

THE REAL REASON DINOSAURS WENT EXTINCT

by Todd Wallinger

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THE REAL REASON DINOSAURS WENT EXTINCT

A Full Length Comedy

by Todd Wallinger

SYNOPSIS: Think the dinosaurs were just helpless victims of the asteroid that crashed into ancient earth? Well, they weren't—and this large-cast comedy tells the whole hilarious tale!

As the play begins, two dinosaur scientists discover the asteroid just three days before it's due to strike. When they try to warn the plant-eating citizens of Fernville, however, they get mocked and ridiculed. After all, the scientists have been predicting doom and gloom for years. But when one of their predictions finally comes true, and the town is attacked by a pack of hungry meat eaters, the plant eaters realize that some dangers are too serious to be ignored.

Now it's up to a clumsy young dinosaur named Snaggleclaw to venture into the Craggs—the very heart of the meat eaters' territory—and bring back a special crystal that offers the plant eaters their only hope of survival. Can Snaggleclaw convince the meat eaters to cooperate? Or will he end up becoming a late-night snack? Find out in this action-packed, easy-to-produce play that teaches the importance of working together while sneaking in a ton of fun facts about the world of the dinosaurs.

DURATION: 90 minutes.

TIME: End of the Cretaceous Period, 66 million years ago.

SETTING: The rainforests of Antarctica: Fernville School; Laboratory; Fernville Town Square; The Craggs.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 females, 4 males, 12 either, unlimited extras)

THE PLANT-EATING DINOSAURS:

MISS SWEETWATER (f) Firm but kind teacher. *(58 lines)*

LITTLE SPIKE (f) Spunky student. *(95 lines)*

GABBY (f) Know-it-all student. *(28 lines)*

- BUSTER (m)..... Smart alecky student. *(39 lines)*
- SNAGGLECLAW (m)..... Clumsy but goodhearted student. *(116 lines)*
- PROFESSOR BROADBEAK (m/f)..... Highly excitable scientist. *(114 lines)*
- DOCTOR DUCKBILL (m/f)..... Much more sensible scientist. *(105 lines)*
- THUNDERFOOT (m/f)..... Security guard; all brawn, no brains. *(7 lines)*
- STORMBROW (m/f)..... Security guard; some brains. *(14 lines)*
- JABBERJAW (f)..... Loves to gossip; mother of Buster. *(50 lines)*
- LOFTYNOSE (f)..... A snob; mother of Gabby. *(44 lines)*
- SHARPTONGUE (m/f)..... The town crank. *(35 lines)*
- GRAYTOOTH (m)..... Grumpy old-timer; father of Jabberjaw. *(18 lines)*
- MAYOR SPIKETAIL (m)..... Pompous mayor of Fernville; father of Little Spike. *(68 lines)*

THE MEAT-EATING DINOSAURS:

- CRUSHER (m/f)..... Hotheaded leader. *(72 lines)*
- RUMBLEBELLY (m/f)..... Always hungry. *(47 lines)*
- UMBERSNOUT (m/f)..... Obsequious to a fault. *(38 lines)*
- PERKY (m/f)..... Closet vegan. *(46 lines)*
- THICKSKULL (m/f)..... A little slow. *(44 lines)*

THE MAMMALS:

- NIBBLER (m/f)..... Nervous, shrew-like rodent. *(8 lines)*
- WHISKERS (m/f)..... Another rodent; more excited than nervous. *(7 lines)*

SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1: Fernville School, one morning.

SCENE 2: Laboratory, that evening.

SCENE 3: Fernville Town Square, the next morning.

SCENE 4: The Craggs, that same day.

SCENE 5: Laboratory, later that day.

SCENE 6: Fernville Town Square, a short time later.

SCENE 7: Laboratory, a short time later.

INTERMISSION (Optional)

ACT TWO

SCENE 1: The Craggs, the next morning.

SCENE 2: Fernville School, that same day.

SCENE 3: The Craggs, later that day.

SCENE 4: Laboratory, later that day.

SCENE 5: Fernville Town Square, a short time later.

SCENE 6: The Craggs, several weeks later.

SET DESCRIPTION

The play takes place in four locations. Each location is represented by minimal set pieces that can be moved on and off quickly. Palm trees, ferns, and other leafy plants should form a permanent backdrop for all of the scenes.

- Fernville School has four chairs and a portable whiteboard.
- The laboratory has a worktable and telescope.
- Fernville Town Square has a park bench, and later, a podium and card table.
- The Craggs has several scattered rocks.

