

THE OTHER HALF:
FLUNG ON A FLING

An Operatic Tale

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Persons

Principal Characters in Order of Appearance

Totum Bottom, a boy of about 12 (mezzo-soprano range)

Eileen March, a girl of about 12 (soprano)

Humbird, a Kingfisher (a funny actor in a costume, silent acting role)

Furbelow, a large and cute Frog (a funny actor in a costume, silent acting role)

Marv, the Half-Bird (tenor)

Bashbaha (mezzo or soprano), Bouncer at the Café [optional double]

Ahriman (baritone or tenor), Host at the Café and the Evil One [optional double]

Alice, the Half-Bird (soprano)

Chorus

The Chorus can be made up of children if there is a community organization, school, or local chorus that can participate, or it can be made up of young adult singers from a university setting. Numbers are flexible, from as few as two or three to a crowd.

Lizards

Monitor Lizards, if needed, are to help with management.

Terpsi Lizards sing and dance in the Finales and the Lizard Call

Seethers sing, hiss, roar, and writhe.

Fish, including the highest voices (one or two very high voices soli)

Extras in Order of Appearance

Sue, a grumpy fish farmer (sing-shouts, acts)

The Hermit (mumbles and does some magic)

Baby Kar, a fish at the Pond of the Tree of Life (child or puppet)

The Momma Kar, as big as a car (two-person action costume, silent)

King Darayavaush, the great and very large king (sings, acts)

Archers (one line speaking role), Messenger, Soldiers

Scenery

The underlying setting is a small Pond, up left, used as Sue's Pond, the Café Fountain, the Pond of the Tree of Life, and the King's Pond.

Act I

Scene 1 Sue's Pond, stage left, in a glade of trees. Entrances left and right. A scarcely noticeable door stage right for the Hermit's shack.

Scene 2 The Fire Temple, Ancient Persia. A simple backdrop or set piece of a Zoroastrian FIRE TEMPLE with a large open arched doorway, right, flown in or pushed on during the smoke and flash of the Hermit's magic at the end of Scene 1. Lighting on right only.

Scene 3 The Café in the Square. A FOUNTAIN (the Pond), a TABLE for three by the fountain, up left of center, a DOOR with a grate (the prison) at the left exit. Another exit up left, behind fountain, and an exit right. A small TABLE for one, behind bars, up center. The Fire Temple is altered to be the façade of another Café in the square, pulled up right and out of focus, a small unobtrusive SIGN on it, "Forget the Name". A SIGN down right center reading "The Lizard Leg" marks the café entrance.

Act II

Scene 1 The Pond of the Tree of Life, modified from the Fountain. Entrance up right, playing area for chase down left and center.

Scene 2 The Fire Temple. Marv has a POOL CHAIR and TOWEL.

Scene 3 the Prison, the TABLE behind bars in the Café from Act I, Scene 3, pulled down center. Alice's CELL down left or on a balcony if possible.

Scene 4 the Desert. Same set as Sue's Pond, with a desert backdrop, no trees; the Pond lighting dimmed.

Scene 5 the King's Pond. Same set as Sue's Pond, with a desert backdrop, no trees. Lights for the Pond.

Scene 5 the Desert. Same set as Sue's Pond, with a desert backdrop, no trees; the Pond lighting dimmed.

ORCHESTRA

2 Flutes, Clarinet, Bassoon
French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone
Percussion (1 player)

2 Violin Sections (4-5 players each)
Viola Section (3-4 players)
Violoncello Section (2-3 players)
Double Bass (1-2 players)

REDUCED ORCHESTRA

Flute
Clarinet
Percussion
String Quartet

SYNOPSIS

The action takes place on a fish farm, here, today, and in Persia, long ago.

Totum Bottom and Eileen March, and their pets Humbird the Kingfisher and Furbelow the Frog are strolling in a glade by a pond on a Fish Farm. They hear an odd voice, and Marv the Half-Bird runs in. He doesn't know where he is so he communicates in Mozartian German from the Magic Flute ("zu Hülfe, zu Hülfe, sonst bin ich verloren!"). But the "dragon" from which Marv is fleeing is only Humbird, who appears, "draggin'" his leash behind him. And, Marv speaks English anyway, though with a strong accent. He tells his story, lost in space and time, flunkt from his home in ancient Persia.

Sue, the Fish Farmer, arrives and recognizes Humbird as a fish thief, back again to her pond. Marv tells his story and asks for some help to get back to Persia. Totum suggests that the Hermit might help. When Sue discovers another fish theft, she chases them all away.

They arrive at the Hermit's junky door, and he creates a magical ceremony for transportation. Just as the incantations perfect themselves, Humbird jumps at Marv, Furbelow, Eileen, and Totum jump at Humbird, and poof! They are all transported.

Back in time and away in space they go, arriving in ancient Persia. Marv sends the children to find a certain Magus who can send them home, and help him find the Other Half. While he takes a relaxed snooze, they mistake his directions and wander into a bad place, where Ahriman the Evil One passes the time as Bartender: the Lizard Leg Café. He puts Furbelow in isolation and bamboozles the children into a quest, which, if fulfilled, would tilt the balance of power between good and evil toward his side. Furbelow, accused of being a transmigrated soul, is held as hostage.

In the second act, the children are attempting to complete their quest: they must dose the guardian Momma Fish with a sleeping 'chip' and take the seeds of the Tree of Life. Luckily for civilization, Momma's an alert guardian and the plan fails. They find their way back to Marv, help him to disguise himself as a baby camel, and begin plan B. Unfortunately before Marv can tell them the rest of plan B he snacks on one of the chips that Ahriman had intended for the Fish, and falls asleep again. Humbird eats one too, and falls asleep.

The Great King Darayavaush happens by on the way to the Great King's Pond. He takes a liking to them, especially Humbird, and agrees to help them. Back in Ahriman's prison, Furbelow meets Alice, the other Half-Bird. Even though she has only one wing, with the help of a friend Alice can fly a little. They escape together.

Ahriman thinks it's time for the great battle. He calls his lizards and attacks the King's forces. Alice and Furbelow arrive, the Half-Birds are re-united, good wins, Ahriman retreats. The King's Magus sends the kids back home. All is well today!

A genuine historical Zoroastrian blessing is spoken, and the curtain falls.

Musical Numbers

ACT ONE

Introduction "Humbird, hurry!"	Totum, Eileen, Marv, (Humbird, Furbelow)
Charade	Eileen, Totum (Furbelow)
Marv's Song.....	Marv
Sue's Fish Farm	Sue, Marv
Reprise: Marv's Song	Marv
Trio: A Human Child	Totum, Marv, Eileen
Incantations (Space/Time Journey to Persia)	(instrumental) (Hermit, Eileen, Totum, Marv, Furbelow, Humbird)
Persia!	Totum, Marv, Eileen
Finale	Cast, Chorus of Fish & Lizards

ACT TWO

The Fish of the Tree.....	Totum, Eileen
Fish Fugue	Baby Kar, Momma Kar (Humbird)
Vide Avake	Marv, Totum, Eileen
Thus Sayeth the King	Darayavaush
Greetings, Frog. I am Alice the Half-Bird. I can see in your heart.	Alice
The Lizard Call	Bashbaha, Ahriman, Lizards
Join me in the Jumping in the Great King's Pond	King Darayavaush
"To arms! To arms! (One wing!)"	Chorus, Marv, King
Act II Finale	Ensemble
Postscript "Let all the world know"	King Darayavaush

Costumes

TOTUM

Casual children's clothing, no changes.

EILEEN

Casual children's clothing, no changes.

FURBELOW

Actor in frog costume with cute blue ribbon.

HUMBIRD

Larger actor in bird costume, carries own leash.

MARV

A large bird with only one wing (must be able to sing, move, and lounge)

SUE

Farmer's overalls, heavy shoes; carries a bucket with approximately 50 fish to drop into the pond; one of them is large enough to be seen and tugged by Sue and Humbird.

HERMIT

Shabby cloak and pointed hat.

BASHBAHA

Gruesome make up, barmaid costume.

AHRIMAN

Old fashioned barman costume with apron.

