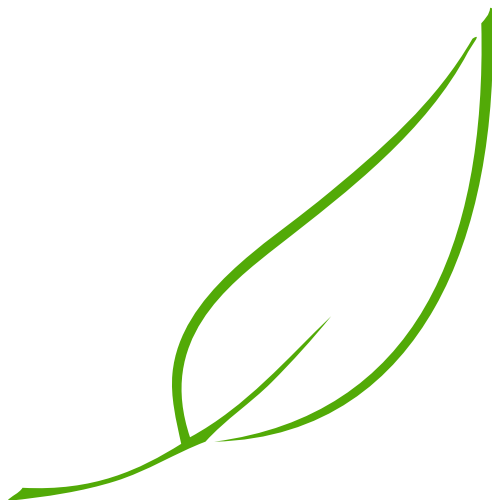


# DEATH OF THE THEATRE

by Ken Bradbury



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**Death of the Theatre**  
**By Ken Bradbury**

# Death of the Theatre

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(written for 44 plus a chorus; parts may be combined)*

Frank	Cassius	Columbine	Usher Two
Joe	Brutus	Ruffiana	Phantom
Dionysus	Caesar	Don Harlequin	Christine
Jason	Aphrodite	Yatsomara	Nancy
Machina	Appolo	Yum-Yum	Bess
Fenton	Phoebus	Stella	Angel
Medea	Artemis	Henry	Joseph
Announcus	Jean Letrec	Felix	Protemeus
Marc Anthon	Maurice	Mark	Cronus
Captain Kirk	Bibette	Cosette	Zeus
Dr. McCoy	Henre	Usher One	Artemus

**DIONYSUS:** Oh, My Dear God!

**APHRODITE:** Yes, my dear Dionysus! What is it?!

**DIONYSUS:** He's dead, Aphrodite!

**APHRODITE:** Who?

**DIONYSUS:** He! Him! (*wails*) He's dead! He's dead! He's dead!

**APHRODITE:** (*as Dionysus as "Mrs. Theatre" continues her wailing*) Shut up! You're hysterical! (*she slaps her ... slap noise made by a member of the chorus*)

**DIONYSUS:** Thanks.

**APHRODITE:** I'm sorry.

**DIONYSUS:** No. I feel better now.

**APHRODITE:** (*slaps her again*)

**DIONYSUS:** I think that will do it. Thank you.

**APHRODITE:** Now who died?

**DIONYSUS:** (*wails*)

**APHRODITE:** (*slaps her*)

**DIONYSUS:** (*quickly coming out of it*) My husband.

**APHRODITE:** Your husband?! (*wails*)

**DIONYSUS:** (*slaps Aphrodite*) My Husband! Theatre! He's been killed! Look! There he lies on the stage floor! Murdered!

**APHRODITE:** Theatre is dead!

**DIONYSUS:** Dead!

**CHORUS:** Dead!

**APHRODITE:** Who's that?

**DIONYSUS:** That's our Greek Chorus. I take them everywhere.

**CHORUS:** Everywhere. We are the chorus. We speak in unison. Go figure. But we are the chorus. Never leave the theatre without us!

**APHRODITE:** But whatever shall we do? Life cannot go on without the Theatre! We must find the murderer!

**DIONYSUS:** I know. But to whom shall we turn?

**CHORUS:** Whom?

**DIONYSUS:** To whom shall we cry?

**CHORUS:** Cry!

**DIONYSUS & APHRODITE:** (*wail*)

(*both are slapped, one at a time, by two members of the chorus*)

**APHRODITE & DIONYSUS:** Ouch.

**CHORUS:** Oh Woe! Woe! Woe! Theatre is Dead! To Whom shall we turn? To Whom? To Whom? To Whom?

**FRANK:** (*turning downstage on his motorcycle with Joe, both making "To - Whoom!" cycle noises*)

Hi! I'm Frank Hardy!

**JOE:** And I'm Joe Hardy!

**FRANK & JOE:** We're the Hardy Boys!

**CHORUS:** Brought to you by Wonder Bread! Building strong bodies, twelve ways! Yeh!

**DIONYSUS:** What?

**FRANK:** Hey! Nice sweater, Joe!

**JOE:** Hey! You too, Frank! Let's solve a crime!

**FRANK:** Great, Joe! Which one?

**DIONYSUS:** Oh! Oh! Oh!

**JOE:** Sounds like a crime, Frank!

**CHORUS:** Duh.

**FRANK:** I love the sound of that, Joe! "Crime! Crime! Crime!"

**DIONYSUS:** Oh! Oh! Oh!

**JOE:** (*smiling, excitedly*) I get that funny feeling in the pit of my stomach, Frank! ... whenever there's a crime to be solved!