PROPERTIES ONSTAGE**ACT ONE:**

SCENE 1:

- dry erase marker (on whiteboard)

SCENE 2:

- pen (on worktable)
- clipboard (on worktable)

SCENE 3:

- banner reading "HAPPY BIRTHDAY, FERNVILLE" (attached with push pins to two trees)

SCENE 5:

- small crystal (on worktable)

SCENE 6:

- banner reading "HAPPY BIRTHDAY, FERNVILLE" (attached with push pins to two trees)
- paper "palm leaves" that can be rolled into megaphones (at foot of palm trees)

SCENE 7:

- small crystal (on worktable)

ACT TWO:

SCENE 3:

- line of yellow tape (running depth of stage)
- boulder
- chair

SCENE 4:

- large crystal (on worktable)
- black cloth (on worktable)

PROPERTIES BROUGHT ON**ACT ONE:**

SCENE 1:

- dinosaur model, pre-broken (PROFESSOR)

SCENE 2:

- simpler dinosaur model (SNAGGLECLAW)

SCENE 3:

- eyeglasses (GRAYTOOTH)

SCENE 6:

- 4 pies (LOFTYNOSE, JABBERJAW, MISS SWEETWATER, SHARPTONGUE)

SCENE 7:

- club (STORMBROW)

ACT TWO:

SCENE 1:

- rope with one end tied around Snaggleclaw (RUMBLEBELLY)
- pen (PERKY)

SCENE 2:

- note (PERKY)

SCENE 3:

- large crystal (LITTLE SPIKE)

SCENE 4:

- club (STORMBROW)
- large crystal (SNAGGLECLAW)

SCENE 5:

- 2 clubs (THUNDERFOOT, STORMBROW)
- several small rocks (SNAGGLECLAW)

SCENE 6:

- ferns (PLANT EATERS)
- suitcases (PLANT EATERS)
- backpacks (PLANT EATERS)

COSTUMES

Elaborate costumes are not recommended. This play is an allegory, and the power of that allegory is best served by using simple costumes that allow the actors to be seen as humans. Still, the audience may need help distinguishing between the different animal groups. This can be accomplished by dressing the actors in color-coded baseball caps and T-shirts: green for the plant eaters, gray for the meat eaters, brown for the mammals. Googly eyes on the caps are optional.

To individualize some of the characters, you might want to add the following:

PROFESSOR, DOCTOR — White lab coats.

GRAYTOOTH — White-haired wig, cane.

MAYOR — Long-tailed coat, red sash.

SOUND EFFECTS (Optional)

- Zap
- Explosion

LIGHTING EFFECTS (Optional)

- Spotlight or rotating light pattern (on crystals)
- Flashing lights (entire stage)

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

CHARACTER MOVEMENT: Instead of elaborate costumes, a better way to portray the animal nature of the characters is through movement. The plant eaters should walk across the stage slowly, swaying from side to side. The meat eaters have more of a bouncy gait and hold their arms curled and close to their bodies. The mammals scurry around the stage in short, quick steps while pawing nervously at their whiskers.

THE BOULDER: The boulder that appears in ACT TWO, SCENE 3 needs to be able to roll. You can make one by covering a large beach ball with papier-mâché and painting it gray. The boulder can then be rolled across the stage by one or two stagehands dressed in black. Alternatively, the boulder could be portrayed by an actor in costume. Either way, don't worry about the artificiality of it. This is theater. It's going to rock.

FLEXIBLE CASTING: All roles can be played by any gender with simple pronoun changes. The names of the characters are mostly unisex in order to facilitate this.

A smaller cast is not an option because all of the characters should appear in the final scene of the play.

For a larger cast, extra plant eaters and meat eaters can be added throughout the play. Feel free to reassign lines as needed.

Ideally, extra mammals should be added to the final scene to represent the proliferation of these animals after the asteroid struck. If necessary, you could exclude Stormbrow and Thunderfoot from the final scene, since they don't have any lines, and have the actors double as mammals instead.

PREMIERE PRODUCTION

The Real Reason Dinosaurs Went Extinct premiered at Standouts in Wellington, New Zealand on April 29, 2022. The production was under the direction of Gemma Shapleski with the following cast and crew:

MISS SWEETWATER	Emilia King
LITTLE SPIKE	Freya Sherwood
GABBY	Sabina Caino
BUSTER.....	Nico Baring
SNAGGLECLAW.....	Luke Steele
PROFESSOR BROADBEAK.....	Sarah Hay
DOCTOR DUCKBILL	Paige Field
THUNDERFOOT	Gus Scott
STORMBROW	Theo Fountain
JABBERJAW	Florence Kynaston
LOFTYNOSE.....	Imogen Oscroft
SHARPTONGUE.....	Jyoti Chapman-Marshall
GRAYTOOTH	Marlon Sinnott
MAYOR SPIKETAIL.....	Zakia Goddard
CRUSHER.....	Jamin Fountain
UMBERSNOUT	Aidan Cochran
RUMBLEBELLY	Lorna McDougall
PERKY	Sofia Sorenson
THICKSKULL.....	Finlay O'Neill
NIBBLER.....	Esther Oliver-Booth
WHISKERS.....	Minnie Bond