KING DARAYAVAUSH

Crown, Balloon pants and sleeves, enormous padding

LIZARDS

Actors in simple costumes of three types: as needed, 'Monitor Lizards'; the octet or quartet of dancing lizards, the 'Terpsi Lizards', in costumes for dancing; the remainder as 'Seethers' with red lined capes that can be spread or closed.

FISH

Chorus in simple costumes, with small flapping fins.

MOMMA KAR

Two person fish costume, must be able to climb from pond and chase the kids.

BABY KAR

Small child or puppet in fish costume.

ALICE

A large bird with only one wing (one Half-Bird has a right wing and the other a left wing).

KING'S ARCHERS, SOLDIERS

Extras in simple Persian costumes.

FLUNG ON A FLING

An Operatic Tale

Book and lyrics by William Copper

ACT I

Scene 1

#1 Overture and Introduction

NARRATOR (voice)

[Images projected: faces of TOTUM and EILEEN]

Two children - their names are Totum and Eileen - Totum Bottom and Eileen March.
[Optional Cut] Totum is descended from an English family of great antiquity, mentioned by Shakespeare, Chaucer, and maybe the Venerable Bede; Eileen's family is of equal or greater antiquity in France, known to Montaigne, Rabelais, and maybe Charlemagne, and connected with the famous Marianne of the Marches.

I tell you this because, you know, Bottom means bottom and March means outsider. So their people, bottom and outside, have been an important part of the world for a long time.

[End Cut] They were walking with their pets one day at a fish farm that belongs to Sue.
Sue's Fish Farm.

[Images projected: HUMBIRD, FURBELOW, and SUE]

There they found a very strange bird. It was the magical Half-Bird from ancient Persia. The bird's name was Marv. Poor Marv! He had been separated from his mate and had been thrown violently through space, through time, and been thrown all the way from ancient Persia to right here, right now, to here: our extraordinary town of [your town]

[Image projected: face of MARV]

After they met Marv and finally understood his unusual story, they took Marv to see the Hermit, an individual with known powers. They thought that perhaps the Hermit would have the magical wherewithal to transport Marv back to his home, and back to his mate: the other Half-Bird, Alice.

[Image projected: the HERMIT, ALICE]

The Hermit helped. More or less. Sending Marv back, and to the right time. But not quite to the right place. And the Hermit's magic was a little too all-embracing. The children were also sent along. Their pets were sent, all were magically packed and shipped to ancient Persia.

[Image projected: the Fire Temple]

When they finally landed together Marv assessed the situation. He knew of a certain Wise Man who could help them get the rest of the way to Marv's home, and then could send the children and the pets back to [your town].

[Image projected: faces of BASHBAHA and AHRIMAN]

No, no, those are not the Wise Man. You'll see. Those malignants - those reprobates - those miscreants - those, like, bad people - are Bashbaha and Ahriman.

It takes so long to tell! You will see, while Marv hides himself on a lounge chair in the Fire Temple, sending the children to find the Wise Man, or as we say that Magus known to Marv, the children mistake his directions and end up asking two, well, this pair named Ahriman and Bashbaha, for help. Those characters saw a way to achieve their own ends, directing the children, horrible as it may sound to you, directing the children to the holy Tree of Life, telling them to pick the seeds, which would begin an Age of Evil.

Luckily for them, and for us, and for you, the Tree was protected by some magical fish.

[Images projected: MOMMY KAR and BABY KAR]

Well. To make a long story short, the children did eventually rejoin Marv, they found Alice, the other Half-Bird, in prison. They met jolly King Da-Ra-Ya-Va-Ush, they battled the bad people and the lizards of Ahriman, they saw the Half-Birds reunited, and they came back safely home. And now we can tell you the whole story.

[Images projected: DARAYAVAUSH and some of the LIZARDS]

(The Curtain opens. A POND in a glade on SUE'S FISH FARM. Late morning on a crisp warm day in June of this year. EILEEN MARCH and TOTUM BOTTOM, both around 12 years old, enter from right.)

EILEEN and TOTUM
HUMBIRD, HURRY!
FURBELOW, HURRY!
THIS IS FARMER SUE'S FISH FARM,
AND YOU KNOW HOW FARMER SUE CAN BE:

FEROCIOUS! HURRY! FEROCIOUS, HURRY!
FEROCIOUS, HUR-HURRY!
FEROCIOUS! ... HUMBIRD!

(HUMBIRD the mischievous Kingfisher lopes across the stage, from left, twirling his leash. He is a silver-gray and orange bird with a tufty head, short active wings, and short legs; a cross, perhaps, between a Kingfisher and a Lobster, or a very short legged Flamingo. He loops around, dodges between the children, and goes back out left. They seem to recognize him but do not notice his exit. They are looking back to the right anxiously.)

EILEEN and TOTUM
FURBELOW? FURBELOW? FURBELOW!

(FURBELOW the Frog, cute and funny as possible, finally enters from right. She is a smaller actor in costume, a blue-green frog with stylish eyes and a pretty blue ribbon. She is a warm, wise, resolute, but sometimes day-dreamy person. EILEEN and TOTUM start again toward left when they hear something off left, ahead of them.)

MARV (offstage)
ZU HÜLFE, ZU HÜLFE! SONST BIN ICH VERLOREN.
DER LISTIGEN SCHLANGE ZUM OPFER ERKOREN.
(loose translation: Help, help, or I'm lost. There's a dragon chasing me.)

(MARV the Half-Bird, a large handsome bird with only one wing runs on from left.)

TOTUM
WHAT IS THAT? WHAT'S IT SAYING? WHAT IS IT?
EILEEN, DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

EILEEN
NO, TOTUM.

EILEEN, TOTUM
Do YOU understand?
(Only FURBELOW seems to understand, but she can't speak. She hops importantly.)

TOTUM (spoken)
Then tell us, Furbelow.

EILEEN (spoken)
Tell us, Beautiful.

MARV (spoken)
Schon nahet sie sich.

#2 Charade

(FURBELOW: The charade begins: an imploring look and clasped hands.)

I LOVE YOU?
EILEEN

I'M HUNGRY?
TOTUM

HELP ME!
EILEEN

(Yes! MARV watches them warily. FURBELOW: covers her eyes and taps the ground insecurely with her foot.)

I'M SLEEPY?
TOTUM

MY BACK HURTS?
EILEEN

I'M LOST!
EILEEN and TOTUM

(Yes! FURBELOW shows a dragon spreading its scaly wings and roaring.)

LOVE MAKES MY STOMACH ACHE?
TOTUM

(THEY hold hands and look at each other tenderly. FURBELOW rolls her eyes and shakes her head dolefully NO. THEY laugh. SHE tries to get their attention again.)

A SICK, SICK HORSE?
EILEEN

(FURBELOW opens mouth wide as if breathing flame.)

A BULL, A HOARSE BULL?
TOTUM

(No. Bigger.)

A DRAGON!
EILEEN (Thinks; her eyes widen; she guesses.)

TOTUM (whispered)
YOU MEAN, HE SAID ..

EILEEN and TOTUM (whispered)
HELP ME. I'M LOST. THERE IS A DRAGON.

(FURBELOW nods YES with satisfaction. They look around. Which way to run?
EILEEN peers at Marv more closely.))

EILEEN (spoken)
Where? I wish he could speak English.
MARV (spoken)
Oh. Vy din't you say so? I speak the English.
TOTUM (spoken)
Why didn't you say so?
MARV (spoken)
I vas tryink to understand vhat your friend vas doink.
But LOOK OUT! Here it comes!

(For a moment EILEEN and TOTUM think the end is near. Through the underbrush
from the left crashes – only HUMBIRD again. His leash is trailing behind him.)

TOTUM (spoken)
Dragon! That's Humbird. He's with us. He's a
Kingfisher, not a dragon.
MARV (spoken)
Ya? I said it vas a big hungry bird
draggin' a rope, din't I?

(FURBELOW shrugs non-committally.)

TOTUM (spoken)
Who are you? WHAT are you?
MARV (spoken)
I am in trouble. My name is Marvo. Call me Marv. In the international
community of vvhich I am a bird, I am a fery important personage. I am the Half-Bird.
And haf I got a story to tell you!
Never since Persia first purred has there been such a
story as is my story.
Attend!

#3 Marv's Song

I AM THE HALF-BIRD, A MYTHICAL BEAST FROM PERSIA,
AND A PRINCIPAL MINISTER TO THE KINK.
...AND SO WAS SHE.

