

THE BOOK OF THE DUN COW

A New Musical

by
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&
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Based on the
National Book Award
Winner,
*THE BOOK OF
THE DUN COW*
By
Walter Wangerin, Jr.

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ACT ONE

(In FULL STAGE and HOUSE LIGHTS, a CHORUS
assembles and the NARRATOR opens his script)

NARRATOR

In those days, the world was round, as it is today. It
encountered four seasons, endured night, rejoiced in day,
offered waking and sleeping, hurt, anger, hope and peace to
all the creatures who dwelt upon it.

CHORUS: IN THOSE DAYS

NARRATOR (CONT.)

Births happened, lives were lived out, and death followed.

CHORUS: IN THOSE DAYS

NARRATOR (CONT.)

Things were no different from the way they are today. But
yet; some things were very different -

CHORUS: WHEN THE EARTH SAT PROUD
AT THE CENTER OF THE COSMOS
AND THE SUN SAILED ROUND
ROLLING DAYLIGHT OVER NIGHT
AND THE MOON KEPT TIDES IN TOW
ALL THE CREATURES HERE BELOW
KNEW THAT GOD ABOVE STILL HELD
THEM IN HIS SIGHT.

IN THOSE DAYS

NARRATOR

God strode among the clouds like a man through his garden.
And in the sweet evening, He looked down to see Lord
Chauntecleer, His Rooster, King of his Coop, puffed full
with pride.

And Chauntecleer crowed his canonical crows.

CHAUNTECLEER: COCK A DOODLE NIGHT!

NARRATOR

In those days, the Animals could speak.

CHAUNTECLEER

Ants!

(Led by TICK TOCK, they march on)

ANTS: FOR THE HUP TWO THREE PRECISION
FOR THE MARCHING OF OUR TROOP

(Then, last, and to CHAUNTECLEER, least...)

CHAUNTECLEER

Mundo Cani!

(MUNDO CANI DOG runs to CHAUNTECLEER'S SIDE)

MUNDO C: ANYTHING YOU SAY
SHALL THIS DOG OBEY
THOU GREAT AND RULING MASTER
OF THE UNIVERSE
AND CHICKEN COOP

ALL: NOW THE DAY IS DONE
NOW THE DAY IS DONE
COME AND SETTLE INTO EVENING
COME AND SETTLE
COME AND SETTLE
COME AND SETTLE
COME AND SETTLE
PUT ASIDE ALL CARES
PUT ASIDE ALL CARES
A COMMAND FROM CHAUNTECLEER
THERE IS PEACE WITHIN OUR NEST
AND CONTENTMENT WITH OUR REST
AND GIVE THANKS FOR ALL
WHO LOVE US FAR AND NEAR

OH TODAY IS DONE
IT'S OVER NOW
SO CLOSE YOUR EYES
AND TAKE YOUR BOW
FOR ALL OF OUR WORK AND PLAY
TOMORROW IS A DREAM AWAY

CHAUNTECLEER

SLEEP!

ALL: GOD HEAR US PRAY
TOMORROW STAY
AS PERFECT AS YOUR WORLD TODAY (CONT.)

CHAUNTECLEER

I SAID SLEEP!

(Continues throughout)

Sleep! I said Sleep! SLEEP! SLEEP! SLEEP!

ALL: GOD HEAR US PRAY
 TOMORROW STAY
 AS PERFECT AS
 YOUR WORLD TODAY
 GOD HEAR US PRAY
 TOMORROW STAY
 AS PERFECT AS
 YOUR WORLD TODAY
 GOD HEAR US PRAY
 TOMORROW STAY
 AS PERFECT AS
 YOUR DAY TODAY

A PERFECT DAY
 A PERFECT DAY
 A PERFECT DAY
 A PERFECT DAY
 A PERFECT DAY
 A PERFECT DAY
 A PERFECT DAY
 PERFECT DAY
 PERFECT DAY

CHAUNTECLEER

NOT ONE-

ALL: PEEP

(ALL FALL ASLEEP)

NARRATOR

The earth had a face then: smiling blue and green and gold and gentle, or frowning in furious gouts of black thunder. Still ; it was a face, and that's where the animals lived, on the surface of it.

(MUSIC CHANGES)

But under its surface, the earth was a prison, for one Creature so damnably huge he could pass once round the earth and bite his own tail ahead of him. He was powerful, because evil is powerful, and he hated the God who had locked him, far below and the Animals above whom God had made his guards.

NARRATOR (CONT.)

But the animals did not know this. Not even the Creature God had chosen to battle the Beast for no less than the life of the World itself:

(ANIMALS toss in their sleep)

NARRATOR (CONT.)

Chauntecleer, the Rooster.

(LIGHTS UP ON MUNDO CANI)

MUNDO CANI

MAROONED.....

BERYL

Hush, Dog! You'll wake him!

(CHAUNTECLEER stares up at the sky)

CHAUNTECLEER

You up there! Talk to me! Something is wrong; I can feel it in every feather. Tell me! I deserve an answer. That's right, deserve! Who sent me to this Barnyard, this banishment or blessing? You! You! Who like to talk but not to answer! I'm waiting!

(Pause; he gives up)

Oh, go step on a Mountain.

SONG: SOMETHING IN THE DARK - Chauntecleer & Mundo Cani

CHAUNTECLEER:

SITTING IN THE DARK
 LIKE A HUSH
 LIKE A WHISPER
 NEVER MORE AWAKE
 MORE ALONE
 CLOSE YOUR EYES AND THEN
 OPEN THEM AGAIN
 SOMETHING IS OUT THERE

SITTING IN THE NIGHT
 TIME FOR REST
 TIME FOR SLUMBER
 TRYING NOT TO THINK
 OF THE FUTURE OR THE PAST
 CLOSE YOUR MIND AND THEN
 OPEN IT AGAIN
 SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
 SOMETHING IN THE DARK

MUNDO CANI: MAROONED

BERYL

(BERYL tries to silence him) Quiet!

CHAUNTECLEER

(To MUNDO CANI) You!

BERYL

(Backs away, pointing at MUNDO CANI) Him!

MUNDO CANI

Me.

CHAUNTECLEER

You sack! You rug! What are you wailing about?

MUNDO CANI

A nightmare, Master! It was in my dream but now it's gone.

CHAUNTECLEER

Stand back, Mongrel! Have you never known a Bath?

MUNDO CANI

I try, Master. I leap into a Lake and the Fish leap out.
Even Skunks hold their noses.

CHAUNTECLEER

Enough, Mutt. Do you sniff anything else, then? Anything ...
peculiar?

MUNDO CANI

(Sniffs, excited) Cats?

CHAUNTECLEER

Worse than Cats.

MUNDO CANI

Rats? (Howls)

CHAUNTECLEER

QUIET!

MUNDO CANI

Point me, Master! This Mongrel's Muzzle is at your command!

CHAUNTECLEER: SOMETHING IN THE NIGHT

VERY WRONG

MUNDO CANI: I SMELL DANGER

CHAUNTECLEER: SOMETHING IN THE BREEZE

NOT AT PEACE
 NOT AT REST
 MOVING THROUGH THE TREES
 SOMETHING NOT AT EASE
 SOMETHING LIKE A FREEZE
 SOMETHING FILLED WITH -
 MUNDO CANI: FLEAS!

CHAUNTECLEER
 Not fleas!

MUNDO CANI
 No?

CHAUNTECLEER
 No!

(SINGS)

SOMETHING IN THE DARKNESS
 ANGRY AND GREAT
 SOMETHING WITH NO BOTTOM TO ITS HATE

MUNDO CANI
 (BARKS, POINTS) THERE! EVIL!

CHAUNTECLEER
 (Sighs) That's a Squirrel.

MUNDO
 Tell me, Master; do you know what Evil looks like?

(CHAUNTECLEER hesitates, deciding to answer)

CHAUNTECLEER
 I do, Dog. And I pray that what I feel is nothing more than
 Memory.

(SONG CONTINUES)

CHAUNTECLEER:	SOMETHING IN THE AIR
MUNDO CANI:	IN THE EARTH
CHAUNTECLEER:	DEEP AS DANGER
	BURIED SO ALONE
MUNDO CANI:	LIKE A BONE
CHAUNTECLEER:	SOMETHING WE CAN'T KNOW
	COLDER THAN A SNOW
BOTH:	SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
CHAUNTECLEER:	SOMETHING IN THE NIGHT
MUNDO CANI:	COMING CLOSE
	COMING FASTER

CHAUNTECLEER: SMASHING LIKE A RAGE
 THROUGH ITS CAGE
 SOMETHING I CAN'T SEE
 STARING BACK AT ME
 SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
 MUNDO CANI: MAROONED
 CHAUNTECLEER: SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
 MUNDO CANI: MAROONED
 CHAUNTECLEER: SOMETHING IN THE DARK

(SONG CONCLUDES. A TINY FIGURE approaches
 them, frightened and exhausted)

MUNDO CANI
 THERE! MOUSE EVIL!

CHAUNTECLEER
 Silence, LummoX. Tell me, Madam. What is it?

WIDOW MOUSE
 My children....
 (Trying not to cry)
 My children are in the River.

(UNDERSCORING BEGINS; The BARNYARD
 congregates to hear)

MUNDO CANI
 Did she say

CHAUNTECLEER
 (To HER)
 Are they alive?

WIDOW MOUSE
 I tied them to the branches. My husband is dead.

CHAUNTECLEER
 Forgive me Widow Mouse, but your children. Where are they?

WIDOW MOUSE
 He wouldn't run. He fought, but they killed him.

JOHN WESLEY
 Rats! Is Rats to blame.

(ANIMALS REACT NERVOUSLY)

WIDOW MOUSE
 Arms. Reaching arms. Crooked, broken, cracking from above.

JOHN WESLEY

Ebenezer Rat! Flip rocks, root roots. Find a villain!

(MORE REACTION; CHAUNTECLEER grips her shoulders,
shouting over them)

CHAUNTECLEER

These arms, are they tree limbs? Do they overhang the cove;
is there a whirlpool in that place?

(WIDOW MOUSE nods)

JOHN WESLEY

Rats is rats, past, present and forever!

CHAUNTECLEER

Beryl! Take this woman to the coop, warm her, feed her.

BERYL

I will , My Lord.

CHAUNTECLEER

Mundo Cani -

(Behind him, MUNDO CANI calls out,
causing CHAUNTECLEER to jump)

MUNDO CANI

Here! As if that's good news -

CHAUNTECLEER

Mutt, I need your speed. Do you know where the River is?

MUNDO CANI

In my childhood, I saw my reflection in it. (Shudders)
A terrible sight.

CHAUNTECLEER

Shag it, you suitcase! Squat and listen! To the Cove;
West of Liver-Brook! How fast can you run?

(MUNDO CANI howls and races off; CHAUNTECLEER,
startled, holding onto his fur.

NARRATOR

Then Chauntecleer found out.