The original cast also included the following extras:

PLANT EATERS: Oscar Amataiti-Graves, Sophia Bartle, Rose Daish, Elspeth Hume, Louis Marshall, Rita Treadgold, Alex Spence

MEAT EATERS: Zara Amataiti-Graves, Emily Brookes, Ciaran Davin, Angus Hume, Finn Marshall, Emily May-Morgan

MAMMALS: Annie Anderson

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

AT START: *Lights up. MISS SWEETWATER teaches a class consisting of LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, BUSTER, and SNAGGLECLAW. She stands by the whiteboard, which has the word "FERNVILLE" written on it. Seated in their chairs, the STUDENTS chatter excitedly among themselves.*

MISS SWEETWATER: All right now, students. It's time to settle down. Class has begun. I said, class has begun!

LITTLE SPIKE: But Miss Sweetwater, we can't settle down! We're too excited about the celebration tomorrow!

MISS SWEETWATER: I'm glad you brought that up, Little Spike. That's what I wanted to talk about today. Can anyone tell me what we're going to celebrate tomorrow?

LITTLE SPIKE: *(Raises her hand.)* I know! I know!

MISS SWEETWATER: Gabby?

LITTLE SPIKE sags.

GABBY: The anniversary of the best hometown in the world, Fernville!

MISS SWEETWATER: That's right, Gabby. And who can tell me how old Fernville is going to be?

LITTLE SPIKE: Ooh! I know, Miss Sweetwater! Call on me! Call on me!

MISS SWEETWATER: Buster?

LITTLE SPIKE: Aw, man!

BUSTER: Eighty million years?

MISS SWEETWATER: That's right, Buster. Fernville is going to be eighty million years old tomorrow!

GABBY: That's a long time, isn't it, Miss Sweetwater?

MISS SWEETWATER: Yes, it is, Gabby. Things were very different when the town was founded.

BUSTER: My grandpa says everything was better back then. He says life was simpler and everyone helped each other out.

MISS SWEETWATER: Now, Buster, I know Graytooth is the oldest dinosaur in town, but I'm sure he's not eighty million years old.

BUSTER: Well, he sure talks like he is.

MISS SWEETWATER: Moving on. So tell me, students, what are some of the things that make Fernville such a wonderful place to live?

LITTLE SPIKE: Ooh! Ooh! Call on me, Miss Sweetwater! Please, please, please call on me!

MISS SWEETWATER: All right, Little Spike. Your turn.

LITTLE SPIKE: Mayor Spiketail!

BUSTER: You're just saying that because he's your dad, Little Spike!

LITTLE SPIKE: Am not!

BUSTER: Are too!

MISS SWEETWATER: I think we can all agree that Mayor Spiketail has done an excellent job governing our town. I'll write his name on the board.

Writes "MAYOR SPIKETAIL" on the whiteboard. LITTLE SPIKE sticks her tongue out at BUSTER. BUSTER sticks his tongue out at LITTLE SPIKE.

MISS SWEETWATER: What else makes our town so great?

GABBY: Lots of ferns to eat!

MISS SWEETWATER: Yes, we do have a lot of ferns to eat here, Gabby. But it's important to remember to eat from all four basic food groups: ferns, leaves, seeds, and twigs.

MISS SWEETWATER writes "TASTY PLANTS" on the whiteboard.

GABBY: Yuck! I hate twigs! They always get stuck in my teeth!

BUSTER: That's because you have nine hundred of them!

LITTLE SPIKE: It must take you all day to floss!

BUSTER and LITTLE SPIKE laugh.

MISS SWEETWATER: Stop it, you two. That's not very nice. Now what else can we add to the list?

BUSTER: No meat eaters!

MISS SWEETWATER: That's right, Buster. All the meat eaters live far away in a barren, rocky place called the Craggs.

MISS SWEETWATER writes “NO MEAT EATERS” on the whiteboard.

BUSTER: They'd better not come here. If they do, I'll jab them with my horn!

GABBY: And I'll scratch them with my claws!

LITTLE SPIKE: Don't worry. My pop says the meat eaters will never come here. There are too many of us!

MISS SWEETWATER: What about you, Snaggleclaw? Isn't there anything you'd like to add?

SNAGGLECLAW: (*Sad.*) No. Not really.