HOW CAN A HALF-BIRD BE WHOLE WITHOUT HIS MATE?
YOU SEE I HAF ONLY ONE VING.
...AND SO HAS SHE.

WE WHEN TOGETHER SPREAD LOVE AS WE FLY,
AND GRACE.
LIGHT AS A FEATHER SOW FRIENDSHIP LIKE
DELICATE LACE.

BUT WHEN WE'RE PARTED, ALAS, PEOPLE
GET MEAN.
GOOD IS DISCARDED LIKE BAD AND HANDS
GET UNCLEAN.

PLEASE HELP THIS HALF-BIRD GET BACK TO HIS MATE,
HIS ALICE,
BACK TO THE NEST OF THAT BEST OF ALL BIRDS,
TO ALICE.

FIRST CAME MARV AND THEN CAME ALICE,
SITTING TOGETHER IN A GREAT BIG PALACE.
AH WHAT A PAIR OF HAPPILY COOING LOVEBIRDS.

VING BY VING, SONGS VE WOULD SING,
WARMING THE NEST FOR EACH OTHER.
SONG BY SING, HEART BY WING,
LOVING THE BEST IN EACH OTHER.

THEN! WAS MARVO SPLIT FROM ALICE!
RIPPED ASUNDER BY AN EVIL MALICE!
NOW AN UNHAPPY HALF OF A PAIR OF LOVEBIRDS.

WING BY WING, SONGS WE'D SING,
WARMING THE NEST FOR EACH OTHER.
SAD TO SING, FLUNG ON A FLING,
HALVED WAS EACH HEART FROM THE OTHER.

MARV (spoken)

Ja. A Half-Bird. Flunk from Persia. Flunk through time from long ago. Voe is me. Without me and my Alice helping the holy fish, evil Ahriman vill maybe take over the world.

(EILEEN and TOTUM look blankly at MARV.)

MARV (spoken)

You don't know Ahriman and the lizards? Vell. This is vhat happened. Marvo, that's me, vas split from his Other Half, that's Alice, by evil Ahriman, that's the bad guy that flunk me here. Direct to you! Here, here at .. uh .. vhere am I anyway? ... ahh ..

(FARMER SUE stomps in from right carrying a bucket and wearing overalls. She is bringing baby fish for her fish pond.)

#4 Sue's Fish Farm

SUE (shout-singing)

SUE'S FISH FARM! AND WHADDAYA
DOIN' ON MY PROPERTY AGAIN, BIRD?

MARV

OH MEIN GOTT! ANOTHER DRAGON!

(MARV buries his head under his wing. FARMER SUE marches past MARV and collars HUMBIRD, who is frantically trying to climb up under EILEEN's pants leg. SUE pulls out HUMBIRD and punctuates with him. EILEEN and TOTUM look plenty scared, too.)

SUE (shout-singing)

(To HUMBIRD)

YOU STAY OUTTA MY POND DO YOU HEAR ME!?
OR MY SOUP WILL BE BIRD. OUT! OUT!

(Turns to MARV.)

ANOTHER BIRD? ANOTHER DESPICABLE FISH-EATER?
HUH? HUH?

MARV

OH NO NO NO. I AM A VEGEGEGETARIAN.
STRICTLY A STRICT VEGETARIAN.
I DON'T LIKE SOUP. I MEAN FISH.

MARV (spoken)

Vait! I mean, I LIKE fish. They protect the world from evil.
But I don't EAT them.

SUE (spoken)

Yeah? What are you anyway?

MARV

Ah! I am the Half-Bird. And haf I got a story to tell you!

#5 Reprise, Marv's Song

WING BY WING, GUIDING THE KING,
PLEASEING THE WORLD WITH EACH OTHER.
SAD TO SING, FLUNG ON A FLING,
HALVED WAS EACH HEART FOR THE OTHER.

MARV (spoken)

There I vas, a Fery Important Official with Kink Darayavaush, the Great Kink. Me and Alice. And then ve vere split apart. Dreadful. Originally from Siam ve vere. Tvins. She a vink, me the other vink. Fery hard to fly alone. But together! Ah, you would say supersonic.

The Lizards vill rise up to oferthrow the Kink any day. Got to get home.
Must get home to Persia. To Alice.

TOTUM (spoken)

How can we help him get home? Maybe the Hermit?

SUE (spoken)

I'd stay away from birds, if I were you, Children.

(SUE watches MARV suspiciously and lets HUMBIRD go. HE steals a fish from SUE's bucket then tiptoes away facing her and holding the fish behind his back -- showing it clearly to the audience.)

SUE (spoken)

I need to finish stocking my pond. Keep those birds away from my fish.

(SUE counts the fish from her bucket as she tosses them into the pond.)

One. Two. Three.

#6 A Human Child

MARV (looks at the children earnestly)
BUT, TELL ME, WHAT ARE YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU, TOO, YOU TWO?
(to HUMBIRD)
AND YOU, TOO.

TOTUM
I AM A HUMAN CHILD, A BOY.
SEE YOU CAN SEE WHAT I AM IN MY HAND.

MARV
A DIRTBALL?

EILEEN
NO, HE IS A DREAMER.

TOTUM
I DREAM, I FLY, I WALK, I SWIM, I'M NOBODY YET
BUT I WILL BE, MY NAME IS TOTUM, TOTUM BOTTOM.

EILEEN
I'M EILEEN. I AM A HUMAN CHILD, A GIRL.
SEE YOU CAN SEE IN MY EYE WHAT I AM.

TOTUM
SHE'S STARLIGHT!

EILEEN
I LIKE GREEN AND RIVERS AND BOUNCING AND FROGS,
I'M CLEAN, ONLY MEAN WHEN I'M TIRED,
AND I'M ALMOST A TEEN. EILEEN MARCH.

TOTUM
WHEN I THINK OF GIRLS I THINK SUGAR AND SPICE,
BUT EILEEN IS MUCH MUCH NICER.

DEEPER THAN PEARLS, STUBBORN LIKE CURLS,
SECRET LIKE HEART LOCKETS HIDDEN ON CHAINS,
I LIKE HER LIKE CASTLES AND HYDROPLANES,
LIKE HER LIKE ROCKETS AND SPARKS FROM A FLINT,

I ADORE EILEEN.

EILEEN

WHEN I THINK OF MALES I THINK DOGBURRS AND MICE,
BUT TOTUM IS MUCH MUCH NICER:

THOUGH HE KEEPS SNAILS, DIRTY TOE NAILS,
CRACKERS IN PANTS POCKETS BULGING WITH LINT,

I LIKE HIM LIKE CHOCOLATE WITH PEPPERMINT,
LIKE HIM LIKE HOCKEY AND FARM WEATHERVANES.

I ADORE THIS TOTUM.

MARV

YOU THEN ARE HUMAN CHILDS, A GIRL AND A BOY.
YES I CAN SEE THAT YOU ARE IN EACH OTHER.

TOTUM and EILEEN

A DIRTBALL? HE'S STARLIGHT?
(to EACH OTHER)
NO, HE MEANS LIKE MIRRORS.

MARV

YOU SWIM AND LIKE GREEN
AND YOU BOUNCE AND YOU DREAM,
YOU'RE SOMEBODY SOMEDAY BUT NOW YOU ARE TEENS.

EILEEN

ALMOST TEENS

MARV

YOUR NAMES ARE ... UH ...

EILEEN

I'M EILEEN.

TOTUM

I'M TOTUM.

EILEEN and TOTUM

WE ARE HUMANS.

(FARMER SUE has been counting their fish during the preceding.)

SUE (loudly)

Forty seven. Forty eight. Forty nine. WHERE'S FIFTY????!!!

(SUE looks around. HUMBIRD has lost all caution in the anticipatory pleasure he is having, thinking of eating the fish he is clutching. A true gourmand. He is about to take his first deliciously appetizing nibble when SUE discovers him with her fish.)

SUE (shouted)

HEY!!!

(SUE runs toward HUMBIRD, he tries to cram the fish in his mouth all at once. SUE grabs the tail of the fish; HE holds it with both hands, eyes squeezed closed. SHE puts her foot on his head or chest and pulls. HE opens one eye mischievously, and lets go. SUE tumbles.)