**FRANK:** Me too, Joe!

**JOE:** And you know what we always do when we get that certain feeling!

**FRANK:** I sure do, Joe!

**FRANK & JOE:** We change sweaters! (*they quickly turn, mime changing as the chorus hums, and turn front again*)

**JOE:** Whoa! I'm ready now!

**DIONYSUS:** Oh!

**FRANK:** Hold it, Joe! It's a woman!

**JOE:** We don't know much about women, Frank!

**FRANK:** Wanna learn?

**JOE:** (*thinks, then*) I'd rather solve a crime.

**FRANK:** (*smiling*) Me, too.

**DIONYSUS & APHRODITE:** Oh!

**JOE:** Hi! I'm Joe Hardy!

**FRANK:** And I'm Frank Hardy!

**JOE & FRANK:** And we're the Hardy Boys!

**CHORUS:** Brought to you by Wonder Bread! Building  
strong bodies twelve ways! Yeah?

**JOE:** Why do they do that, Frank?

**FRANK:** Must be one of those grown up things, Joe.

**JOE:** Like women?

**FRANK:** Like women, Joe! What's the matter, ladies?

**APHRODITE:** It's Theatre! He's dead! Murdered!  
Oh most foul! Nice sweaters.

**JOE:** Thanks. See. Women are just like us, Frank. Just ...  
bumpier.

**FRANK:** This'll be day to remember, Joe.

**APHRODITE:** You boys are cute.

**FRANK:** Yes, we are!

**DIONYSUS:** Who are you?

**JOE:** We're Frank and Joe Hardy.

**FRANK & JOE:** The Hardy Boys!

**FRANK:** We're from Bayport, a small but thriving city  
of fifty thousand on Barmet Bay.

**JOE:** We're the sons of Fenton Hardy, the world famous  
detective.

**FENTON:** (*enters scene*) You rejects!

**FRANK:** Dad!

**FENTON:** I need to have my DNA analyzed.

**JOE:** What's a reject, Dad?

**FENTON:** What's DNA, Dad? You don't have to spell  
things in front of us.

**JOE:** We've got a crime, Dad!

**FENTON:** You're tellin' me. I'll never take fertility pills again.

**CHORUS:** The theatre is dead.

**APHRODITE:** He is murdered!

**CHORUS:** Murdered!

**JOE:** Dead!

**CHORUS:** Dead!

**FRANK:** Murdered!

**CHORUS:** We just said that.

**FRANK:** Can you feel the tension mounting, Joe?

**JOE:** I can feel it, Frank! I can feel it!

**FRANK:** Me too! Oh, me too!

**FENTON:** You morons.

**JOE:** I've never felt this strange before!

**CHORUS:** Doo-Dah. Doo-Dah.

**FRANK:** And Theatre lies there on the floor!

**CHORUS:** Oh, Doo-Dah Day!

**FRANK:** I guess there's only one thing to do!

**JOE & FRANK:** Let's change sweaters! (*they turn and do*)

**CHORUS:** (*chorus hums "Camptown Races" under*)

**FRANK:** Gee whillikers! I'm ready now! How long's he been dead?

**DIONYSUS:** For almost three sweaters!

**JOE:** Let's investigate, Frank. Let's get to the bottom of this!

**FRANK:** Gee. If we could only go back in time!

**CHORUS:** (*makes creaky sounds as Deus Ex Machina climbs onto his stool*)

**APOLLO:** Ding!

**PHOEBUS:** Ding!

**ARTEMIS:** Ding!

**CHORUS:** You ... have mail!

**JOE:** Wow! Who are you?

**MACHINA:** I'm Deus Ex Machina. The machine of the gods.

**FRANK:** Holy snakes!

**MACHINA:** Close. I drop in from the sky to save cheap theatrical productions.



**JOE:** Wow!

**MACHINA:** I can do anything.

**JOE:** You think he could help us understand women, Frank?

**MACHINA:** I'm not the miracle worker.

**DIONYSUS:** Theatre is dead! You must help us find the killer!

**FRANK:** Take us back in time, oh great Deux Ex Machina!  
(*pronounces it Dukes Ex Makina*)

**FENTON:** I wanna see a blood test on you two.

**JOE:** Gee, Dad! Wanna help?

**FENTON:** No.

**FRANK:** But it'll be fun, Dad!

**FENTON:** Get lost.

**MACHINA:** Here we go. Hang onto your hats, boys.  
(*chanting, as group begins to weave hypnotically*) Drizzle, drizzle, drizzle, drine, Take us now, way back in time!