(CHAUNTECLEER and MUNDO CANI race in a circle around the theater as the ANIMALS stare into the distance, amazed)

JW: LOOK A TORNADO!
 T.TOCK: HOLD ON!
 BERYL: ALL HIS FUR IS A BLUR!
 HENS: SEE THEM RACING STILL
 UP AND DOWN THE HILL
 ALL: SEE THEM RUN
 TO THE RIVER

(ANIMALS PURSUE THEM)

 CHAUNTECLEER
 Can you see them? She said they're tied to branches-

 MUNDO CANI
 (Weeping) Oh; Master-

 CHAUNTECLEER
 Not now, Dog! Look for them!

 CHORUS: TO THE RIVER

 MUNDO CANI
 There! Mouses!

(CHAUNTECLEER climbs over obstacles, leaning down to see THREE TINY CHILDREN huddled below)

 CHAUNTECLEER
 Listen to me, Children! Reach up toward this branch! Take my wing! Your mother sent me to you with this message: Come closer to hear it!

(They don't move)

She has a dry place where she will sing to you. She has a coat warm as sleep. But you must hurry to climb on my wing!

(CHAUNTECLEER reaches down, almost losing his balance. They don't move)

 CHAUNTECLEER (CONT.)
 Listen! The most important part of her message is something only the smartest of you can understand. She said, " I am waiting for you"- who hears her?

(ONE CHILD reaches up to Chauntecleer's wing)

CHAUNTECLEER

(Patience gone) Clamp it! All of you.

(To the CHILDREN as he helps them on MUNDO CANI)
Children, here is your coach. This Dog will take you to your
mother, who will rejoice to see you! Go! All of you!
Hurry, then!

(With a HOWL, MUNDO CANI rushes off with the
CHILDREN; ALL follow. CHAUNTECLEER finally has
a moment to catch his breath)

NARRATOR

As he turned, Chauntecleer's eye caught a white object on
the shore. It was a Hen, but no Hen he had ever seen before.
She was lying unconscious on her back, and at her throat,
her feathers blazed vermilion Her tail was lapped in water,
and she was wet to the roots. But she was not dead. And she
was so beautiful.

(CHAUNTECLEER leans over her, mumbling to himself)

CHAUNTECLEER

Glory, glory, glory.

(The Hen, PERTELOTE, opens her eyes, and screams
in terror)

PERTELOTE

COCKATRICE -

CHAUNTECLEER

(Struggling to hold her) NO!

PERTELOTE

COCKATRICE! COCKATRICE! COCKATRICE!

(PERTELOTE fights wildly; scratching at
CHAUNTECLEER'S face; HE tries to subdue her.
PERTELOTE suddenly stops)

PERTELOTE

(Touching his face) You're hurt. You can be hurt.

(LIGHTS UP on the BARNYARD; SOUND OF A SCREAM)

HEN

My Eggs! My Babies!

(ALL ARE PANICKED; BERYL sees CHAUNTECLEER)

APPROACH WITH PERTELOTE)

BERYL

Shells, Sire! They've all been eaten!

(The WIDOW MOUSE, seeing PERTELOTE, throws her arms around her. The MOUSE CHILDREN gather around them)

JOHN WESLEY (O.S.)

Chauntecleer! Look! Look here at what's caught!

(JOHN WESLEY and MUNDO CANI enter. MUNDO CANI has EBENEEZER RAT grabbed around the NECK)

EBENEEZER RAT

Put me down, you Drooling Fur Bag!

CHAUNTECLEER

Ebenezer Rat.

JOHN WESLEY

A Rat caught by a Dog and Weasel!

(EBENEEZER pulls free, adjusts his clothes and his toothpick)

EBENEEZER

A Rat caught eating breakfast! How do you like your eggs, Chauntecleer?

(MUNDO CANI HOWLS, grabbing him again)

CHAUNTECLEER

Hen, Widow Mouse: Is this the Creature who did you harm?

WIDOW MOUSE

No.

PERTELOTE

Not he.

CHAUNTECLEER

Did you eat the eggs of my Coop, Ebenezer?

EBENEEZER

Rats eat eggs, Rooster. And this Rat ate yours.

MUNDO CANI

Evil!

EBENEEZER

Ha! No such thing! There's good, there's bad and there's worse. But no "Evil". Nature!

JOHN WESLEY

Nature's change.

EBENEEZER

Not a Rat's. Does a Rooster's change, Chauntecleer?

(Comes closer, threatening)

I remember a Rooster long before this land. Long before this coop. I remember what that Rooster did; his nature and his name. Do you remember, Chauntecleer?

(ANIMALS are confused; CHAUNTECLEER stares at EBENEEZER)

JOHN WESLEY

Dead Rats can do no harm.

MUNDO CANI

Say the word, Master! Say "Munch"!

BERYL

Sire! Give the command.

CHAUNTECLEER

Let him go.

(The ANIMALS are stunned)

EBENEEZER

Say again?

CHAUNTECLEER

If you take another step onto my land, Ebenezer, it will be your last.

EBENEEZER

You free a Rat, Rooster? Why?

CHAUNTECLEER

Because it is in this Rooster's nature to believe in a Second Chance.

(EBENEEZER, surprised, quickly leaves)

JOHN WESLEY

No! No chances!

BERYL

He's gone! The Rat is gone!

(ANIMALS REACT; CHAUNTECLEER SHOUTS ABOVE THEM)

CHAUNTECLEER

WHO QUESTIONS ME?

(Silence. HE turns to PERTELOTE, WIDOW MOUSE and the CHILDREN)

This is our Home.

(To OTHERS)

Make it theirs. All of you.

(ALL LEAVE except for CHAUNTECLEER; HE LOOKS ABOUT HIM)

CHAUNTECLEER: SOMETHING IS OUT THERE ...

(HE TURNS, EXITS. MUSIC CONTINUES:
SOMETHING IN THE DARK)

NARRATOR

All through that Autumn, the rain never stopped. Sometimes it was no more than a chill mist on the air, other times it came down suddenly, like a cold and angry fist, and the Coop shuddered against it. But Chauntecleer's coop was a warm, blessed island for tired mice and a wounded hen, she of the burning crimson throat. Her name was...

(BERYL appears before CHAUNTECLEER)

BERYL

(Overlapping) Pertelote is stronger, Sire. But in her sleep, she weeps and calls out. If she would speak, I could make a proper mix. Dreams can be doused.

CHAUNTECLEER

Find out then. And quickly.

BERYL

Yes, Sire.

(BOTH watch PERTELOTE at a distance)

She is beautiful. Don't you think?

(CHAUNTECLEER turns to her; BERYL immediately curtseys her retreat)

If it pleases you. To think.

(CHAUNTECLEER watches BERYL EXIT with PERTELOTE.
And the HENS, jealous of losing CHAUNTECLEER'S
attentions, try to distract him)

SONG: CHAUNTECLEER'S SONG - Hens, Chauntecleer,
Pertelote

HENS: LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA
 " "
 " "
 " "

CHAUNTECLEER: I HAVE RESPECT
 I HAVE ESTEEM
 SO MANY BOWS SALUTES AND CURTSEYS
 THEY COULD MAKE A FOWL SCREAM
 IT'S TRUE

 THEY ENDLESSLY ADORE
 A RULER COULDN'T ASK FOR MORE
 AND YET I DO
 AND YET I DO

 WHEN I COMMAND
 THE DEED IS DONE
 TOTAL OBEDIENCE SO TEMPTING
 I'M CONVINCED I SHOO THE SUN
 IT'S FUN
 FROM FAR AND WIDE THEY HEED
 THEY FILL MY
 EVERY WHIM AND WISH AND NEED
 EXCEPT FOR ONE

 THEY HAIL ME MASTER
 MY COMMANDEER
 BUT JUST THIS ONCE I'D LIKE TO HEAR
 DEAR
 CHAUNTECLEER

HENS: LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA

(LIGHTS UP ON BERYL and PERTELOTE)

BERYL

Will you eat, My Lady? If you tell me what likes you, I'll
grind a little Mustard Seed in it that you may mend. If only
you'd speak to me.

(BERYL pauses, waiting for an answer, then starts
to leave)

PERTELOTE

Beryl.

BERYL

Yes. (Turns, surprised) Yes! Yes! Keep talking!

PERTELOTE

Have you always known the Rooster of this household?

BERYL

I have. Can you tell me where the pain lies inside you? Tell me that at least.

PERTELOTE

Has he always been called Chauntecleer?

BERYL

Of course!

PERTELOTE

Was he ever anything else but Chauntecleer?

BERYL

Chauntecleer not Chauntecleer? (Confused) Come along, my Lady; no more Poppy Seeds for you.

(PERTELOTE EXITS; CHAUNTECLEER about to pursue her, but he is intercepted by BERYL, exiting, and JOHN WESLEY, in pursuit of the WIDOW MOUSE crossing the stage)

BERYL

Sire. (EXITS)

WIDOW MOUSE

Highness. (Bowling)

JOHN WESLEY

Kingness.

(A quick bow)

(Gruff) You there! Widow!

WIDOW MOUSE

John Wesley?

JOHN WESLEY

Mouse children! They climb on Weasels! Wake Weasels! That's a fact.

WIDOW MOUSE

I'm sorry.

JOHN WESLEY

Doesn't want that. Doesn't want it. Mouse children, they
gots claws. Like Weasels claws.

Working claws, you understand, not Rat Claws.

(WIDOW MOUSE doesn't understand)

Weasels find foods. Digs holes. Digs tunnels. Digs houses.
Big enough to fit Weasels with rooms left for Mice.

(The WIDOW MOUSE is touched, but reluctant)

WIDOW MOUSE

Thank you, but we couldn't-

JOHN WESLEY

Doesn't want that. Doesn't want it. It's just that Weasels'
got room, you understand. Room.

(The WIDOW MOUSE and JOHN W. walk off together)

CHAUNTECLEER:

WHAT GOOD IS A PECK ON THE WATTLE
IF PROCEEDED BY "SIR, MAY I COME NEAR?"
WHAT'S THE USE OF A CUDDLE
AN AMOROUS HUDDLE
IF THE TREMBLE SHE TREMBLES IS FEAR
AND I NEVER SHALL MISS
AND OBEDIENT KISS
THAT IS CHILLY WITH DUTY TO CONSERVE IT
SO I STIFLE MY YEN FOR A PASSIONATE HEN
FOR PASSION IS BEAUTY
AND I DESERVE IT

SO HERE I STAND
SO HERE I CROW
AND KEEP ON HOPING IF I FIND HER
THAT AT LEAST SHE'LL SAY HELLO
AND SO
EACH COCK A DOODLE DO I DO
IS LIKE A MISSIVE STRAIGHT TO YOU
SO YOU WILL KNOW

DON'T CALL ME MASTER
MY COMMANDEER
BUT JUST THIS ONCE I'D LIKE TO HEAR
DEAR CHAUNTECLEER
JUST A WHISPER IN MY EAR
DEAR...