SUE (shouted)

Get out! Get off my farm! Take this fish-thief and don't ever come back with a fish-eater. Do you hear me? Never! Never! NEVER!!!

(SUE stomps off left, the OTHERS all run right.)

(A moment passes, then MARV, EILEEN, TOTUM, FURBELOW creep back onstage right. EILEEN is holding Furbelow's foot, TOTUM is holding Marv's wing. HUMBIRD is trying very hard to be invisible and very small behind the others. EILEEN releases Furbelow and takes hold of HUMBIRD's wing to make sure there is no more trouble from him.)

TOTUM (spoken)

Whew! But luckily we ran the right way ... this is where the HERMIT lives.

(He knocks at an almost unnoticeable door, to a .. cave, a cabin, an old school bus .. where the HERMIT lives. The HERMIT appears. He is not prepossessing but not really scary either.)

HERMIT (spokenish)

Hmm?

TOTUM (spoken)

Umm. Hello.

EILEEN (spoken)

This is the Half Bird. He needs to go home, long ago and far away. Could you send Marv back to ancient Persia?

HERMIT (spokenish)
(HE shrugs: well .. maybe?)

Hmm. Mmm. Dmm.

(The HERMIT traces a circle on the ground. He puts some special twigs and things in the center, makes an 'OK' sign, and indicates that MARV should stand in the ring. He gestures that the others should walk slowly around the circle.)

EILEEN takes HUMBIRD by the wing as a precaution. MARV sprinkles pinches of stuff on the pile and mutters under his breath. FURBELOW sneezes quietly. EILEEN watches with fascination and lets HUMBIRD slip from her grasp.)

MARV

By the principles of opposition and the eternal verities and the contrarities, by the vital force of two kids, a frog, a bird with a rope, and me, by my deep deep longing to rejoin my other half, I want to go HOME.

(When HUMBIRD realizes he is free again he does a big slow anticipation then jumps into the circle with Marv. TOTUM, EILEEN, and FURBELOW all rush forward to catch HUMBIRD – just as the incantation completes. POOOOOF!! A big flash of light and smoke, and they are ALL transported to Persia together.)

(Under cover of the FLASH and SMOKE the scene changes: a Fire Temple, a trapezoidal building with a square base. We see one wall of the Temple and a big open arched doorway.)

ACT I
Scene 2

(TOTUM, EILEEN, FURBELOW, HUMBIRD, and MARV have been transported to ancient Persia. They recover their balance, then look around. MARV stays cautiously at the door of the Temple.)

#8 Persia

TOTUM

WHERE ARE WE?

MARV

HOME! PERSIA! THE FIRE TEMPLE.

TOTUM and EILEEN

PERSIA! PERSIA?

MARV

YES. PERSIA. HOME!

EILEEN

I WANT TO GO HOME.

MARV

YOU JUST GOT HERE.

TOTUM

I WANT TO GO HOME.

TOTUM and EILEEN

WE WANT TO GO HOME.

TOTUM

WE'RE LATE FOR LUNCH.

MARV

THE MAGUS COULD SEND YOU HOME.

EILEEN

WHAT IS THE MAGUS?

MARV

YOU WOULD SAY, THE VISE MAN.

TOTUM
WISE MAN, AS IN THE BIBLE?

MARV (sniffs)
I COULDN'T SAY. THAT PART IS NOT WRITTEN YET.

(MARV dances. TOTUM and EILEEN look at each other.)

MARV (spoken)
Come on kids, relax.

EILEEN
WHERE IS THIS MAGUS?

MARV
I DON'T KNOW. BUT THERE IS A TAVERN IN THE TOWN.

THE NAME IS, I FORGET THE NAME.
GO TO THE DISHVASHER THERE,

EILEEN AND TOTUM
GO WHERE?

MARV
I FORGET THE NAME.
GO TO THE DISHVASHER THERE AND SAY,
"MAY THE HALF-BIRDS REUNITE"
THEN HE VILL SAY,
"MAY THE FISHES PROSPER"
THEN YOU BOTH VIGGLE YOUR LITTLE FINGERS TO THE EAST.

ASK HIM VHERE TO FIND THE MAGUS.
ASK THE MAGUS HOW TO GET HOME. SIMPLE!

THE TAVERN HAS A SIGN, RIGHT ON THE SQVARE.
YOU CAN'T MISS IT. I'LL VAIT HERE.

EILEEN (spoken)
What will you do?

MARV
I'll sit here safe inside the circle of the Fire Temple und vatch the sun set und vait.
It's great to be home.

MAY THE HALF-BIRDS REUNITE

(MARV snaps his 'fingers' jazzily and points to Totum)

TOTUM

Uh. "AND MAY THE FISH BITE."

EILEEN

"PROSPER"

(ALL THREE wiggle their little fingers to the east)

MARV

Right! May the fishes prosper. You say "MAY THE HALF-BIRDS REUNITE", the dishwasher say "UND MAY THE FISHES PROSPER". It's a secret code, you know? You viggles, then you know it's the right fellow und he knows you're vith me.

TOTUM

Why don't you go with us?

MARV (nervously)

No, no. I am fery well known here. I must be careful not to be seen. So. Find the Dish Washer, ask vhere to find the Magus.

TOTUM

You have to go with us, Marv.

MARV

Oh no no no. I couldn't. Ve wouldn't last an hour. I'm tellink you, eferyone knows me.

TOTUM

What will we do?

MARV

Maybe you'll see Alice. My Other Half

(TOTUM, EILEEN, FURBELOW, and HUMBIRD walk away from MARV and into the square, down right, as the scenery changes. MARV exits behind the Fire Temple up right. If doubling, the actor playing MARV/AHRIMAN must cross backstage and change costume for his entrance as AHRIMAN from left.)

ACT ONE
Scene 3

(The Café in the Square. A FOUNTAIN (the Pond), a DOOR with a grate (the prison) at the left exit. Another exit up left, behind fountain, and an exit right. A small TABLE for one, behind bars, up center. The Fire Temple is altered to be the façade of another Café in the square, pulled up right and out of focus, a small unobtrusive SIGN on it, "Forget the Name". A prominent SIGN down right center, "The Lizard Leg" marks the café entrance. Sue's Pond has become the Café Fountain of the Lizard Leg Café during the smoke and flash of the incantation, and is now lit. BASHBAHA enters left and sets up a table for three beside the fountain, up left of center.)

(TOTUM, EILEEN, FURBELOW, and HUMBIRD walk slowly up to the Lizard Leg Café.)

#9 Act I Finale

TOTUM
THIS MUST BE THE PLACE. LIZARD LEG CAFÉ.

EILEEN
HE COULDN'T REMEMBER *THAT* NAME?

(THEY enter the café. BASHBAHA looms toward them.)

BASHBAHA
GREEETINGS.

TOTUM
HELLO. WE'RE JUST LOOKING.

(THEY quickly back out of the café. BASHBAHA is a little gruesome.)

EILEEN
DON'T JUDGE A BIRD BY ITS BEAK.

(THEY re-enter the café.)

TOTUM
WE'D LIKE A TABLE FOR FOUR.

(BASHBAHA counts them. She looks particularly evilly at Furbelow. She frowns.)

BASHBAHA
FOUR? ONE MOMENT.

(AHRIMAN the Host has entered and is looking at them from behind the grated doorway left. BASHBAHA goes over near him and leaves them waiting at the entrance.)

EILEEN
SO THIS IS MARV'S KIND OF PLACE?

TOTUM
I DON'T KNOW.

EILEEN
WHY DID SHE LOOK AT FURBELOW LIKE THAT?

(BASHBAHA turns a very large crank which starts the Fountain. It is animated by the CHILDREN of the chorus, first appearing the MECHANICAL LIZARDS then the MECHANICAL FISH. They begin quietly and get louder and louder.)

LIZARDS
SHA. SHA. SHA. GIVE ME A FISH.

FISH
BLOOP BLOOP BLOOP. OH ME OH MY, LIZARDS.

AHRIMAN (to Bashbaha)
SQUEEZE THEM INTO THE THREE BY THE FOUNTAIN.

LIZARDS
F-SHA I-SHA S-AHA SHA-H. SHA! SHA! SHA!

BASHBAHA
FOLLOW ME, THIS WAY.