**ENTIRE GROUP:** (*starts bouncing violently, moaning shakily as they do, their eyeballs extended from their sockets*)

**FENTON:** (*as the group continues to shake and moan under*)  
Get me out of here, you morons!

**JOE:** (*noise under*) Hang on, Dad!

**FRANK:** (*noise under*) Atta boy, Pop!

**FENTON:** (*noise under*) Idiots!

**JOE:** (*noise under*) Look, Frank! My watch is going crazy!

**FRANK:** (*noise under*) Mine too, Joe! It's spinning backwards!

**ENTIRE GROUP:** (*begins to whine and jolts to a sudden stop*)

Ahhhhoooooooooooooooooooooerch ... stop.

**MACHINA:** (*entoning ominously*) Ancient Greece!

**FRANK:** Wow!

**JOE:** Wow!

**CHORUS:** Wow!

**FENTON:** You guys are mutants, you know that?

**JOE:** Say, that was quite a trip, Frank!

**FRANK:** Yeah. Remember when you threw up all over me on the Tilt-A-Whirl?

**JOE:** Oh gosh. Don't embarrass me, Frank.

**MEDEA:** (*exploding*) I am Medea!

**FRANK:** Do you see what I see, Joe?

**JOE:** Yeah, Frank! Our sweaters got all wrinkled!

**MEDEA:** I have killed all my children to revenge my husband's infidelity!

**CHORUS:** (*sings*) My baby does the Hanky Panky.

**FRANK:** Oh, yuck, Joe.

**JOE:** Oh, yuck, Frank.

**CHORUS:** Oh, Medea! Most accursed of all women!

Nightly she moans and wails across ancient Athens!

Nightly she vents her vengeance!

Oh Medea! Oh Calcutta! (*Sings*) Ooooooklahoma!

Where the wind comes sweeping down the plain ...

**MEDEA:** How long must I endure this?! Unfaithful husband!  
Blood on my hands! Murder in my heart! I need an analyst!  
This has not been my day! I am a frustrated woman!

**CHORUS:** (*singing as from Sound of Music*) How do you solve a problem like Medea?

**MEDEA:** What do I gain from living one day longer? My husband Jason, abandons me for another!

**CHORUS:** Don't look now, but here he comes.

**JASON:** Yo! Medea! What's shakin' baby?

**MEDEA:** Foul wretch! I have killed our children!

**JASON:** What happened to "How was your day?" You murder Bryce and Estelle and you call *me* foul?

**FRANK:** (*still looking at his sweater*) You think we can iron these, Joe?

**MEDEA:** Flinch not while I pluck those hideous eyes from their sockets!

**JOE:** (*looking at his sweater*) Geesh, I don't even have an iron.

**APHRODITE:** Would you two wake up?

**MEDEA:** Greece will tremble in its sandals 'til I have your head on a platter, Jason!

**CHORUS:** Yuck!

**JASON:** Could we talk about this?

**MEDEA:** Who is she?

**JASON:** Who?

**MEDEA:** Thou knowest who!

**JASON:** I do-est?

**MEDEA:** You do-est! She! The woman who nightly wound her willful way while wayward winding wound the woom. (*spits something off her tongue*)

**CHORUS:** Hub?

**JASON:** Oh ... her.

**JOE:** Hi, we're Frank and Joe Hardy, the Hardy Boys! We live in Bayport, a small but thriving city of fifty thousand on Barmet Bay. Do you have a dry cleaner in town?