(COMPLETING HIS SONG, PERTELOTE ENTERS)

PERTELOTE: DEAR CHAUNTECLEER

HENS: LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA
 LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA
 LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA
 LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA LA

PERTELOTE

Thank you. I never thanked you.

CHAUNTECLEER

(Surprised, embarrassed to have been overheard) You are a
 Singer.

PERTELOTE

I sing.

CHAUNTECLEER

No! Some of God's Creatures sing. Some very few are Singers.
 You, Lady, are among the very few. Of us.

(For the first time PERTELOTE smiles. BERYL and
 the ANIMALS gather to listen)

PERTELOTE

You are puffed with pride, Chauntecleer. Enough to fill two
 Barnyards.

(ANIMALS GASP. BERYL tries to pull PERTELOTE away)

BERYL

Time to eat, My Lady. Let me fill your mouth.

CHAUNTECLEER

Leave us.

(The ANIMALS EXIT. PERTELOTE watches them go,
 surprised at their subservience)

PERTELOTE

I speak what I think, Lord Chauntecleer. I always have.

CHAUNTECLEER

There is no need to apologize-

PERTELOTE

I'm not.

(CHAUNTECLEER, taken aback, is even more confused)

CHAUNTECLEER

I see. You're not afraid of me?

PERTELOTE

No.

CHAUNTECLEER

But you were. When we first met. On the shore of the River:
You screamed at me, you fought me.

PERTELOTE

I was afraid of what I thought you were.

CHAUNTECLEER

What is that?

PERTELOTE

(Becoming upset) Something terrible. No. Something worse.
Something evil.

CHAUNTECLEER

"Cockatrice"?

PERTELOTE

You know him-

CHAUNTECLEER

No.

PERTELOTE

(Still uneasy) But you must.

CHAUNTECLEER

Why?

PERTELOTE

Because he spoke to me your name. And a message to give you.

(MUSIC CHANGES)

NARRATOR

East of Chauntecleer's land near the mountains out of which
the river flowed was another land, Pertelote's land, a land
ruled by another rooster. Senex was that Rooster's name:
Senex with his Back to the Mountains.

(With his back to us, SENEX works up a crow)

SENEX

Cock-A... (Wheezes)

NARRATOR

Senex was very old. In his coop there were a hundred hens, because his reign had been a long one.

(SENEX turns, bumping into chickens asleep)

SENEX

Sorry. Sorry.

NARRATOR

His head was pink, bald about the comb: His toes were thick and bent into four directions, he could not perch well.

(SENEX bumps into another chicken)

SENEX

Sorry, Sorry.

NARRATOR

He apologized so often, which infuriated him, but he couldn't seem to help it.

SENEX

(Insulted, to NARRATOR)

Sorry!

(SENEX turns away)

NARRATOR

And Senex had another problem.

(SENEX works up his fiercest wheeze of a crow,
waking all the chickens)

SENEX

Cock - A...A.. A..

CHICKEN # 1

Not again! The moon's still out!

CHICKEN # 2

Senex! It's the middle of the night!

SENEX

Sorry, sorry.

CHICKEN # 1

Button it!

CHICKEN #2

Give a Hen her sleep!

CHICKEN # 3

If you can't crow right, codger; don't crow at all!

SENEX

Sorry! Sorry!

NARRATOR

In the middle of the night, Senex would weep and worry : He had no son, no prince, no heir to his land. Senex would try to sleep, but he didn't even sleep well: He dreamed instead.

(Voices should build in number throughout)

VOICES: SENEX SENEX SENEX

SENEX

(Panicked)

Sorry!

VOICES: DON'T BE SORRY YOU'RE A KING
 YOU WHO GAVE THEM EVERYTHING
 BUT DO THEY RESPECT
 BUT DO THEY OBEY
 NOW THEIR TIME HAS COME TO PAY
 TO WREAK HAVOC AND DISMAY
 ALL YOU NEED TO SAY IS
 LET IT BE SO
 AND YOU WILL KNOW
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET OF THE AGES

DON'T BE SORRY
 DON'T BE SORRY
 DON'T BE SORRY

SENEX

Let it be so.

VOICES: GOD THROUGHOUT ALL HISTORY
 HIDES HIS GREATEST MYSTERY
 YOU DON'T HAVE TO DIE
 YOU CAN LIVE AGAIN
 BORN ANEW TO RULE YOUR PEN
 KING OF COOP AND DON OF DEN
 SAY YOU WILL AND THEN
 SAY YOUR WILL BE DONE
 AND YOU WILL BE YOUR OWN SON
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET
 THE SECRET OF THE AGES
 DON'T BE SORRY
 DON'T BE SORRY
 DON'T BE
 DON'T BE
 DON'T BE

(BUILDS UNTIL.....)

SENEX

LET IT BE DONE

CHORUS

YOU'LL BE SORRY
 YOU'LL BE SORRY
 YOU'LL BE SORRY

(PERTELOTE APPROACHES WITH THE MOUSE and
 OTHER HENS; SENEX SITS, CURLED INTO HIMSELF)

PERTELOTE

Senex! What's wrong? What's happened to you?

CHORUS: DON'T BE SORRY (8 Repeats)

(SENEX RISES, REVEALING AN EGG)

SENEX

(VOICE STRONGER NOW) Look upon my child, all of you! This shall be my son, and he will rule over you and bear my name!

NARRATOR

They gathered to stare at the small, leathery egg.
And on the seventh day it hatched, better yet, it
ripped apart. And the monster was born.

(The ANIMALS stand over it, horrified)

PERTELOTE

The Chick has no feathers.

WIDOW MOUSE

It has no hair.

CHORUS

YOU'LL BE SORRY

YOU'LL BE SORRY

WIDOW MOUSE

His tail...What is it?

PERTELOTE

A Serpent's Tail.

CHORUS

YOU'LL BE SORRY

YOU'LL BE SORRY

(They stand back as the ROOSTER rises, crossing
slowly across the yard to a terrified SENEX)

NARRATOR

It grew though it ate nothing; it rose with scales from
throat to tail, and eyes red with fire.

(COCKATRICE, a CREATURE both MALE and FEMALE,
reaches out two hands to touch SENEX'S cheek)

SENEX

(Terrified)

Sorry -

(COCKATRICE LEAPS FORWARD, KILLING SENEX;
MUSIC RISES AS THE BARNYARD IS SUDDENLY BLANKETED
BY DARKNESS)

PERTELOTE

NO!

(COCKATRICE TURNS, FACING THE ANIMALS)

PERTELOTE

(TO MOUSE) HURRY! TO THE RIVER!

MOUSE

CHILDREN, COME QUICKLY!

(PERTELOTE TURNS TO RUN, BUT BEFORE HER STANDS
COCKATRICE)

COCKATRICE

M&F: PERTELOTE
 FEMALE: YOU DID NOT
 MALE: DARED NOT
 BOTH: BEAR MY CHILD
 MALE: NOW YOU WILL BEAR MY WORDS
 FEMALE: YOUR FEAR
 BOTH: TO CHAUNTECLEER
 FEMALE: TELL HIM THIS
 MALE: MAKE HIM HEAR
 BOTH: CHAUNTECLEER WILL DIE

(PERTELOTE BACKS AWAY, TERRIFIED, AS
 LIGHT SHOOTS UP FROM THE CRACKS IN THE
 EARTH, ILLUMINATING COCKATRICE)

NARRATOR

The Trinity of Evil had come to be: Cockatrice,
 his Basilisks, and below the earth the Serpent, the Father
 to them all. For the first time on earth, his Name
 could be Spoken. And his Name was-

(PERTELOTE'S VOICE IS JOINED BY WHAT
 SOUNDS LIKE AN ARMY OF TORTURED SPIRITS
 SEEPING THROUGH THE EARTH)

COCKATRICE

M&F:
 SOUNDS: WYRM

(LIGHTS CHANGE, REVEALING CHAUNTECLEER AND
 A DEVASTATED PERTELOTE, ALONE)

PERTELOTE

There. I have told you all.

CHAUNTECLEER

Pertelote-

(SHE turns from HIM)

CHAUNTECLEER

You are cold. I could hold you.

(HE reaches out, but she doesn't move)

Or I could not. I will never be something fearful to you, My Lady. I promise that.

PERTELOTE

And I believe you.

(SNOW FLAKES BEGIN TO FALL)

CHAUNTECLEER

It is snowing.

PERTELOTE

It is. And without your permission.

(CHAUNTECLEER is STUNNED. HE'S never been spoken to this way)

CHAUNTECLEER

Are you laughing at me?

PERTELOTE

Yes.

CHAUNTECLEER

Laughing.

PERTELOTE

Yes!

(This time it is CHAUNTECLEER who pulls away)

CHAUNTECLEER

There are things I have done in my past. Terrible things I hate, and hate myself for.

PERTELOTE

What's past is past.

CHAUNTECLEER

I try to believe that.

PERTELOTE

(Pause) Why do you tell me this?

CHAUNTECLEER

Because you should hear it. Before I ask you to marry me.

PERTELOTE
Marry you?

CHAUNTECLEER
So now you know.

PERTELOTE
Yes.

CHAUNTECLEER
"Yes"?

PERTELOTE
Yes.

CHAUNTECLEER
(Relieved) Done, then. Congratulations.

(UNDERSCORING: REMEMBER THIS DAY
As the NARRATOR speaks; PERTELOTE walks with
CHAUNTECLEER through the ANIMALS assembled)

NARRATOR
It was a Snow Wedding. And under all that whiteness, so much
could be forgotten.

LORD RUSSELL
"Marry the Hen!", I told him; the first day I saw her!
"Let the Nuptuals begin! There she is, your Bird, your
Bride - Persimone."

BERYL
"Pertelote".

LORD RUSSELL
Of course she is. Had you forgotten?

(MUNDO CANI, standing beside JOHN WESLEY,
stifles a sob)

JOHN WESLEY
Enough, Dog! Dogs drip on Weasels! Weasels fur all's Ice-
Cicles.

TICK-TOCK
(Sniffs) Dog! You smell.

MUNDO CANI
I rolled myself in Roses. The Roses died. Now I'm mulch.

TICK-TOCK

Fall Back!

(ANTS take a step backward)

WIDOW MOUSE takes her place at PERTELOTE'S side;
 PERTELOTE nods toward MUNDO CANI; now alone.
 CHAUNTECLEER shakes his head "No".

PERTELOTE urges him to approach the dog)
 CHAUNTECLEER turns to MUNDO CANI)

CHAUNTECLEER

Mundo Cani.

MUNDO CANI

Master?

CHAUNTECLEER

(Reluctant) Come here. Stand beside me.

MUNDO CANI

Oh, Master: You want me to be Best Beast?