FISH (bad spellers)
L-Z-Z-A-R-DABLOOP-D-S. OH MY, LIZARDS.

BASHBAHA
FOLLOW ME, THIS WAY.

(SHE leads them to the small table next to the fountain. The CHORUS are mechanical lizards chasing mechanical fish in a mechanical cycle, while they sing. TOTUM, EILEEN and HUMBIRD take chairs, FURBELOW stands beside Eileen.)

CHORUS

(The chanting of Fish Names serves to get the Lizard Chorus worked up; during the Fish Solos the Terpsi Lizards perform a choreography while the Seethers form behind them to writhe and flap their capes in rhythm.)

TUNA TURBOT MULLET LOACH,
ROCKFISH REDFIN SALMON ROACH,
PARROTFISH PADDLEFISH GILTHEAD TENCH.
SHA! SHA! SHA!

DOLPHIN ANGLER SUNFISH PLAICE,
POLLOCK HADDOCK MOONFISH DACE,
DEVILFISH ANGELFISH GROUPER BRAIZE,
FISH-SHA SHA SHA, SHA! SHA!

AHRIMAN

SQUEE-EEZE THEM.

(BASHBAHA hovers over them with an order pad.)

TOTUM

WE'D LIKE FOUR ICE CREAM JULEPS.

AHRIMAN

SQUEE-EEZE THEM.

EILEEN

AND WE'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO THE DISHWASHER.

(BASHBAHA looks at them funny. Funnier. She scratches her head and again goes to consult Ahriman.)

LIZARDS

F-SHA I-SHA S-SHA SHA-H! FISH-SHASHA,
FISH-SHASHA, SHA! SHA! SHA!

FISH

L, Z, Z, A, R-bloop, D, S. OH ME OH MY, AAAAAH! LIZARDS.

CHORUS

GOLDFISH SILVERFISH MUSKELLUNGE SCAD,
FROGFISH HALIBUT HOOKFISH SHAD,
FLOUNDER LUNGFISH GRAYLING CHUB,
OPAH HAGFISH LAMPREY BASS,

FISH-SHA-SHA, FISH-SHA-SHA. SHA! SHA!

RASBORAH REMORA ANCHOVY SARDINE,
HAKE SPOT PERCH BREAM,
PICKEREL MACKEREL HERRING PIKE,
ANEMONE COD RED YELLOW BLUE WHITE

GUNNEL RUDD TROUT SNAPPER FIN FLAPPER
FISH-SHA! SHA-SHA! SHA-SHA! SHA! SHA!

FISH (soli)
OH ME! OH MY! AAAHH! AAAHH!

FISH
AAAAAHHH!

(AHRIMAN and BASHBAHA bring the ice cream juleps. AHRIMAN scrutinizes each of them, then with an exaggerated response pretends to have just noticed FURBELOW.)

AHRIMAN
OH, NO! NO NO NO, NO, NO!
OH NO NO NO, BY THE LOVE OF THE LIZARD,
NOT ALLOWED, NO. NO!

(AHRIMAN steps over to the Fountain Crank, turns it. The FISH and LIZARDS freeze in place and become silent suddenly).

AHRIMAN
THE TOAD MUST NOT SIT HERE.

EILEEN and TOTUM
WHY NOT?

(AHRIMAN turns the Fountain Crank.)

LIZARDS and FISH (CHORUS)
SHHH-AAAAH! AAAAH! Etc.

AHRIMAN
SOULS WHO ARE BEING TORMENTED,
TORMENTED BY TRANSMIGRATION
MUST SIT IN A SEGREGATED PLACE.

(AHRIMAN turns off the fountain.)

THE TOAD MAY NOT SIT HERE.

(AHRIMAN turns on the fountain.)

CHORUS

SHHH-AAAA. SHAAAA! AAAAAH!

AHRIMAN (to Furbelow)

FOLLOW ME, THIS WAY.

EILEEN

THEN WE'LL ALL SIT THERE.

LIZARDS

TAIL OF THE FISH FIN SCALE

GILL HEAD SKIN BONE!

TAIL OF THE FISH FIN SCALE

GILL HEAD SKIN BONE!

AHRIMAN

I CAN'T HEAR YOU.

EILEEN

SHE'S A FROG, NOT A TOAD.

EILEEN and TOTUM

THEN WE'LL ALL SIT THERE.

AHRIMAN (to Furbelow)

THIS WAY, MADAM, THIS WAY.

LIZARDS

TAIL OF THE FISH FIN SCALE

GILL HEAD SKIN BONE

AHRIMAN

I CAN'T HEAR YOU.

EILEEN and TOTUM

THEN WE'LL ALL SIT THERE!

LIZARDS

TAIL OF THE FISH FIN SCALE

GILL HEAD SKIN BONE.

AHRIMAN
THIS WAY. THE TOAD MUST SIT THERE ALONE.
THE TOAD MUST SIT THERE ALONE.

(FURBELOW looks at Eileen and shrugs, as if to say she's not bothered. AHRIMAN picks up her ice cream and a straw and leads her around the fountain to a very small table behind bars. He clicks a lock closed. HUMBIRD is investigating the mechanical fish, but discovers they are inedible. AHRIMAN returns.)

AHRIMAN
NOW. YOU WANTED THE DISH WASHER.
KNOW THEN THAT I HAVE WASHED A DISH OR TWO.

TOTUM
MAY THE HALF-BIRDS REUNITE!

(AHRIMAN controls his horrified reaction.)

AHRIMAN
AH. YOU HAVE A MESSAGE FOR ME?

TOTUM
WE NEED HELP. MARV SAID YOU WOULD
KNOW WHERE WE MIGHT FIND THE MAGUS

EILEEN
TOTUM, HE DIDN'T SAY "MAY THE FISHES PROSPER".

LIZARDS
SHA! SHA! SHA!

(AHRIMAN can scarcely control his anger and hatred. HIS lips curl and his nostrils flare but he controls himself. The LIZARDS sing more quietly.)

LIZARDS
SOLE, DUAL, DOZEN, SCHOOL,
DOESN'T SEEM TO SATISFY.
SCORE, GROSS, A MEASE OR MORE,
GIVE US FISH TO HORRIFY.

THOUSAND, MYRIAD, MILLION, BILLION
STILL DOESN'T SATISFY.
SHA! SHA! SHA! LET THE FISH FRY!

AHRIMAN

THAT CODE STUFF IS VERY OLD FASHIONED.
THEN WE VIGGLE OUR FINGERS? HO-HUM.
THAT FELLOW .. WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH HIM, HMM?

LIZARDS

SOLE, DUAL, DOZEN, SCHOOL,
DOESN'T SEEM TO SATISFY.
SCORE, GROSS, A MEASE OR MORE,
GIVE US FISH TO HORRIFY.

THOUSAND, MYRIAD, MILLION, BILLION
STILL DOESN'T SATISFY.
SHA! SHA! SHA! LET THE FISH FRY!

EILEEN and TOTUM

THE MAGUS WILL HELP US HOME AGAIN.

(AHRIMAN draws in his breath and makes a symbol of protection from good – crossing both fingers and thumbs in a square.)

AHRIMAN

WHERE IS HOME?

TOTUM

[Your Town] (Or “XXX Middle School”, or “Mrs. Smith’s Fifth Grade”, etc)

AHRIMAN

NEVER HEARD OF IT.
BUT I WILL HELP YOU HOME AGAIN.
YES I WILL HELP YOU BUT
YOU MUST PROVE YOU ARE WORTHY,
WORTHY.

LET ME SEE.

YOU ARE TO BRING US THE SEEDS
OF A CERTAIN TREE
WHICH IS GUARDED BY SOME CERTAIN FISH.

BASHBAHA

YOU ARE TO BRING US THE SEEDS OF A CERTAIN TREE.

AHRIMAN
GO TO THE FISH OF THE TREE ...

BASHBAHA, EILEEN, TOTUM
GO TO THE FISH OF THE TREE,

AHRIMAN
CLIMB THE TREE,

BASHBAHA, EILEEN, TOTUM
CLIMB THE TREE,

AHRIMAN
PICK THREE SEEDS,

BASHBAHA, EILEEN, TOTUM
PICK THREE SEEDS,

AHRIMAN
BRING THEM HERE TO ME.