**FRANK:** I don't think they have sweaters here, Joe. Everybody's wearing bedsheets.

**MEDEA:** (*stabbing Jason*) Die!

**JASON:** (*dying*) Ahrgh!

**MEDEA:** (*stabbing*) Die!

**JASON:** (*dying*) Ugh!

**MEDEA & CHORUS:** (*still stabbing*) Die!

**JOE:** Hi, we're Frank and Joe Hardy, the Hardy Boys! We live in Bayport, a small but ...

**DIONYSUS:** Are you blind?

**JASON:** (*holding his eyes*) Yes!

**DIONYSUS:** Not you! Can't you see what's happening?

**MACHINA:** Let's go!

**JOE:** But we haven't found out who murdered the Theatre!

**CHORUS:** Isn't it obvious?

**MACHINA:** (*as group begins to weave hypnotically*) Double, double, toil and ... grind ...  
Take these children on in time.

**ALL:** *(again begin the bouncing and moaning under the following lines)*

**FRANK:** Here we go again, Joe!

**JOE:** It's getting bumpier, Frank!

**FENTON:** Idiots!

**JOE:** Hang on, Pops!

**FENTON:** I should have drowned you both at birth!

**ALL:** *(machine begins to wind down)*

Uhhhhhhhhhoooooooooahhhhh ... stop.

**FRANK:** Holy shoot! Where are we, Joe?

**CHORUS:** The Globe Theatre! Presenting William Shakespeare's production of Julius Caesar!

**ANNOUNCUS:** In tonight's performance, the role of Marcus Arelus will be played by Cassius

Liptonious. The role of Cassius Pugnacious will be played by Stephonius Felonius who

previously played both Cassius, Brutus, Audacious Bodacious, Felacious the Outrageous

and Lexus Nexus, son of Billy Sol Estes of Waco, Texas. No flash pictures, please.

**JOE:** Wow!

**NURC ANTONY:** Friends! Romans! Countrymen! Lend me your ears! I come to bury Caesar,

not to praise him! The evil men do lives after them!

The good is oft interred with their bones!

**CAPTAIN KIRK:** Come one, Bones! You've got to cure him!

**MR. MCCOY:** Remember, Jim. I'm a doctor, not a Roman Undertaker!

**JOE:** I'm getting that funny feeling again, Frank!

**FRANK:** Same here, Joe! Another crime! Excuse me, we're Frank and Joe Hardy! The Hardy

Boys! We live in Bayport, a small but thriving city of fifty thousand inhabitants ...

**MARC ANTONY:** What?!

**FRANK:** ... located on Barmet Bay.

**MARC ANTONY:** Cassius?

**CASSIUS:** Yes, Marcus!

**MARC ANTONY:** Brutus!

**BRUTUS:** Yes, Marcus!

**MARC ANTONY:** What thinkest thou of these?

**BRUTUS:** These?

**MARC ANTONY:** Those.

**CASSIUS:** Those?

**MARC ANTONY:** Them.

**BRUTUS:** Thou?

**MARC ANTONY:** Aye!

**CASSIUS:** Fie!

**MARC ANTONY:** Foe!

**BRUTUS:** Fum!

**CHORUS:** (*sings*) Fie, Fie, Shakepearean Pie,  
Drove my Chevy to the levee but ...

**MARC ANTONY:** Stopest thou! Oh, cankerous chorus!

**JOE:** I think he's angry, Frank.

**FRANK:** Boy, I would be too, Joe. He's gotta wear tights.  
And look at that thing on his...

**MARC ANTONY:** (*screaming* to the heavens) Oh, Caesar!  
Oh Ranch! Oh low-fat Thousand

Island! Revenge your death upon these lean and  
hungry men!