SONG: REMEMBER THIS DAY - Beryl, Animals, Chorus

BERYL: REMEMBER THIS LIGHT
 WHEN DARKNESS FALLS
 REMEMBER THIS SONG
 WHEN SORROW CALLS
 REMEMBER THIS PLACE
 AND WHAT FEELS LIKE GRACE
 REMEMBER THIS DAY

REMEMBER THIS PEACE
 WHEN STRUGGLES GROW
 REMEMBER THIS JOY
 IN TIME OF WOE
 REMEMBER THESE FACES
 THESE HANDS AND EMBRACES
 THAT NEVER LET GO

CHORUS: REMEMBER THIS DAY
 REMEMBER THIS DAY
 ALL THE MOMENTS YOU HOLD
 WILL NEVER GROW OLD
 AND NO ONE CAN TAKE THEM AWAY
 JUST AS LONG AS YOU REMEMBER
 REMEMBER

THE HOPE AND THE HURT
 YOU NOW WILL SHARE
 THE VOWS THAT YOU SPEAK
 A WHISPERED PRAYER
 WHEN TWO GO AS ONE
 THE JOURNEY'S BEGUN
 REMEMBER THIS DAY

(WIDOW MOUSE STAMPS DOWN ON THE SNOW BEFORE HER,
 DRAWING A PICTURE AS A PRESENT)

WIDOW MOUSE: MY WEDDING GIFT
 I DRAW A ROSE

ANTS: DRAW DIAMONDS IN THE ICE BELOW

BERYL: A SIMPLE SMILE

FOX: A NOBLE STEED
 TO CARRY YOU ACROSS THE SNOW

MUNDO: I GIVE A SCRATCH
 EACH SCRATCH A STAR
 A MILLION IN THE SKY ABOVE
 AND EVERY STAR
 COME LOOK AND SEE
 IS SHINING BRIGHTLY AS YOUR LOVE

CHORUS: REMEMBER THIS DAY
 REMEMBER THIS DAY
 ALL THE MOMENTS YOU HOLD
 WILL NEVER GROW OLD
 AND NO ONE CAN TAKE THEM AWAY
 JUST AS LONG AS YOU REMEMBER
 REMEMBER

CHAUNTECLEER: I DRAW A MAP
 DEAR PERTELOTE
 OF LAND I'LL RULE WITH YOU

PERTELOTE: THIS LIFE I LIVE
 MY CHAUNTECLEER
 IS LIFE I GIVE TO YOU

(THE ANIMALS WATCH PERTELOTE DRAW)

TICK-TOCK

One..Two..Three-

BERYL

Eggs!

CHAUNTECLEER

I will name them now: Ten Pin and Five Pin and One Pin. And they shall be sons.

CHORUS: THE HOPE AND THE HURT
 YOU NOW WILL SHARE
 THE VOWS THAT YOU SPEAK
 A WHISPERED PRAYER
 WHEN TWO GO AS ONE
 THE JOURNEY'S BEGUN
 REMEMBER THIS DAY

(The ANIMALS return to the COOP to leave CHAUNTECLEER and PERTELOTE in privacy. JOHN WESLEY STOPS, turning to the WIDOW MOUSE)

JOHN WESLEY

Mice and weasels IS different. That's a fact that John Double -U understands. On account of Mice is squeaky homebodies. Double-U's is beings of the whole outdoor. Nothing to a Double -U to spend a whole night outside a-hunting. Bring home food. For the family, you understand. The family. Double-U's take care of their own. Of their own, you understand.

(The WIDOW MOUSE, hearing his proposal, smiles)

WIDOW MOUSE

I do.

(SHE takes JOHN WESLEY'S hand; THEY EXIT)

PERT.: REMEMBER THIS DAY
CHAUN: REMEMBER THIS DAY

BOTH: ALL THE MOMENTS WE HOLD
 WILL NEVER GROW OLD
 AND NO ONE CAN TAKE THEM AWAY
 JUST AS LONG AS WE REMEMBER

(THE SHADOW OF COCKATRICE APPEARS BEHIND THEM)

C. MALE: SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
C&P.: REMEMBER
C. M&F: SOMETHING IN THE DARK

(CHAUNTECLEER AND PERTELOTE EMBRACE,
BOTH AS HAUNTED AS THEY ARE IN LOVE)

NARRATOR

Days went by and Winter hugged the earth until, at last,
the sun released its grip.

(The ANIMALS assemble as CHAUNTECLEER prepares
to crow)

No one had ever heard Chauntecleer crow as he crowed these
crisp early mornings. For he was dizzy with pride as he
stood on the haunch of a mountainous dog.

CHAUNTECLEER: COCKADOODLE
 MORNING
 SUNRISE
 OPEN
 YOUR EYES

NARRATOR

And beside him stood three young chicks, their yellow downy
feathers making an awful effort to bristle.

CHAUNTECLEER

Ready, Lads! COCK-A -DOODLE-

PIN ONE

Pip-

PIN FIVE

Pip-

PIN TEN

Peep!

CHAUNTECLEER

Congratulations, my tweets! God put trumpets in your
throats! You will blast the morning and shatter the east!

ALL PINS

Peep!

(CHAUNTECLEER laughs, wrestling with the children,
hugging them)

CHAUNTECLEER

Ye are lions, roaring lions, and sons to me.

(BERYL APPROACHES, gathering the PINS for school)

BERYL

Morning Lessons! Stand in your circle!

(PINS moan)

Sums and penmanship! And no chicken scratch!

(TICK-TOCK marches in with his WORKER ANTS)

ANTS BUSYNESS AND WORK SIR
NEVER WILL WE SHIRK SIR

NARRATOR

Tick-Tock the black ant stopped.

(TICK-TOCK looks around him)

For the first time in three seasons, the air was clear, and a feather or antennae could expect to stay dry the whole day through.

TICK- TOCK

(To CHAUNTECLEER) Permission to speak, Sire.

CHAUNTECLEER

Permission Granted.

TICK-TOCK

COMPANY, ATTENTION! IT IS OFFICIAL!

(TICK-TOCK blows his whistle)

Spring!

(ANTS cheer; the PINS cheer with them)

PINS

SPRING!!!!

NARRATOR

And the Animals took holiday.

SONG: SPRING - COMPANY

TICK TOCK:NATURE CALLS

SHOUT OUT YOUR ANSWER

SEASONS CHANGE

AND SO MUST WE

SHAKE THE CHILL

OF HIBERNATION

WITH SOME PHYSICALITY

BUDS BUD

SPROUTS SPROUT

THAT'S WHAT NATURE'S ALL ABOUT

STRETCHING TO THE SKY

SAP SAPS

FLEAS FLEA

SHOW SOME BESTIALITY

RAISE YOUR VOICES HIGH

AND SING
IT'S SPRING

(The ANTS have exercised zealously through this section joined by the PINS, despite BERYL'S efforts to stop them. But then the ANTS begin exercising with the PINS.)

CHAUNTECLEER & PERTELOTE watch; arms around each other)

BERYL

(Frustrated) No more! My Lord and Lady! There is a time to play and a time to learn!

(LORD RUSSELL intercedes)

LORD RUSSELL

And a time, Madam, to vocalize.

(LORD RUSSELL leads the PINS on an obstacle race)

LORD R: NATURE CALLS
THROW DOWN HER GAUNTLET
DARES THE WEAK
AND OVERFED
WILL YOU JOIN
THE WILD KINGDOM
OR BE VEGETABLES INSTEAD

PINS: BUGS BUG
WORMS WORM

LORD R: CREATURES OF THE TERRA FIRM
SHOW WHAT YOU CAN DO

PINS: HOUNDS HOUND
GULLS GULL

LORD R: PROVE YOU'RE NOT A MINERAL

PIN ONE: HOWL

PIN FIVE: BARK

PIN TEN: OR MOO

LORD R: BUT SING

ALL: IT'S SPRING

(MUNDO CANI bounds in, carrying a stick)

MUNDO CANI

Master!

CHAUNTECLEER

Oh, no.

MUNDO CANI

Let us run and leap and play!

PERTELOTE

Children, look! It's Mundo Cani!

THREE PINS

MUNDO CANI!

(The PINS leap on the beleaguered DOG)

MUNDO CANI

Princes! Such heavy Princes!

(In pain)

Such sharp claws to climb a Canine's Back! Such Strong
Beaks to Peck a Canine's Tail!

(Moans)

Owoow!

PIN ONE

Should we stop, Uncle?

MUNDO CANI

Uncle? Did you call me Uncle? Bite on, Nephews! Bite on!

MUNDO

CANI: SOMETHING STARTS TO GROW
 SOMETHING CHILLED BY SNOW
 SOMETHING THAT WAS WARMING ALL THE WHILE
 SOON YOU SPOT A TRACE
 HERE UPON YOUR FACE
 THAT COULD BE MISTAKEN FOR A SMILE
 CLEARLY
 (PINS BITE HIS TAIL; HE WINCES)
 NEARLY

(BERYL approaches angrily)

BERYL

DOG! You play reckless! Chicks must stay in their circle!
They are safe in their Circle!

(PINS MOAN; SHE turns to MUNDO CANI)

Play with creatures your own size!

(BERYL and PERTELOTE herd the CHILDREN to the
CIRCLE)

(MUNDO CANI RUNS TO CHAUNTECLEER)

MUNDO CANI

MASTER!

(HANDS HIM A STICK)

This stick needs throwing.

CHAUNTECLEER

Ready?

MUNDO CANI

Ready!

CHAUNTECLEER

FETCH!

(CHAUNTECLEER "THROWS" THE STICK OFFSTAGE)

MUNDO CANI

(Giving chase) OWOOH!

(MUNDO CANI EXITS - AND WE SEE CHAUNTECLEER
HAS NEVER RELEASED THE STICK.

HE DROPS IT TO THE GROUND BESIDE HIM.

JOHN WESLEY WEASEL ENTERS with the MICE children
clinging to him)

JOHN WESLEY WEASEL

A hunt is no talking! Is no crowding! A leaf; don't slip on
it! A hole; don't fall in! File single! Noses up, tails
down! Maybe baby mice want to stay home?

MOUSE CHILDREN

No!

JOHN WESLEY WEASEL

Faugh!

ALL: NATURE CALLS
THROWS DOWN HER GAUNTLET
DARES THE WEAK
AND OVERFED
WILL YOU JOIN
THE WILD KINGDOM
OR BE VEGETABLES INSTEAD

FAWNS FAWN
BOARS BOAR

CREATURES OF THE SEA AND SHORE
 TRUMPET BRAY AND BLEAT
 GRUBS GRUB
 FLIES FLY
 ANIMALS OF THE EARTH AND SKY
 STAND IF YOU'VE GOT FEET

AND SING
 SING
 SING
 IT'S SPRING
 IT'S SPRING
 IT'S SPRING
 IT'S SPRING

(SONG CONCLUDES AS CHAUNTECLEER and PERTELOTE
 HUG THEIR CHILDREN TO THEM, SURROUNDED BY THE
 COMMUNITY.)

MUSICAL PLAY OFF: ANIMALS LEAVE THE STAGE
 UNTIL -)

HEN #1

They're gone!
 (ALL RUSH TO HER)
 My Children!

BERYL

Eaten! Every Egg!

