast asking audience members to join them in heaven/Oregon, RP interrupts.

RP (cont'd)

Okay, everybody. I have to make sure to get ready for how many people you're all going to recruit to win my fabulous prize. Oregon won't be enough. I'm selling my yacht and I'm going to buy California and a few other states for good measure. So, I'll be gone to prepare a place for all of you, but when I come back the second time, I'll take you all to live with me, carefree, forever.

AAAAAAAAND SCENE

I HOPE THE APOSTLE JOHN WON'T MIND MY PLAGIARISM