**CAESAR:** (*rising from the grave*) Antony!!!!

**MARC ANTONY, BRUTUS & CASSIUS:** Caesar!

**CAESAR:** Antony!

**MARC ANTONY, BRUTUS & CASSIUS:** Caesar!

**FRANK:** Wow! Neat trick!

**MACHINA:** Thank you.

**FENTON:** Idiots.

**CAESAR:** I have returned from the grave to avenge my  
death! Brutus!

**BRUTUS:** Yikes!

**CAESAR:** Oh, that I had known you better!

**CHORUS:** (*sings*) If you knew Brute, like I knew Brute ...  
Oh! Oh!

**CAESAR:** Oh, Brutus! Thou hast wounded me!

**DIONYSUS:** What about my husband?  
**APHRODITE:** Who killed the theatre?  
**CAESAR:** My wife warned me there'd be days like this.  
**FRANK:** Excuse me. My name's Frank Hardy. Do any of  
you know who killed the theatre?  
**MARC ANTONY:** The French!  
**FRANK:** Why do you say that?  
**MARC ANTONY:** They screw up everything.  
**FRANK:** Oh.  
**DIONYSUS:** You're getting nowhere.  
**MACHINA:** Hang on, everybody.  
**FRANK:** Here we go again, Joe!  
**CAESAR:** Farewell, Sweet Prince!  
**CHORUS:** (*sings ala Sound of Music*) So long, Farewell,  
Aufeterzein, Goodnight!  
**DIONYSUS:** What about my husband?!!!  
**CHORUS:** (*again with moaning and shaking*)  
Ohhhhaahheeeee.....  
**JOE:** But Frank, we haven't solved anything!  
**FRANK:** Help us, Dad!  
**FENTON:** Offbreed! Inbred! Idiots!  
**APHRODITE:** What about the Theatre?  
**MARC ANTONY:** Friends! Romans!  
**CHORUS:** Ah, shut up! (*the time machine noise begins to  
slow down*)  
**FRANK:** We're slowing down, Joe. And just look at your  
sweater!  
**JOE:** Oh, golly whillikers, Frank! Yours, too!  
**CHORUS:** (*again with moaning and shaking*)  
Ohhhhaahheeeee - clump - clump .... stop.  
**NMCHINA:** Next stop, Paris. French Restoration Comedy.  
**CHORUS:** Viola!  
**ANNOUNCUS:** (*in a schmaltzy French accent*) Tonight at  
Zee Opera de Pree, zee role of Montigue weel be  
played by Pepe LePeu, zee role of Pierre Cordan  
weel be played by French Dijon, een a supporting  
cast of Soup De Jour, Maurice Manure, Oui Oui

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Peepee of Gay Paree, Bridgeet Bon Bon who ees ah ah, Alley Oop, WallaMart, Alleluia, Ala Carte! No flash photographeeks.

**CHORUS:** Act Ou!

**JEAN LETREC:** Grey Poupon! Ce'est la vie!

**MAURICE:** Le Are de Triomphe!

**BIBETTE:** Ooo La La!

**CHORUS:** Act Doe!

**JEAN LETREC:** Sacre Blue! Le Toulleries in las Follies Bergies!Champaigne! Le Grand

Mamier! Le Grand Piano! Michele LeGrand!

**MAURICE:** Hors Doueveres!

**JEAN LETREC:** Tres Bien! Taluus LaTrec! Ta win, ta Luus! Ta try again!

**BIBETTE:** Ooo La La!

**JEAN LETREC:** Le Champs d'Eleises! Et Fifi's .... Bidet!

**CHORUS:** Act twa!

**BILBETTE:** Ooo La La!

**JEAN LETREC:** (*getting tipsy*) Bordeaux! Drambuie!

**BIBETTE:** Renoir! Riviera! Lincoln Continental!

**JEAN LETREC:** (*and tipsier*) Schnapps! Vermouth! Mogan David!

**BIBETTE:** Beau Jest! Bon souir! Bon Voyage! Bon Apettite!

**JEAN LETREC:** (*and tipsier*) Burgandy! Cognac! Kahlua! Le Red Dog!

**CAPTAIN KIRK:** Lt. Ohura, translate!

**OHURA:** Jim, it sounds... foreign!

**CHORUS:** Act ... (*look at each other, confused*) ... Four!

**JEAN LETREC:** Pardon me! Madame? Where is your husband?

**BIBETTE:** He?

**JEAN LETREC:** Him.

**BIBETTE:** Aha!

**MAURICE:** Where?

**BIBETTE:** Where?

**JEAN LETREC:** Where!

**BIBETTE:** Why?

**MAURICE:** With Whom?

**BIBETTE:** Whom?

**JEAN LETREC:** Whom!

**BIBETTE:** Doomed.

**MAURICE:** Doomed?

**BIBETTE:** Soon.

**JEAN LETREC:** Soon?

**BIBETTE:** Noon.

**MAURICE:** Noon?

**BILBETTE:** Le Boom.

**JEAN LETREC:** Le Boom?

**BIBETTE:** Boom! Boom!

**JEAN LETREC:** Le Boom?

**BIBETTE:** Boom! Boom!

**JEAN LETREC:** Le Boom?

**CHORUS:** Boom boom boom! Barrumoom-boom boom!

Barrumoom boom-boom, boomboom ba-boom!