JOHN WESLEY

Rats! Is Rats! Is Ebenezer, back again!

(PERTELOTE looks for Chauntecleer)

PERTELOTE

Chauntecleer! Everyone inside, quickly! We must find-
 (Stops, looking around her)
 Beryl; where are the Children?

BERYL

Why, they are...Pins! PINS!

(Panicked, BERYL runs off in search of them,
 followed by PERTELOTE. LORD RUSSELL joins;
 and MUNDO CANI rushes back in)

LORD RUSSELL

Princes!

PERTELOTE

CHILDREN!

MUNDO CANI

MASTER?

(LIGHTS UP ON CHAUNTECLEER, ALONE)

NARRATOR

Chauntecleer stood by the River, a River that drew him there by a power stonger than any current.

(LIGHTS up on COCKATRICE, ACROSS THE RIVER)

COCKATRICE (SUNG)

M: PAXE
 F: PAXE
 BOTH: PAX GALLE SUPERBE
 F: PEACE
 M: PEACE
 BOTH: PEACE PROUD BIRD

CHAUNTECLEER

I know what you are.

COCKATRICE (SUNG)

M: I AM YOUR YEARNING
 F: ALWAYS HERE
 M: YOUR COMPANION
 F: ALWAYS NEAR
 BOTH: YOU HAVE GROWN
 SO ALONE
 LORD CHAUNTECLEER

CHAUNTECLEER

I have no loneliness.

COCKATRICE (SUNG)

F: YET YOU ARE ALONE
 M: AND I KNOW YOUR PAST
 WHO YOU WERE
 F: WHO YOU ARE
 BOTH: WHO YOU MAY BE AT LONG LAST
 F: ALL YOU'VE WILLED
 M: WHO YOU'VE KILLED
 BOTH: IN THE END CHAUNTECLEER
 FRIEND CHAUNTECLEER

CHAUNTECLEER

What do you want?

COCKATRICE (SUNG)

F: COME TO ME
 M: CROSS THE RIVER
 F: COME TO ME
 M: KNOW MY NAME
 F: COME TO ME
 AND YOU WILL SEE
 BOTH: WE ARE THE SAME

CHAUNTECLEER

No. We are not the same-

COCKATRICE (SUNG)

BOTH: CROSS THE RIVER
 YOU WILL KNOW
 CROSS THE RIVER
 YOU WILL GROW
 WISE AS GOD

CHAUNTECLEER

God gave me a new life!

COCKATRICE (SUNG)

BOTH: GOD GAVE YOU NOTHING
 F: NO ONE
 M: THEY WILL BETRAY YOU
 F: WHERE IS GOD NOW
 M: THEY WILL FORSAKE YOU
 F: WHAT CAN HE GIVE
 M: HATE THEM
 F: HATE GOD
 BOTH: JOIN US AND LIVE

CHAUNTECLEER

It is you I hate! You, Cockatrice, the damned of God!
 That is truth! That I know!

COCKATRICE (SUNG)

M: THEN TELL ME THIS CHAUNTECLEER
 F: ONLY THIS, CHUANTECLEER
 BOTH: WHERE ARE YOUR SONS?

(BLACKOUT ON CHAUNTECLEER AND COCKATRICE.
 LIGHTS up on a very full EBENEEZER RAT,
 licking his fingers, pleased with himself)

(MUSIC: NATURE CALLS)

EBENEEZER RAT

Rats eat Eggs. Good eggs, bad eggs and worse eggs. Every one. That's a Rat for you. That's Nature.

(LIGHTS UP ON PERTELOTE, peering through the forest)

PERTELOTE: SOMETHING IS OUT THERE

(EBEEZER stands, hearing something)

EBEENZER RAT

What's that, now? What's there? Show yourself!

(LIGHTS UP on JOHN WESLE, SEARCHING)

JW: SOMETHING IS OUT THERE

EBEENZER RAT

(Nervous) You afraid of a Rat? Is that you, Rooster? Is that-

(EBENEEZER RAT SEES EXACTLY WHAT IT IS. AND FREEZES)

P & JW: SOMETHING IN THE DARK

EBEEZER RAT

(Horrorified. Fascinated. He whispers) Evil.

(BLACKOUT; AND MUNDO CANI'S HOWL)

MUNDO CANI: MAROONED.....

(MUNDO CANI runs onstage to find CHAUNTECLEER kneeling over a HEN and THREE CHICKS, lying still before him four.

CHAUNTECLEER

They are dead, Mundo Cani. My children are dead. And more sadness is - they were killed.

MUNDO CANI

Oh, Master.

(PERTELOTE ENTERS, STOPPING AT THE SIGHT)

PERTELOTE

No. This can't be-

(SHE rushes forward; CHAUNTECLEER holds her tight)

(LORD RUSSELL, JOHN WESLEY and TICK TOCK ENTER,
STOPPING, HORRIFIED)

TICK TOCK

Sire; command us. Tell us what to do.

CHAUNTECLEER

Bear the Nurse back to the Coop. Walk most tenderly with
this lady.

PERTELOTE

(Pulling back) This sacrifice was not meant for her. It was
meant for me.

CHAUNTECLEER

Not you-

PERTELOTE

Yes! He did this. He has killed us all.

CHAUNTECLEER

Mundo Cani. Look after my Children's Mother. Bring her home.

(MUNDO CANI, TICK TOCK, LORD RUSSELL
AND JOHN WESLEY take BERYL & PERTETLOTE
FROM THE STAGE)

NARRATOR

The Lord God looked down and cloaked His entire earth in a
cloud of sadness as Chauntecleer spread his wings and
gathered his children beneath them.

But God would do one more thing so the Rooster would not be
this alone in the terrible struggle about to begin. He
would send His Messenger. He would send His Dun Cow.

CHORUS: IN THOSE DAYS
IN THOSE DAYS

NARRATOR

Here ends the First Act.

CHORUS: IN THOSE DAYS

ACT TWO

(LIGHTS UP on CHAUNTECLEER)

NARRATOR

To anyone who might have seen him standing on the coop that night, Chauntecleer would seemed to be black iron. A breeze tugged at his feathers, they flipped forward on his back; ragged, vagrant. But the Rooster himself was unmoveable.

And while Pertelote withdrew to be alone with her grief, the Animals honored them with silence.

CHAUNTECLEER: IF I NEVER KNEW FAITH
 HOW COULD I MISS IT
 IF I NEVER KNEW HOPE
 HOW COULD I PRAY
 IF I NEVER KNEW LOVE
 THEN LOVE WOULD BE ANOTHER WORD
 ANOTHER GIFT
 THAT YOU CAN GIVE
 AND TAKE AWAY

CHORUS: SHOW US YOUR WILL
 STRONGER THAN SORROW
 YOUR PLAN THAT IS VAST AS THE SKY

IT WOULD EASE ALL OUR PAIN
 IF YOU'D EXPLAIN
 WHY
 WHY
 WHY
 WHY
 WHY

CHAUNTECLEER: I AM PARALYZED HERE
 IN THE GRIEF OF THE PRESENT
 BY A WEIGHT THAT IS GREAT
 AS THE SINS OF MY PAST
 AND TOMORROW WILL BRING
 MORE PAIN WITH EVERY MEMORY
 THAT EMPTINESS YOU MADE FOR ME
 IS MINE AT LAST

CHAUNTECLEER: HOW COULD YOU WATCH MY CHILDREN DIE
 RAISE NOT A HAND
 SOUND NOT A CRY
 DO YOU NOT CARE

DO YOU NOT SEE
ARE YOU AS DEAD
AS YOU'VE LEFT ME

MY SONS

ANIMALS: SHOW US YOUR WILL
STRONGER THAN SORROW
YOUR PLAN THAT IS VAST AS THE SKY

IT WOULD EASE ALL OUR PAIN
IF YOU'D EXPLAIN

CHAUNTECLEER: WHY

NARRATOR

Then it was the Dun Cow came to him. Her eyes were liquid with compassion- as deep as the earth is deep. Her brow knew suffering and knew, besides that, worlds more.

(THE DUN COW SINGS)

DUN COW: 0000000000000000000000

(CHAUNTECLEER watches his own desolation appear in the eyes of the Cow, then sink so deeply into them that she shudders)

NARRATOR

So it was the First Miracle took place: Chauntecleer's grief became her grief. And though he ached no less for that, his heart made room for Her, for Her will and wisdom. And he could bear the sorrow better.

CHAUNTECLEER

Who are you?

NARRATOR

And the Second Miracle Chauntecleer could not understand. For it seemed to Chauntecleer that the Dun Cow spoke to him with Words that were more than Words: They were Weapons

DUN COW: RUE WLL BRING PROTECTION

CHAUNTECLEER

Rue? Protection from what?

DUN COW: ROOSTER'S CROW, CONFUSION
ONE THING MORE TO END THE DEED
A DOG WITH NO ILLUSION

CHAUNTECLEER

What are you saying?

DUN COW: COURAGE
MADNESS
WAR AND RUE
CHAUNTECLEER
THEY WILL COME TO YOU

(DUN COW vanishes as CHAUNTECLEER calls out)

CHAUNTECLEER

Wait! I don't understand-

JOHN WESLEY

Rooster knows, doesn't he?

(CHAUNTECLEER turns to see JOHN WESLEY
and the OTHER ANIMALS)

CHAUNTECLEER

Go away, John Wesley-

JOHN WESLEY

John knows who! Once is, always is! No changing the wicked.
No teaching the vile. Hate him! One murders Chicks! One
breaks a Hen what should live! Oh, how John does hate him!

(JOHN WESLEY, in fury, approaches CHAUNTECLEER,
but MUNDO CANI stops him)

Off, Mountain back!

CHAUNTECLEER

Enough.

JOHN WESLEY

Not enough! One wants hating. Pleads for hating. Kills for
hating.

CHAUNTECLEER

You don't know what you're saying-

JOHN

I know this! Here's one Double-U that won't kiss no Rat.

CHAUNTECLEER

You think you know who killed my children?

JOHN WESLEY

I think and I know! Ebenezer Rat! Hunt him! Kill him!

CHAUNTECLEER

You want me to do what he did. Become a Rat to kill a Rat?

JOHN WESLEY

Who kills three Chicks? Who leaves none to be Prince? John hunts him.

(Contemptuous of CHAUNTECLEER)

John kills for a Father who will not.

WIDOW MOUSE

(Enters; panicked) Rat! He's here! Underneath the coop!

MUNDO CANI

Ebeneezer!

CHAUNTECLEER

(Looking)) Just so. Pull him out, Mundo Cani.

(The ANIMALS group around the unseen RAT)

JOHN WESLEY

You see!

CHAUNTECLEER

I see, John Wesley! Now, you look and see.

NARRATOR

Ebeneezer Rat's eyes were closed, his fur was matted with blood, an impossibly deep wound on the side of his neck. But the lesson was elsewhere: Clamped in the Rat's mouth was a foul section of a serpent bitten away from its greater body. It had been a hideous fight.