BASHBAHA, EILEEN, TOTUM
BRING THEM.

LIZARDS
SHA. SHA. SHA. SHA.

AHRIMAN
FEED THE FISH THESE CHIPS AND THEY'LL LEAVE YOU ALONE.

(THEY quickly finish their ice cream. AHRIMAN takes a small bag from beside the fountain and gives it to them. EILEEN and TOTUM look over to Furbelow. SHE can't get out.)

EILEEN
COME ON, FURBELOW, LET'S GO.

LIZARDS (quietly)
SHA. SHA. SHA. SHA.

AHRIMAN
THE TOAD MUST STAY HERE. AS A 'GUEST'.
TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE WHO YOU SAY YOU ARE.
'[Your town]' HUH? ("Mrs. Smith, huh?" etc.)

EILEEN
I WON'T GO WITHOUT FURBELOW.

LIZARDS
SHA. SHA. SHA. SHA.

AHRIMAN
YES YOU WILL, MY CHILD. YOU MUST.

EILEEN (calling to Furbelow)
WE'LL BE BACK VERY SOON, DARLING.

LIZARDS (very quietly)
SHA. SHA.

EILEEN and TOTUM
WE'LL BE BACK, WE'LL BE BACK,
WE'LL BE BACK. WE'LL BE BACK.

FISH (solo, pianissimo)
AAAAHHHH.

(BASHBAHA ushers them out the door without Furbelow. They have unwittingly been employed as Agents of Evil. EILEEN looks suspicious and troubled. She points to the sign on the other café façade, and looks as if she is trying to remember something. BASHBAHA stands at the door and points to the long dusty road off into the desert. THEY exit right, BASHBAHA carries the table off left. Curtain.)

ACT II
Scene 1

(The Pond of the Fish of the Tree.)

#10 Fish of the Tree

TOTUM

THIS MUST BE WHERE THE FISH OF THE TREE LIVE.
SHOULD WE GO IN?
I DON'T SEE HOW FISH IN A TREE CAN LIVE.
LET'S GO IN.

EILEEN

HE SEEMED EVIL.

TOTUM

WHO?

EILEEN

THAT MAN.

TOTUM

NO, EILEEN.

EILEEN

YES, MY FRIEND.

TOTUM

WHY DO YOU THINK THAT?

EILEEN

WHY DO I THINK THAT?

TOTUM

YOU THINK SO BECAUSE HE HAS FURBELOW.

EILEEN

HE DOES HAVE FURBELOW!

TOTUM

LET'S GO IN, LET'S FINISH.

EILEEN

NO, I'M CONCERNED. WE CAN'T TRUST SUCH A MAN.
HE SEEMED EVIL. MAYBE WE SHOULD NOT PICK THE SEEDS.
LET'S GO TALK TO MARV.
THAT MAN WAS EVIL, SO WE SHOULD NOT PICK THE SEEDS.

TOTUM

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN?

EILEEN

I AM CONCERNED. I DON'T WANT TO KNOW.
LET'S TALK TO MARV.

TOTUM

FIRST, LET'S JUST LOOK IN AND SEE
WHAT THE TREE MIGHT BE.

EILEEN

THEN WE TALK TO MARV?

TOTUM

RIGHT!

TOTUM and EILEEN

LET'S JUST SEE HOW THE FISH OF THE TREE LIVE

TOTUM

THERE'S THE TREE.

EILEEN

HERE'S A POND.

TOTUM

THERE ARE FISH!
THIS LOOKS EASY.

EILEEN

BUT LET'S STILL GO TALK WITH MARV.

TOTUM

ALRIGHT.

(As the CHILDREN turn away, HUMBIRD reaches into the pond, bringing up a BABY FISH)

BABY FISH

You're gonna be sorry!

(HUMBIRD looks at the fish with cold, fierce, hungry eyes and shrugs.)

(EILEEN and TOTUM begin to exit, HUMBIRD follows them with that gourmand's look on his face again.)

11 Fish Fugue (Instrumental)

(The top of a very large head .. then four or five feet of silvery fish scale ..)

(Then all of MOMMA KAR's huge length and bulk wriggles out of the pond. A shadow passes over HUMBIRD.)

(HE looks up and squawks. EVERYONE else looks up too. They all run.)

(THEY run into the desert. MOMMA KAR lumbers behind.)

(HUMBIRD throws BABY KAR back to MOMMA. BABY, if played by a child, can 'flounder' back to the POND; otherwise MOMMA stops to pick up BABY.)

(MOMMA chases awhile then returns into the pond.)

(THEY trudge for a brief time and come near the Fire Temple, where Marv is asleep on a beach chair, with a beach towel.)

TOTUM and EILEEN

Marv!

#12 Vide Awake

MARV

YES, MOM, I'M VIDE AVAKE. I MEAN, KIDS.

TOTUM and EILEEN

WE HAVE PROBLEMS,
MARV, WE HAVE ... HEY MARV,
WE HAVE PROBLEMS, HEY ... MARV!

MARV

YES, KIDS, VIDE AVAKE,
AND VONDERFUL IT IS TO BE HOME.

TOTUM

YOU MUST COME WITH US,
YOU MUST COME WITH US NOW, MARV.

MARV

OH NO NO NO NO, YOU KNOW I AM NOTABLY KNOWN,
SO NO NO NO.

I DO NOT WANT TO BE FLUNKT BACK TO [Your Town]
(Mrs.Smith's, etc.)

TOTUM and EILEEN

PLEASE. WE NEED YOUR HELP.
WE NEED ADVICE.
WE COULD DISGUISE YOU, DISGUISE!

MARV

A BABY DUCKLING! I'LL BE A DUCK!

TOTUM and EILEEN

MARVO, I DON'T THINK SO.

MARV

MAYBE A CAMEL, A BABY CAMEL?

TOTUM and EILEEN

(nodding agreement: he *does* have a camel air)
HM. IT SUITS. IT'S HIM!

MARV

A BABY CAMEL I VILL BE, SO SVADDLE ME.
HARACACA! HARACACA!

TOTUM and EILEEN

OK NOW, MARVO, SHOW YOUR DROMEDARY VIGGLE,
DROMEDARY VIGGLE, MARVO,
SHOW US HOW YOU VIGGLE, VIGGLE.

MARV

I'M A BABY CAMEL SNOOZING,

I SHALL NOT BE FLUNKT BACK TO [Your Town].

TOTUM and EILEEN
WE HAVE PROBLEMS,
MARV, WE HAVE ... HEY MARV,
WE HAVE PROBLEMS, HEY. MARV!

EILEEN
HE WAS BAD INDEED, HE SEEMED EVIL.

MARV
YES MOM, A BABY CAMEL SNOOZING.

TOTUM
YOUR FRIEND, THAT DISHWASHER MAN, HAS FURBELOW.

EILEEN
EVERYONE AGREED, HE SEEMED EVIL.
I GET VERY MAD AT SOMEONE SO BAD.

MARV
I SHALL NOT BE FLUNKT BACK TO [Your Town] ...

EILEEN and TOTUM
HE HAS FURBELOW.

MARV
(beat) OH YOU MEAN FURBELOW.

MARV
OH HO HO HO. MAYBE HE DIN'T BELIEVE YOU.
WHAT DID HE VANT?

TOTUM and EILEEN
WE WERE TO FEED .. A BUNCH OF FISH,
HE GAVE US FISH FOOD, THESE CHIPS.

MARV
LET'S SEE A CHIP.

TOTUM and EILEEN
MARVO, NO, I DON'T THINK SO.

MARV

I WANT TO TASTE IT.

MAYBE I'M HUNGRY. JA, FERY HUNGRY.

(MARV takes a chip from the bag and eats it.)

TOTUM and EILEEN

MARV? WHAT'S THE MATTER?

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

(HUMBIRD takes a chip from the bag and eats it.)

(MARV falls asleep again on his chair; HUMBIRD topples over, asleep.)

ACT TWO
Scene 2

(The CHILDREN, not knowing what to do, pace out a little, back into the desert. A very large fellow enters right: KING DARAYAVAUSH, escorted by two of the KING'S ARCHERS.)

#13 Thus Sayeth the King

KING DARAYAVAUSH
SAND WALKERS AHEAD, HALT!
I WOULD SPEAK WITH YOU.