**BIBETTE:** (*fainting*) I swoon!

**FRANK:** Hi! I'm Frank Hardy and this is my brother ...

**BIBETTE:** A Man!

**FRANK:** Thanks.

**BIBETTE:** In my bidet! What eef my huzband should learn  
of thees?

**FRANK:** Wait a minute! I was just asking ...

**HENRIE:** Aha!

**FRANK:** Ah!

**HENRE:** Aha!

**JOE:** Whoa-Ho!

**BIBETTE:** Oh, Henre, it ees not as you think!

**HENRE:** (*pulling a knife*) Aha!

**JOE:** He's got a knife, Frank!

**HENRE:** (*pulls a gun*) Aha!

**JOE:** And a gun!

**HENRE:** Oho!

**FRANK:** What's he saying, Joe? I can't speak French!

**JOE:** I don't know, but I'm getting that funny feeling again!



**BIBETTE:** I confess! Zay are my lovers! Go ahead! I weel  
make zee sacrifice!

**FRANK:** Sacre Blue!

**JOE:** Sacre Couere!

**CHORUS:** Sack the Quarterback!

**BIBETTE:** Keel them if you must!

**JOE:** What?

**FRANK:** Help, Dad!

**FENTON:** I am! It's my gun!

**JOE & FRANK:** Get us out of here!

**NMCHINA:** Hang on to your tutus, boys!

**FENTON:** (*agonizing disgust*) Ohhh!

**ALL:** (*begin the time travel rumble*)

Oooooooooooooeaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhzoooooooooom ...

**HENRE:** (*over the rumble*) Keel zee swine!

**BIBETTE:** I have bean uzed!

**JOE:** She was used when I found her, Frank! Honest!

**FRANK:** Well, I didn't touch her!

**MACHINA:** Feticinni, Cattalona

Grab your pasta boys, here's Roma!

**CHORUS:** Ohhheeeeeerrrrch ... stop! All out for Italy!

Commedia del Arte!

**ANNOUNCUS:** Ey! In tonight's-a show, we gotta couple  
changes so listen up, eh? Gina

Lollabrigida, she had-a bad accident, so we gonna  
replace her with-a Sylvesta Stalone, son of Don  
Corleone. And Don Ameche, he had-a bad accident,  
so hez part, it-a gonna go to Frank Sinatra, son of Don  
Corleone. Also appearing in da show tonight we got  
Vito Corleone, Luigi Corleone, Mama Corleone, and  
all da little-bitty baby Corleones. You taka da flash  
peekture, we gonna break-ya you legs, Ok?

**CHORUS:** OK.

**COLUMBINE:** (*singing*) O solo mio!

**RUFFIANA:** (*breathless*) Mama! Mama!

**COLUMBINE:** Hey Ruffiana! Don't-a shout so much! You  
give me da heachache.

**RUFFIANA:** But-a Mama! He's-a doing it again!

**COLUMBINE:** Who? Who? Who's-a doin'-a what?

**RUFFIANA:** That awful-a boy, Mama! Scapino, Mama!

He's a chasin'-a me again! Dis time he  
 almost caught me! It was (*smiles, then cries*) ... awful,  
 Mama!

**COLUMBINE:** Ai Carumba! I'll kill-a him dis time!

**FRANK:** Hi!. My name's Frank Hardy, and ...

**RUFFIANA:** Mama!

**COLUMBINE:** You-a!

**FRANK:** Me-a?

**COLUMBINE:** You-a!

**FRANK:** Me-a?

**RUFFIANA:** (*crying*) Mama!

**CHORUS:** Mia!

**COLUMBINE:** Santa Maria! Santa Barbra! Santa Rosa!

Pasadena! I've-a had it wit you, boy!  
 You just a-wait 'til my husband, Don Harlequin gets  
 home.

**DON HARLEQUIN:** Hi! I'm home!

**CHORUS:** Whoa!

**COLUMBINE:** Scapino has deescraced our family!

**DON HARLEQUIN:** (*in a rage*) Ahhhhhh!

**COLUMBINE:** Da chase ees on!

(*all cast members put their scripts in front of their  
 faces and only lower them to spea ...  
 this moves a lightening speed*)

**CHORUS:** Act Uno!

**FRANK:** What's going on?

**COLUMBINE:** Aha!

**RUFFIANA:** Mama!

**JOE:** Frank!

**FRANK:** Help!

**COLUMBINE:** Aha!

**RUFFIANA:** Mama!

**JOE:** Frank!

**FRANK:** Help!



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