CHAUNTECLEER

Peace, Neezer.

NARRATOR

Ebeneezer Rat was dead.

(CHAUNTECLEER addresses the ANIMALS around him)

CHAUNTECLEER

I want a Council! Every one of you! Present your breed before me. Scarce! My messenger! Where are you?

SCARCE

Here! Never gone!

NARRATOR

Scarce was a Mosquito. Scarce was all Mosquitoes, but then, all Mosquitoes are one.

CHAUNTECLEER

Put into every ear in my land that I will have Council. Command them to come! No one is safe who stays away.

SCARCE

Sire!

(Underscoring begins): CHAUNTECLEER'S Battle Rousing)

NARRATOR

And so they came. On padded feet, on hooves and wings. Animals brown and soft, quick and gray, one by one, family by family they came. Then stood obedient and waiting.

CHAUNTECLEER

There is a Murderer among us.

(ANIMALS whisper, frightened)

An Enemy from another place, another land. The death of my children is only his first word to us - to all of us. He has come to slaughter this place and the next, to leave no soul alive.

JOHN WESLEY

Tell us who, Chauntecleer?

(ANIMALS are UPSET; CHAUNTECLEER SHOUTS OVER THEM)

CHAUNTECLEER

He is frightful and filled with the power of hate - no, more than hate- filled with evil-

LORD RUSSEL

Evil?

CHAUNTECLEER

LISTEN TO ME! I know your fear, because I, too, have been afraid! I know your fury, because I have known fury! I know evil, because I too, have killed.

(CROWD is frightened now)

Yes! I have killed and killed again! Killed the one I most hated, and the one I most loved.

MUNDO CANI
Master! This can't be so!

(CHAUNTECLEER SINGS)

CHAUNTECLEER: BY THE LORD GOD
MY SPIRIT WAS TRANSFIGURED
BY THE LORD GOD
HE LED ME TO THIS LAND
BY THE LORD GOD
WE WERE GIVEN FOOD AND SHELTER
BUT THE TIME HAS COME WHEN WE MUST MAKE
A STAND

AND THE LORD GOD KNOWS
HIS ENEMY IS FRIGHTFUL
THE LORD GOD KNOWS
WE ARE WEAK AND WE ARE FEW
BUT THE LORD GOD KNOWS
WE WILL DO WHAT WE MUST DO
WE WILL KILL
AND WE WILL
FOR THE LORD GOD

(THE ANIMALS are panicked, shouting at
CHAUNTECLEER and each other)

LORD RUSSEL
Kill who?

WIDOW MOUSE
We have had enough killing!

JOHN WESLEY
No! Not enough!

TICK TOCK
What do we fight?

LORD RUSSEL
Can't we talk; reason-

JOHN WESLEY
Kill or be killed!

TICK TOCK
How many? Can we win?

CHAUNTECLEER
Silence!

(But the CROWD'S DISCORD is stopped not
by CHAUNTECLEER, but by the SOUND of
a VOICE cutting through it.

ANIMALS turns to see PERTELOTE, who has
heard all. And ALL are silenced)

PERTELOTE'S SONG - Pertelote & Animals

EVERY DAY A GIFT OF SORROW
EVERY DAY A GIFT OF JOY
EVERY DAY A NEW DECISION
THAT CAN NURTURE OR DESTROY

IN THIS WORLD
SO FULL OF CHOICES
IN THIS WORLD
THAT CAN FRIGHTEN AND CONFUSE
IN THIS WORLD
WITH SO MANY DIFFERENT VOICES
WE MUST CHOOSE
WE MUST CHOOSE

WE MUST BAND
TOGETHER
STAND TOGETHER
TOGETHER HAND IN HAND

AND IF AS ONE WE SING
TOGETHER WE WILL BRING
NEW HARMONY
TO THIS LAND

ANIMALS: IN THESE DAYS
PERTELOTE: SO MANY CHOICES
ANIMALS: IN THESE DAYS
PERTELOTE: THAT CAN FRIGHTEN AND CONFUSE
ANIMALS: IN THESE DAYS
PERTELOTE: SO MANY VOICES
STILL WE MUST CHOOSE

ALL: STILL WE MUST CHOOSE
STILL WE MUST CHOOSE

WE MUST BAND TOGETHER
STAND TOGETHER
TOGETHER HAND IN HAND

AND IF AS ONE WE SING
TOGETHER WE WILL BRING

NEW HARMONY
 NEW HARMONY
 NEW HARMONY
 TO THIS LAND

NARRATOR

The moment was peaceful and good. In the days to come, Chauntecleer would draw strength from it. But swiftly, the moment was over.

COCKATRICE

M & F: CHAUNTECLEER!

(CHAUNTECLEER stares in the distance at
 COCKATRICE, surrounded by his army of BASILISKS.

Terrified, WIDOW MOUSE runs to PERTELOTE'S SIDE)

WIDOW MOUSE

It's him!

PERTELOTE

Cockatrice.

COCKATRICE (SINGS)

KILL THEM
 ALL!

(THE BASILISKS ATTACK; THE ANIMALS GRAPPLE
 WITH THE SERPENTS)

CHAUNTECLEER

Follow me!

JW, TT: BITING
 SLASHING
 P, WM: SCREAMING
 CRYING
 TT, MC: TEARING
 GASHING
 ALL: PIERCING
 DYING

JOHN WESLEY

Cut for cut! Kill for kill!

PERTELOTE

This slaughter!

JOHN WESLEY

Is war!

JW, TT: STABBING
STRIKING
P, WM: WAILING
FLAYING
TT, MC: GNAWING
CLAWING
ALL: FLAILING
SLAYING

CHAUNTECLEER

Fall back! All of you!

COCKATRICE (SINGS)

M: WATCH THEM RUN
F: CURSE GOD,
BOTH: CHAUNTECLEER
M: CURSE GOD
BOTH: AND ALL WILL BE DONE

(THE ANIMALS HAVE REASSEMBLED)

LORD RUSSELL

Down wind, Dog! Do we have to fight your smell, too?

MUNDO CANI

It's true. I reek! My fur is filled with the foul leaves of the bush I charged through.

TICK TOCK

You stink.

MUNDO CANI

Even the Basilisks turned and ran.

PERTELOTE

(Stepping back) What is it?

MUNDO CANI

Rue! Even my nose is horrified.

CHAUNTECLEER

Rue! That's what she told me! Her words! Her weapons!

LORD RUSSELL

Who?

CHAUNTECLEER

We have no time; Tick Tock; Mundo Cani, we need more rue.

LORD RUSSELL

It's repulsive!

CHAUNTECLEER

It will be! Even to Basilisks! Scarce!

LORD RUSSELL

(SLAPPING AT HIS NECK) Ow!

SCARCE

Sire.

CHAUNTECLEER

Fly high and search it out. Pertelote, Widow Mouse; rub rue everywhere. Make a closed circle around the Mothers and children! Smear Rue on every warrior; we should all stink of it.

(MUSIC: RUE WILL BRING PROTECTION)

The Basilisks can die! They are vulnerable, like all of us!
But evil, too, can die!

JOHN WESLEY

Serpents wants fighting! Gets fighting!

MUNDO CANI

OWOOO!

LORD RUSSELL

Crow, Lord Chauntecleer! Crow like Judgment Day!

(THEY RUSH INTO BATTLE)

ANIMALS: CHARGING
LEADING
CLASHING
BLEEDING
WARRING
CROWING
KILLING
KNOWING

CHAUNTECLEER

They can die!

(The ANIMALS have the BASILIKS on the run)

ANIMALS: THEY CAN DIE

THEY CAN DIE
 THEY CAN DIE
 THEY CAN DIE
 THEY CAN DIE

COCKATRICE

Children! Come to me!

NARRATOR

And the battle was over. Insufferably weary, the Animals fell back into camp; sick and sorry, but alive.

(CHAUNTECLEER sees MUNDO CANI leaving)

CHAUNTECLEER

Mundo Cani! Where are you going?

MUNDO CANI

This dog has brought this curse to your coop. This dog will leave now, so it can follow him.

CHAUNTECLEER

You helped save us!

MUNDO CANI

More are gone than saved. Three young princes died because this dog did not protect them.

CHAUNTECLEER

Stop, Dog! I command you!

SONG: THE DOG'S SONG - MUNDO CANI & CHAUNTECLEER

MUNDO CANI: WHO NEEDS A DOG
 WHEN THE DOG IS A RUG
 AND HE'S BRUISED UP AND BITTEN
 AND NOT WORTH A HUG
 OH HE'S SORROW ITSELF
 LIKE A SNIFF OR A SHRUG OR A SIGH
 HE'S A WALKING DISASTER
 BUT HE LOVES HIS DEAR MASTER
 GOOD-BYE
 AWOOO

(MUNDO CANI starts to get up to go; CHAUNTECLEER stops him)

MUNDO CANI: WHO WANTS A PUP
 WHEN HIS SNOOT HAS A LEAK
 SO UNLIKE THE ROOSTER
 WITH A BEAUTIFUL BEAK
 OH HE'S WOEFUL DEFINED
 AND IT'S HOPELESS TO SPEAK
 BUT HE'LL TRY
 HE'S A WALKING DISASTER
 BUT HE LOVES HIS DEAR MASTER
 GOOD-BYE

CHAUNTECLEER

You utter fool!

MUNDO CANI

You're so right.

CHAUNTECLEER

You blithering nincompoop.

MUNDO CANI

The Master of the Universe is embarrassed that he made such a mistake as this one.

CHAUNTECLEER: SOME CALL THE DOG HERO
 MUNDO CANI: WHAT SENSE WOULD THAT MAKE
 CHAUNTECLEER: A HERO'S A SAVIOR
 MUNDO CANI: A MUTT'S A MISTAKE
 CHAUNTECLEER: I DON'T MAKE THEM, YOU MANGE
 AND I KNOW WHAT I NEED AND HE'S HERE
 YOU'RE FAST AS THE BREEZE
 MUNDO CANI: SO'S A SNAKE OR A SNEEZE

CHAUNTECLEER: YOU'RE FAITHFUL AND FAIR
 MUNDO CANI: LIKE THE FLEAS IN MY HAIR
 MUNDO CANI: YOU FACED A GREAT EVIL
 AND SHOWED NOT A TINGLE OF FEAR
 BOTH: COCKADOO

CHAUNTECLEER: LISTEN YOU LUMP
 EVEN IF YOU'RE A CURSE
 THEN IT'S CURSES WE WANT
 AND TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE
 IF IT'S FLEAS THAT YOU'RE BREEDING
 IT'S FLEAS THAT WE'RE NEEDING
 YOU KNOW
 YOU'RE A STOOP AND A BOOSTER
 AND A PLACE FOR A ROOSTER TO CROW

(MUNDO CANI SIGHS, TURNS AWAY)

CHAUNTECLER: I'LL TELL YOU ONCE
 WHY YOU CAN'T LEAVE THIS COOP
 WHICH I SAY SINCE IT PAINS ME TO SEE A
 DOG DROOP
 THERE ARE REASONS FOR STAYING THAT
 EVEN A MONGREL SHOULD KNOW
 THERE'S A ROOF HIGH ABOVE YOU
 AND A ROOSTER WHO LOVES YOU
 DON'T GO

MUNDO CANI: WHO NEEDS A DOG
 CHAUNTECLEER: I NEED A DOG
 MUNDO CANI: WHO NEEDS A PUP
 CHAUNTECLEER: I NEED A PUP
 MUNDO CANI: I'M A WALKING DISASTER
 BUT I LOVE YOU DEAR MASTER
 CHAUNTECLEER: SHUT UP

(MUSIC CHANGES; PERTELOTE ENTERS
 TO SEE JOHN WESLEY ENTERING CARRYING
 THE WIDOW MOUSE, DEAD, IN HIS ARMS)

PERTELOTE

John Wesley!