THUS SAYETH KING DARAYAVAUSH,
THE GREAT KING, KING OF KINGS.

ARCHER

Thus sayeth King Darayavaush the King.

(The ARCHERS nock their bows threateningly.)

TOTUM
Should we run?

EILEEN
No. They'd shoot us.

TOTUS
They'll shoot us anyway.

(The KING hops over to them, moving surprisingly quickly for a man his size. It takes awhile for the bulk of him to fall quietly in place. His costume spins and wiggles and he pats himself ineffectually to make it all come to a stop. TOTUM, EILEEN, and the ARCHERS circle him as he spins.)

KING DARAYAVAUSH
Perhaps I have eaten too often (he chortles). Thus sayeth King Darayavaush
the Great King.

(HE eventually slows and is stable.)

KING DARAYAVAUSH
Now. Who are you and what are you carrying?

EILEEN

We're trying to get home.

TOTUM

Those are ... umm... a bird ...

EILEEN

A bird and um a baby camel.

KING (leads the way closer to MARV and HUMBIRD)
And a baby camel. I can see. That bird is very distinguished looking. A King Fisher, if I'm not mistaken. A bird worthy of a king. And I am a king. I want it.

TOTUM

Um.

KING DARAYAVAUSH

I want the bird. Maybe I could help you and then you would give it to me as a gift?

TOTUM

It's a pet.

KING DARAYAVAUSH

I want that bird.

(The KING looks at MARV without much interest as MARV wakes up.)

KING DARAYAVAUSH

Yes, a baby camel. Cute. But they grow up, you know.

Well. Walk and talk with me, O Sand Walkers. Entertain me! Thus sayeth King Darayavaush the Great King. Archers, bring the bird.

(The KING exits right, followed by TOTUM. The ARCHERS grab HUMBIRD and drag him to the exit; EILEEN helps MARV readjust his costume and they follow, exiting.)

ACT II
Scene 3

(Lights rise on FURBELOW in her cell, back at the Lizard Leg Café. If feasible it has been moved somewhat down center to be more visible. ALICE'S cell is not immediately visible, but may be on stage behind FURBELOW, or perhaps in an accessory area or balcony. FURBELOW is alone and miserable, but she is exercising like a resolute prisoner, doing frog pushups and panting loudly. BASHBAHA peers in.)

BASHBAHA

Quiet in there!

(BASHBAHA enters and makes the sign of the evil square against Furbelow's Blue Ribbon of good. SHE glares at FURBELOW and leaves. FURBELOW does another pushup. Something attracts her attention, she looks at the rear wall. SHE listens.)

ALICE (her voice is heard, but she is not seen)

Through the crack in the wall I can see a blue ribbon. If you are in *this* prison you must be a friend. And, my friend, we might escape together. There is a loose stone. Find it. Push. Push hard. Join me!

(FURBELOW finds the stone and pushes. And fails. But tries again, succeeds. SHE hops through into the next cell. The light falls, then rises, and we see ALICE the Half-Bird.)

#14 The Other Half

GREETINGS, FROG.
I AM ALICE, THE HALF-BIRD.
I CAN SEE IN YOUR HEART.

WHEN YOU ARE ALONE,
AND SUNDERED FROM YOUR OTHER,
THE LAKE IS LIKE A COLD GRAY PRISON,
ISN'T IT?

EVEN ICE CREAM TASTES LIKE ASHES;
PILLOW'S SOFT AS ANY STONE;
HEART'S NOT WORTH ITS RIBCAGE SPLASHES,
WHEN IT BEATS ALONE.

BUT FROG, DEAR FROG,

WHEN YOU HOP SIDE BY SIDE WITH A FRIEND,
THE WORLD IS WARMER,

AND THE SKY BECOMES GOLDEN AGAIN,
AND THE WATER INVITES YOU TO DANCE.

IS IT TRUE? I CAN SEE IN YOUR HEART?
FOR I TOO AM ALONE.

Against all our troubles there is only a Half-Bird and a Frog. Well, I think we can get free, with your help. And find our Other Halves. And laugh again. Look up. Look up there.

(FURBELOW does not like heights, but she looks up.)

Half-Birds can fly a little when balanced by a friend. I think you may enable us to escape, my Friend.

(FURBELOW still does not like heights.)

You must hold on tight, Dear. If you let go we may fall down. It would be a very unpleasant fall.

(FURBELOW is very uneasy about this development.)

That's a nice Ribbon, Frog. Hold tight to my connector bone.

(A drumming sound of bird wings. BASHBAHA runs in and sticks her head in Furbelow's cell, and looks up.)

BASHBAHA

Come back! Stop them. The Half-Bird is escaping. We'll get you Toad.

(BASHBAHA stands looking up, a feather or two drifts down.)

(shouts) You'll never make it.

ALICE'S VOICE

We made it! Look out. Watch your step. Don't look down.
But let me rest. Before we try. Any more.

Let's find Marv! It's been so long.

ACT TWO
Scene 4

(AHRIMAN enters and stands with BASHBAHA looking up.)

AHRIMAN

It doesn't matter. We'll have the seeds from the Tree. Give the Lizard Call.

(BASHBAHA blows a Lizard Call.)

Our time has come. Evil will rule. And we, my dear, will rule evil.

(LIZARDS begin to enter from all directions.)

Get 'em worked up.

(LIZARDS continue to enter, they thrash around.)

BASHBAHA

Allight, Class. Give me an L.

LIZARDS (inarticulate growls)

ELLR.

BASHBAHA

Give me a Z.

LIZARDS (inarticulate hisses)

ZZZRRR.

BASHBAHA

Give me another Z.

LIZARDS

ZZZRR

BASHBAHA

Um. Give me an A.

LIZARDS

ARRGH

BASHBAHA

Give me an R da Bloop.

AHRIMAN

Awww. You've been listening to those silly fountain fish, haven't you? Lemme do it.

(to the crowd)

AHRIMAN

Welcome! Welcome all. The Half-Bird is trying to return. Whaddawe do?

LIZARDS (roar)

SHA! SHA! SHA!

AHRIMAN

Yes! Do we do it now?

LIZARDS (roar and snarl)

SHA! SHA! SHA!

AHRIMAN

Yes! It's time to overthrow the fat king. Whaddawe do?

LIZARDS (roar and snarl and gnash)

SHA! SHA! SHA!

AHRIMAN

Yes! When do we do it?

LIZARDS (more of the same)

AHRIMAN

Do you mean now?

LIZARDS (even louder)

(The LIZARDS are writhing and thrashing wildly. AHRIMAN really knows how to get them worked up. BASHBAHA throws incendiary morsels of fish among them.)

BASHBAHA

Fish-sha!

AHRIMAN

Now!

LIZARDS

(roar very loudly)

#15 The Lizard Call

AHRIMAN

LIZARDS, DO YOU HEAR THE LIZARD CALL?
COME ONE, COME ALL.

LIZARDS, DO YOU HEAR THE LIZARD CALL?
SLITHER IN, COME CRAWL.

LIZARDS, DO YOU HEAR THE LIZARD CALL?
COME TO THE MAUL.

COME ONE, COME ALL, ROLL OUT YOUR REEL,
PROSECUTE YOUR DINNER WITHOUT APPEAL.
I SEE A WILL-O-THE-WISH RISING IN YOUR FATE,
A DATE WITH A PLATE,
I SEE – WHAT IS IT? FISH!

COME ONE COME ALL, COME ALLIGATE,
IT AIN'T ILLEGAL TO SALIVATE
AT THE THOUGHT OF A DISH,
AT THE SMELL OF A MEAL,
NOT VEAL. GET REAL!
I SMELL .. WHAT IS IT? FISH!!

NO TOAD, NO HOPSTER,
NO LOBSTER, NO SHRIMP.

I SAY NO SHRIMP
(HE boots a small lizard out of the way.)

THEY CRIMP OUR STYLE.
AND WHAT'S OUR STYLE?
REPTILE! BE REPTILIAN LIKE A SSSS-NAKE.
YESS LIKE A SNAKE!

COME ONE, COME ALL, CREEP TO YOUR CREEL,
INFORM YOUR DINNER HOW YOU FEEL.
I SEE A WILL-O-THE-WISH RISING IN YOUR FATE,
A DATE WITH A PLATE!
I SEE ... FISH!!

COME ONE COME ALL, CROCODILATE,
EXPAND YOUR JAWS AND HALITATE,
BLOW UP YOUR BREATH TO A SHOUT,
BREAK THE WIND, LET IT OUT,
LET YOUR SCENT SHOW NO DOUBT:
WE MEAN ...
WHAT IS IT? FISH!!

I HEAR A HISH ...
WHAT IS IT? FISH!!

I FEEL A PISH ...
WHAT IS IT.

(The small lizard is behind Ahriman, leg raised, doggy fashion).

EWV.

IF YOU ARE A FISSILINGUAL LIZARD
AND YOU'VE GOT A FORKED TONGUE,
THEN COME, COME, COME.

COME, LEAP IN, DON'T BE LATE,
DON'T WAIT, DON'T HESITATE.

YOU ARE THE HUB OF THE FIRMAMENT,
TAKE THE WHEEL,
OF THIS VERY EVOLUTIONARY REPTOMOBILE,

THE EARTH! THE EARTH! THE EARTH!

(AHRIMAN and BASHBAHA lead the LIZARDS down right and off. The Cell is removed and the Fountain becomes the King's Pond.)

ACT II
Scene 5

(Enter from left TOTUM and EILEEN, KING DARAYAVAUSH, the ARCHERS, HUMBIRD, and MARV, still lagging behind and still in disguise. The Pond of the Great King. The KING has his arm around HUMBIRD. THEY are in love.)

KING DARAYAVAUSH

This is the Pond of the Great King. He loves to float!

(The KING stands at the edge of the pond and begins to rock. Out of the pond flee some FISH.)

KING DARAYAVAUSH

Come on in!

(Looking after the FISH who are floundering away.)

KING DARAYAVAUSH

They don't understand me.

EILEEN

You are the Great King?

(HUMBIRD disengages from the KING, begins to tear after the FISH, then suddenly remembers Momma Kar. Stops, looks around carefully then dashes after them again.)

#16 Join Me in the Jumping in the Great King's Pond

KING DARAYAVAUSH
ROYALLY, YES, WE HAVE CALLED
OUR AMPLE SELF THE GREAT;
BUT MODESTLY DO CONFESS
WE WOULD PRIVATELY BE GOOD WITH LARGE.
BIG IS AS BIG DOES, CALL IT OUR FATE.
LOOK OUT, FISH, WE'RE JUMPING!
LOOK OUT, FISH, WE'RE JUMPING IN!
LOOK OUT, WE'RE JUMPING NOW!

HEY! JOIN ME IN THE JUMPING IN THE GREAT KING'S POND,
A SPLASH WILL MAKE YOU HAPPY IF YOU FIND YOU'RE FEELING SAD.

COME ON IN! GOOD AND BAD.
JUMP AND SWIM, YOU'LL BE GLAD.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE WATER TO WASH A FROWN AWAY!

HEY! JOIN ME IN THE JUMPING IN THE GREAT KING'S POND,
A SPASH'LL MAKE YOU GLEEFUL IF YOU FIND YOU'RE GETTING GLUM.

COME ON IN! JOIN THE SONG.
JUMP AND SWIM, YOU BELONG.
PUT SOLE IN THE WATERS, DISSOLVE YOUR CARES WITH ME!

SEE, BIG OR SMALL, YOU'LL BE GLAD,
ROOM FOR ALL, PLAIN OR PLAID,
JUMP IN! JUMP IN! JUMP IN!

ACT II
Scene 6

(A MESSENGER arrives looking panicky.)

MESSENGER

The Lizards have risen! Ahriman is taking over all Persia!

KING

Call my archers. Let the Great King's troops prove themselves again.
To arms! To arms!

(MARV throws off his disguise, moves forward.)

MARV

One ving!

KING

Where are they?

(MESSENGER points vaguely toward the city. SOLDIER mass and run here and there.)

TOTUM

What are the Lizards?

MARV

Followers of horrible Ahriman. In his Lizard Leg Café he has a mechanical fountain. It ...

(TOTUM and EILEEN let their jaw drop open).

It demonstrates his dreams: that the Lizards will rise and kill all the Magical Fish that protect

the Tree of Life. And that evil may rule over all unto eternity. Only the Magical Fish – and yours truly – dare oppose him.

TOTUM

But ... but ... you sent us to the Lizard Leg Café, din't you? To the Dishvasher?

MARV

Oh, no no no, I sent you to the “Forget the Name” Tavern. Across the square. Don't tell me you vent to Ahriman's place?

(TOTUM and EILEEN nod yes in horror.)

EILEEN

He told us to put the fish to sleep, climb the tree, and pick three seeds. The tree on the island in the pond where the big fish are.

MARV (flabbergasted)

That would haf doomed the world to the dominion of evil. I think it's time to tell the Kink that the Half-Bird has returned.

(Using everyone available, the finale begins with a kind of line dance: first some of the fighters for good enter from right: the king's soldiers, Marv, Eileen, Totum, the King, some of the fish chorus upgraded to warriors. In a sinuous line they cross from up right to up center, curve back to down right, curve up and left to center, and form a line diagonally facing right; at a slight delay some of the fighters for bad enter from left: the Lizards, Bashbaha, Ahriman, and as many bad guys as can be assembled; they make a kind of reverse curve in a more limited space and form a line facing up right, opposing the goodies. As the battle progresses, the baddies appear to be pushing forward, to be winning.)

#18 Battle, Reunion, and Victory

LIZARDS, BASHBAHA, ETC.

SNARL, BITE, SCRATCH AND CLAW,
SLITHER HITHER MAKE THEM BAWL,
BASH, CRASH, AND LET THEM WRECK,
FECKLESS FISH LET'S CATCH THEM ALL.

MARV, EILEEN, TOTUM, KING, ETC

DA-RA-YA-VAVAVA
YAVAVAVAVAVAVA
USH! USH! USH!
FA-YA-GA-HA-TUSH!
DA-RA-YA-VA-USH!
FIGHT PUSH PUSH PUSH!

BADS
SHA SHA.
KICK EM KNOCK EM POKE EM PIKE

GOODS
KAYAKA KA KA NA OH VA

BADS
KICK EM KNOCK EM PIKE EM POKE

LIZARDS
ELLR ARRGH
ZZZ ZZZ SHH SHH SHA!
ZZZ!

(The KING'S SOLDIERS, the KING, MARV, and ALL retreat left.)

(AHRIMAN, BASHBAHA, and the LIZARDS resume their push. Big fight, all more or less choreographed.)

BASHBAHA
Fish-sha!

LIZARDS
Sha! Sha!

(A bird-wing drumming sound over the commotion. Everyone looks up and watches ALICE and FURBELOW fly across, invisibly to the audience, to offstage left.)

ALICE'S VOICE (amplified as necessary)
We want to see the King. I am the Half-Bird.

MARV (runs off toward left)
ALICE!

ALICE'S VOICE
MARVO!

TOTUM and EILEEN
Marv-Alice!

(Flashes of colored light off left as the Half-Birds are reunited.)

(FURBELOW staggers in from left, walking with an awkward tilt. She is suffering the after-effects of cooperative flying. Even the LIZARDS stop being revolting briefly to stare at her. SHE goes to EILEEN.)

(MARV-ALICE comes from left with an awesome poise and power. In union, a mighty creature. All of AHRIMAN's forces waver and draw back.)

(MOMMA KAR enters from right. Perhaps she wears or carries a symbol that shows she is with DARAYAVAUSH, on the side of good.)

(The KINGS SOLDIERS take heart, the tide has turned. Good will win today.)

(The bad ones retreat in disorder; BASHBAHA and AHRIMAN and the LIZARDS exit as they can to escape. Maybe some crushed LIZARDS litter the stage floor if feasible.)

(The defeat is turned to victory.)

KING DARAYAVAUSH

Let all the world know that with the help of Ahuramazda, the Great God, the One God who made heaven, earth, and mankind, and made Darayavaush King, I, the Great King, King of Kings, have defeated the great lie of the power of evil. And Eileen and Totum and the Half-Bird have helped.

Now! Anybody want to splash?

(Note: There is a blessing associated with mentioning the foregoing. Except the part about Eileen and Totum and the Half-Bird. And the Pond.)

(curtain)