(MUSIC: JOHN WESLEY'S LAMENT)

JOHN WESLEY

Look. Come see what they have done. What does Mice do? Mice
 cleans in the spring. Mice sweeps. Mice watches their
 children. But the damned...the damned-

(MUSIC CHANGES; Furious, CHAUNTECLEER goes back
 into the BATTLEFIELD)

CHAUNTECLEER

COCKATRICE! HEAR ME!

PERTELOTE

Chauntecleer, come back!

(COCKATRICE APPEARS)

COCKATRICE (SINGS)

F: PROUD CHAUNTECLEER
 HEED YOUR WIFE
 M: SEE YOUR SUBJECTS
 F: SOUNDLESS
 BOTH: WITH NO LIFE

CHAUNTECLEER

I see you! A coward who hides behind his army! Show yourself at dawn! You and I will fight!

COCKATRICE

BOTH: And you will die.

(COCKATRICE VANISHES; MUSIC ENDS.)

MUNDO CANI and LORD RUSSELL approach, fearful)

MUNDO CANI

Master-

CHAUNTECLEER

It's dark. Go back. Take Pertelote with you.

(PERTELOTE pulls away, the OTHERS go)

PERTELOTE

No.

CHAUNTECLEER

Get back into the camp. You have no business on the battlefield!

PERTELOTE

How dare you! My sons are my business! Beryl is my business!

(PERTELOTE points to a body on the field)

PERTELOTE (CONT.)

Here! Look! She, too, is my business! Touch her! Feel her face! Tell me her name.

CHAUNTECLEER

She's dead.

PERTELOTE

I don't care! I want to know her name!

(CHAUNTECLEER LEANS DOWN, TOUCHING THE BODY, STRICKEN)

CHAUNTECLEER

The Deer. Nimbus.

PERTELOTE

Nimbus! Her name is Nimbus! Nimbus, too, is dead. No more, Chauntecleer! Is this what God wants us to do, fight until we are all bodies on a battlefield?

CHAUNTECLEER

I don't know what God wants-

PERTELOTE

Do you even care? All you want is to become His next sacrifice?

CHAUNTECLEER

No!

PERTELOTE

Yes! You won't stop until Cockatrice kills you, too!

(SHE is overcome, running to him.
CHAUNTECLEER hugs her)

CHAUNTECLEER

Pertelote-

SONG: THE MYSTERY - PERTELOTE & CHAUNTECLEER

PERTELOTE: HOW DO YOU GO ON

CHAUNTECLEER: YOU GO ON

PERTELOTE: NO, TELL ME

(Turning) HOW DO YOU GO ON

BATTLES NEVER DONE

WARS THAT CAN'T BE WON

ONCE WE MADE OUR CHOICES

ONCE WE HAD OUR SONS

CHAUNTECLEER: WE FIGHT AGAINST A MYSTERY

PERTELOTE: HOW DO YOU BELIEVE

CHAUNTECLEER: YOU BELIEVE

PERTELOTE: NO, TELL ME

HOW DO YOU BELIEVE

CERTAIN WE SHOULD FIGHT

CERTAIN WE ARE RIGHT

WHO CAN TELL THE DIFFERENCE

IN THE DARK OF NIGHT

CHAUNTECLEER: WE FIGHT AGAINST A MYSTERY

PERTELOTE: WHO IS WYRM

CHAUNTECLEER: I DON'T KNOW

PERTELOTE: WHAT IS WYRM

CHAUNTECLEER: I DON'T KNOW
 PERTELOTE: WHY CAN'T GOD EXPLAIN

CHAUNTECLEER: WHAT SHOULD GOD EXPLAIN?
 WHY HE STANDS ALOOF?
 WHY DO WE GROW OLD?
 WHY DOES MUNDO CANI WEEP
 OR WHY HIS NOSE IS COLD?

PERTELOTE

You killed before. You said that. "The one you most hated.
 The one you most loved".

CHAUNTECLEER

(Struggling) A Wolf came to the land I was born in. He
 terrorized all the animals. And my Mother, a Widow. She had
 only me, small, young, useless to her.

The Wolf moved into our house. He made my Mother feed and
 serve him. He laughed at us all; at our weakness.

One night, I strapped on two iron Spurs, Gash and the
 Slasher, the weapons of my Father. The Wolf was sleeping.
 With all my strength I leaped upon him; I dug my spurs
 deeper and deeper into his chest as he screamed and cursed
 me. I killed him.

But not only him. In the fighting, my fighting, I killed my
 Mother.

PERTELOTE

You didn't mean to. It was a mistake.

CHAUNTECLEER

It was my violence; my battle. I am no different than
 Cockatrice.

PERTELOTE

I see now. So all of this has happened because of you:
 Cockatrice, his army - they're the penance you must pay.
 How important, how powerful you must be to cause such evil
 in the world all by yourself.

CHAUNTECLEER

You think I'm wrong?

PERTELOTE

You are more than that; you are foolish.

CHAUNTECLEER

To think I married you for this honesty.

PERTELOTE

You married me because I chose against evil. Because I would not bear Senex or his children..

CHAUNTECLEER

I know that.

PERTELOTE

Chauntecleer: you choose against him now. Not for you; for all of us. (Takes his hand) And I choose with you.

CHAUNTECLEER

Then we are one.

PERTELOTE: WHAT IF YOU SHOULD DIE
CHAUNTECLEER: THEN I DIE
PERTELOTE: NO, TELL ME
 WHAT IF YOU SHOULD DIE

PERTELOTE: KNOW THAT EVER STILL
 KNOW HE CANNOT KILL
 HOW I LOVE MY HUSBAND
 HOW I ALWAYS WILL

CHAUNTECLEER: AND THAT'S THE GREATEST MYSTERY
BOTH: AND THAT'S THE GREATEST MYSTERY

(MUSIC CHANGES)

COCKATRICE

CHAUNTECLER!

NARRATOR

And the Battle for the Earth began.

(MUSIC: WE FIGHT AGAINST A MYSTERY)

COCKATRICE (SINGS)

F: COME TO ME
M: COME TO ME
BOTH: I WILL GIVE YOUR BEASTS
 YOUR FLESH FOR FEAST

PERTELOTE

God help us.

(ANIMALS WAKE, RISING, STARING OUT AT THE BATTLEFIELD)

MUNDO: SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
 JW: SOMETHING
 TICK T: SOMETHING
 ALL: SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
 SOMETHING IN THE DARK

NARRATOR

Chauntecleer binds on his spurs, Gaff, and the Slasher. And then with all his might, he flaps his wings, struggling to meet his enemy.

(CHAUNTECLEER RISES INTO THE AIR;
 ALL the ANIMALS have gathered to watch)

TICK TOCK

He's flying!

LORD RUSSELL

But he can't! Roosters don't fly!

MUNDO

Oh, Master.

(As CHAUNTECLEER rises higher, SCARCE JOINS THEM)

ANIMALS: SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
 SOMETHING SOMETHING
 SOMETHING IS OUT THERE
 SOMETHING IN THE DARK

(COCKATRICE SWOOPS DOWN AND SMASHES INTO CHAUNTECLEER, SENDING HIM HURLING TO EARTH)

PERTELOTE

CHAUNTECLEER!

TICK TOCK

There! In the Forest.

SCARCE

He's alive!

PERTTELOTE,
 MUNDO CANI: WE FIGHT AGAINST A MYSTERY

LORD RUSSELL

He's trying again!

(IN PAIN, CHAUNTECLEER RISES AGAIN INTO THE SKY)

ANIMALS: WE FIGHT AGAINST A MYSTERY

JOHN WESLEY

No, Chauntecleer! Don't!

(CHAUNTECLEER, EXHAUSTED, RISES HIGHER AS
COCKATRICE, LAUGHING AT HIM, CIRCLES ABOVE)

ANIMALS: WE FIGHT AGAINST A MYSTERY

MUNDO CANI

Come back!

ANIMALS: WE FIGHT AGAINST A MYSTERY

(COCKATRICE PLUNGES TOWARD CHAUNTECLEER,
UNABLE TO FLY HIGHER)

PERTELOTE

Husband!

(AS COCKATRICE PLUNGES TOWARD HIM, CHAUNTECLEER
FALLS TO HIS BACK, THRUSTING HIS SPURS ABOVE HIM:

GAFF PIERCES COCKATRICE'S THROAT, SLASHER
IS BURIED IN HIS CHEST.

FROM THE EARTH BELOW, A BLAZING OF LIGHTS THROUGH
THE CREVICES AND THE GROUND SHAKES WITH WYRM'S
SCREAM ECHOING COCKATRICE'S)

COCKATRICE/M/F/WYRM

No!

(CHAUNTECLEER and COCKATRICE have tumbled to
earth and are now face to face, their hands
grappling the other)

COCKATRICE (SUNG)

M: YOU!

F: YOU!

WHY DO YOU KILL

M: TELL US

BOTH: YOU LIED

F: NOT TO SAVE YOUR MOTHER

M: NOT TO SAVE THE WORLD

BOTH: YOU KILL TO SAVE YOUR PRIDE

(A "VOICE", A RUMBLING VIBRATION JOINS THEM AS A LIGHT SHOOTS THROUGH A CREVICE OF THE EARTH DIRECTLY UP AT COCKATRICE: IT IS WYRM)

C&W: NOW YOU WILL FAIL
 M&F: HE WILL AVENGE US
 M: MY FATHER
 WYRM
 F: MY FATHER
 M&F: EVIL WILL AVENGE US
 W: EVIL WILL PREVAIL

(THE SHAFT OF LIGHT EXPLODES UPWARD LIKE LIGHTNING AND COCKATRICE VANISHES INTO THE EARTH IN THE BRIGHTNESS.

THE ANIMALS RUN TO CHAUNTECLEER, WHO HAS COLLAPSED. CHAUNTECLEER IS DYING)

PERTELOTE

Chauntecleer! Can you hear me? His head is burning!

JOHN WESLEY

Give the Rooster room!

(THE ANIMALS SURROUND CHAUNTECLEER'S "BODY", BUT CHAUNTECLEER, STEPS BACK, WATCHING THEM, WATCHING HIMSELF; HOVERING BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH)

NARRATOR

Chauntecleer had won. But it is possible to win against the enemy and still to be defeated by the battle. With words only, Wyrms had struck down Chauntecleer.

CHAUNTECLEER

I'm here. Here! Can't you see me?

NARRATOR

Now Chauntecleer's Animals, frightened, the Keepers of the earth would lose their strength. The bond was breaking, the prison gate unlocking. And Wyrms saw freedom in front of him.

(MUSIC; THE DUN COW APPEARS:
 SHE FACES CHAUNTECLEER)

DUN COW: RUE I SAID, PROTECTION.

CHAUNTECLEER

You! You came back to me!

DUN COW: ROOSTER'S CRY CONFUSION

(DUN COW TURNS TO FACE MUNDO CANI,
HUDDLING OVER THE UNSEEN CHAUNTECLEER'S
"BODY".

AS SHE SINGS, MUNDO CANI TURNS TO FACE HER,
LISTEN TO HER)

DUN COW: ONE THING MORE TO END THE DEED
A DOG WITH NO ILLUSION

(THE DUN COW SWINGS ROUND NOW TO A WALL/BEAM
OF THE COOP, CLOSING HER EYES)

AS MUSIC BUILDS SHE CRACKS HER HORN AGAINST
THE WOOD, ONCE, TWICE, THEN AGAIN -)

CHAUNTECLEER

Stop!

(UNTIL THE HORN FALLS TO THE GROUND; THE
DUN COW APPROACHES CHAUNTECLEER.

LIGHTS DIM; FOCUSING ONLY ON CHAUNTECLEER and
THE DUN COW)

DUN COW

(Whispers) Chauntecleer.
(SINGS)

COURAGE
SACRIFICE
AND RUE
CHAUNTECLEER
IT IS ALL FOR YOU

(THE DUN COW EXITS)

CHAUNTECLEER

Don't go! Wait! Do you hear me?

(PERTELOTE and the ANIMALS are still
huddled over the dying "Body" of CHAUNTECLEER.

THE STAGE IS DARKER: IT IS EVENING)

PERTELOTE

He's dying! We have to do something.

JOHN WESLEY

(Despairing) Death and more death.

LORD RUSSELL

My lady; there is nothing to be done.

MUNDO CANI

Sir; you are wrong. There is one thing.

(MUNDO CANI touches the "HEAD" of CHAUNTECLEER'S
BODY)

This dog must leave now.

(MUSIC CRASHES; BEGINS TO BUILD TO THE LAST
BATTLE:

THE STAGE SPLITS APART, JAGGED PIECES
WITH HEIGHT, AND FROM BELOW THE EARTH
SHARDS OF UNEARTHLY RED AND GREEN LIGHT)

NARRATOR

It was then the earth opened up: the Coop tottered on the
edge of an abysmal cliff, the mantle of the earth had split,
and the waters of the earth rushed into it like suicide.

(THE ANIMALS HOLD ON TO EACH OTHER
FOR SUPPORT; SOME FALL TO THE SHIFTING
GROUND, OTHERS SLIDE OFF STAGE.

CHAUNTECLEER VANISHES.

FROM BENEATH THE EARTH WE HEAR THE VOICE OF WYRM)

WYRM

Chauntecleer is dead! You have surrendered!

PERTELOTE

No!

WYRM

The Keepers have failed! The earth cracks before me! I
shall be free!

(THE EARTH SHIFTS AGAIN; THE ANIMALS
ARE TERRIFIED)

CHAUNTECLEER

Pertelote-

(PERTELOTE turns to see CHAUNTECLEER on
the ground where his "BODY" has been)

PERTELOTE

Husband!

CHAUNTECLEER

Help me up!

(SUDDENLY, ABOVE THE CHASM ON A SPLINTERED
CREST OF EARTH, MUNDO CANI APPEARS)

MUNDO CANI

Wyrms, look at me! Does evil look upon a dog? This dog will
fight you.

CHAUNTECLEER

Mundo Cani! Come back!

(The EARTH SHIFTS AGAIN; PERTELOTE SCREAMS
as CHAUNTECLEER GRABS HER, SAVING HER FROM
FALLING INTO THE CREVICE.)

MUNDO CANI

Of all the noble, a Dog is Chosen!

WYRM

Dog! You dare this?

MUNDO CANI

Are you afraid of a Dog; a speck who calls you out!

PERTELOTE

What is that? What is he carrying?

CHAUNTECLEER

The Dun Cow's Horn.

MUNDO CANI (SINGS)

LOOK UPON ME
LOOK UPON ME
LOOK UPON ME

WYRM

HISSESSSSSSSSSS.....

(FROM THE EARTH, BRIGHT SHARDS OF LIGHT
THAT NEARLY BLIND MUNDO CANI.)

CHAUNTECLEER and PERTELOTE hold on to each other as other ANIMALS make their way to their feet or back on stage to witness this moment)

MUNDO CANI (SINGS)
 STARE FROM HELL
 THIS DOG WILL BE
 THE FINAL SIGHT THAT
 YOU SHALL SEE

(MUNDO CANI LEAPS at the WYRM, INTO THE BLINDING LIGHT, THE HORN OF THE DUN COW IN HIS HANDS.

WYRM SHRIEKS IN PAIN, AS MUNDO CANI STABS AND STABS INTO THE LIGHT, ONCE WHITE, THAT TURNS REDDER AND REDDER-

THE ANIMALS HAVE MADE THEIR WAY TO CHAUNTECLEER AND PERTELOTE'S SIDE)

CHAUNTECLEER
 Mundo Cani! Come back!

(CHAUNTECLEER tries to make his way toward HIM, but not in time-

WITH AN EXPLOSION, THE EARTH CLOSES, COLLAPSING, FALLING IN ON ITSELF)

NARRATOR
 The land closed with a scar that knit the Dog into the earth, forever. Then the clouds above ripped asunder, and the beams of the sun above reached down to warm the earth. And, finally, the Rooster crowed:

CHAUNTECLEER
 (SINGS) MAROONED

(MUSIC: IN THOSE DAYS.

ALL ANIMALS EXCEPT FOR CHAUNTECLEER, PERTELOTE and the MOUSE CHILDREN remain)

NARRATOR
 Days passed, nights passed, Children grew. Their parents gave thanks for them, and most of the animals worked to mend all that was broken. Most, but not...

PERTELOTE

(Calling off stage) John! John Wesley!

(To CHAUNTECLEER)

He won't come out of his burrow.

(A MOUSE CHILD gets CHAUNTECLEER'S attention by pulling on his wing)

MOUSE CHILD

He won't play with us.

(CHAUNTECLEER goes to PERTELOTE'S side)

CHAUNTECLEER

John Wesley! Laggard! Get out here! We are not going to bring you food! We are not going to spend pity on you! And when you have wasted away, we are not going to mourn a fool's passing!

PERTELOTE

Chauntecleer!

(To the CHILDREN)

Children; play now.

(MOUSE CHILDREN EXIT)

CHAUNTECLEER

I've no time for a mope. The past is past.

PERTELOTE

Is that so?

CHAUNTECLEER

Of course it is.

PERTELOTE

Then you don't think of it?

CHAUNTECLEER

My duty is to think of the future.

PERTELOTE

Not of Mundo Cani?

CHAUNTECLEER

Why are you doing this?

PERTELOTE

Because I love you. As he did.

CHAUNTECLEER

How can you? I let him die! I let him go alone into that pit! A leader lost and a Dog took over! A Leader lives to be sick of his life!

PERTELOTE

Is that all?

CHAUNTECLEER

All? I should have died instead of him.

(HE TURNS AWAY)

PERTELOTE

What more, Chauntecleer?

CHAUNTECLEER

I miss him. Terribly. I miss my friend.

PERTELOTE

I know.

(SHE HUGS HIM)

And that makes you greater than a King.

Now, for him; for me. Will you forgive yourself?

(CHAUNTECLEER steps back, collects himself;
then calls for ALL ANIMALS to hear)

CHAUNTECLEER

All of you! Come hear me.

(ANIMALS RETURN; THE MOUSE CHILDREN,
LORD RUSSELL, SCARCE and TICK TOCK)

We have been given back the earth. From this day forward, none of us will not hide from it, as frightened as a Weasel.

JOHN WESLEY (OFFSTAGE)

What?

LORD RUSSELL

Didn't I just say the same thing!

(Slaps his back)

Ouch! Ouch!

SCARCE

Sorry. Stop now, children.

LORD RUSSELL

How many do you have?

SCARCE

Ninety Six.

LORD RUSSELL

Ninety- Ouch! How lovely.

TICK TOCK

(To Chauntecleer) Sire; I can tunnel the Weasel out.

(CHAUNTECLEER motions for him to wait)

(MUSIC "NEW HARMONY" BEGINS)

CHAUNTECLEER

There are no more adventures, and probably very little courage left in a moping one eared Weasel.

JOHN WESLEY

What? Is a Mouse John mourns, a Mouse, fool Bird!

CHAUNTECLEER

You mourn by ignoring her Children?

JOHN WESLEY

"Her" children? Is that what you say? They are Weasel children, now, too!

PERTELOTE

Show us, then.

(JOHN WESLEY emerges)

JOHN WESLEY

I'll show you! I'll show you all! Even the Skeeter!
(To CHAUNTECLEER) As for you, Rooster, you'd better keep your beak in your own bird business-

CHAUNTECLEER

Watch what you say, you lopsided ferret-

(The tiniest MOUSE CHILD runs from PERTELOTE and stands between them; the CHILD'S song stopping them from fighting)

MOUSE CHILD #1 WE MUST BAND
 TOGETHER

(JOHN WESLEY and CHAUNTECLEER stop arguing,
look to the CHILD)

MOUSE CHILD #2: STAND TOGETHER
 MOUSE CHILD #3: TOGETHER HAND IN HAND
 ALL MICE: AND IF AS ONE WE SING
 TOGETHER WE WILL BRING
 NEW HARMONY
 TO THIS LAND

NARRATOR

Here ends the story of Chauntecleer, the Animals and the
 Keeping of Wyrn.

PERTELOTE: IN THESE DAYS

CHAUNTECLEER: SO FULL OF CHOICES
 TICK TOCK: IN THESE DAYS
 SCARCE: THAT CAN FRIGHTEN AND CONFUSE
 LORD R: IN THESE DAYS
 ALL MICE: SO MANY VOICES
 JOHN WESLEY: WE MUST CHOOSE
 PERTELOTE WE MUST CHOOSE

ALL: WE MUST STAND TOGETHER
 BAND TOGETHER
 TOGETHER HAND IN HAND

CHAUNTECLEER: AND IF AS ONE WE SING
 TOGETHER WE WILL BRING
 ALL: NEW HARMONY

NEW HARMONY
 NEW HARMONY
 TO THIS LAND

THE END