BUSTER: Snaggleclaw doesn't like living here because he's the biggest klutz in town.

MISS SWEETWATER: Now, Buster, you know that's not true.

BUSTER: Sure it is, Miss Sweetwater. Why, just yesterday, he spilled a whole pitcher of ginkgo juice in the cafeteria. Boy, were the lunch ladies mad!

LITTLE SPIKE: And the day before that, in gym class, Snaggleclaw smacked a turtleball right into Mr. Finhead's face and sent him to the hospital!

MISS SWEETWATER: Well, I'm sure those were just accidents. Weren't they, Snaggleclaw?

SNAGGLECLAW: I don't know, Miss Sweetwater. Maybe.

MISS SWEETWATER: Well, I've got exciting news to share. Since we're talking about the eighty millionth anniversary of Fernville, I thought I'd invite a special guest to speak to us today.

LITTLE SPIKE: Ooh! Ooh! Is it Mayor Spiketail?

MISS SWEETWATER: No, Little Spike. Not this time.

BUSTER: Is it my Grandpa Graytooth?

MISS SWEETWATER: No, Buster. It's not him either. Our special guest today is that famous scientist, Professor Broadbeak!

LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, and BUSTER laugh.

LITTLE SPIKE: Professor Broadbeak? What a joke!

BUSTER: My mom says he's a nutjob, always warning us about things that'll never happen!

GABBY: My mom says he's a busybody, always sticking his nose where it doesn't belong!

LITTLE SPIKE: Well, how can he help it, with that big snout of his?

LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, and BUSTER laugh.

SNAGGLECLAW: Stop it, all of you!

LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, and BUSTER stop laughing and stare at SNAGGLECLAW in shock.

SNAGGLECLAW: Professor Broadbeak is the smartest dinosaur in all Antarctica! They say his brain is as big as a tennis ball!

GABBY: Tennis ball? What's a tennis ball?

SNAGGLECLAW: I don't know. They haven't been invented yet. But they'll be bigger than a walnut, which is how big our brains are!

MISS SWEETWATER: That's enough, students. Now while it's true the professor can seem a bit eccentric at times, he promised me that today he won't act like a complete nutjob.

LITTLE SPIKE, BUSTER, and GABBY groan.

MISS SWEETWATER: All right then. If you don't want to hear from Professor Broadbeak, we can go over our math problems from yesterday.

GABBY: No, no! We'll listen!

BUSTER: Yeah, bring him in!

LITTLE SPIKE: We can't wait to hear his pearls of wisdom!

MISS SWEETWATER: I thought as much. *(Calls off SL.)* Oh, Professor Broadbeak! Can you come in, please? We're ready for you.

PROFESSOR: *(Enters SL, carrying a dinosaur model.)* Good morning, children! What bright, shining faces you all have!

MISS SWEETWATER: Students, please say hello to the professor.

LITTLE SPIKE, BUSTER, and GABBY: *(Mumbling.)* Hello, Professor.

SNAGGLECLAW: *(Excitedly.)* Good morning, Professor Broadbeak!

MISS SWEETWATER: Professor Broadbeak, we've been discussing the history of Fernville. Can you tell us what the world was like when it was founded?

PROFESSOR: Certainly, Miss Sweetwater. Fernville was founded at the very end of the Jurassic Period, when Brachiosaurus walked the earth and Archaeopteryxes filled the skies.

GABBY: And now we're in the Cretaceous Period!

PROFESSOR: That's right.

BUSTER: I heard that the Brachiosaurus was the tallest dinosaur ever.

PROFESSOR: No. That would be the Sauroposeidon, which lived forty million years later.

BUSTER: How tall was that?

PROFESSOR: Oh, about as tall as a mangrove tree. In fact, its neck was longer than the whole rest of its body, including the tail. Lucky for you, I just happened to bring a model of one. Would you like to see it?

LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, BUSTER, and SNAGGLECLAW respond excitedly.

PROFESSOR: Very well. I'll let you pass this around.

PROFESSOR hands the dinosaur model to BUSTER.

MISS SWEETWATER: Be careful, students! Don't break it!

BUSTER hands the model to GABBY.

PROFESSOR: Oh, don't worry about that, Miss Sweetwater. That model was carved out of solid granite. There's no way they could break it.

GABBY hands the model to SNAGGLECLAW, who drops it, causing it to break.

SNAGGLECLAW: Oops!

MISS SWEETWATER: Oh, no! Did you break it, Snaggleclaw?

SNAGGLECLAW: *(Holds up the broken pieces.)* I guess so, Miss Sweetwater.

PROFESSOR: *(Sighs.)* That's all right. I'll glue it back together. *(Takes the broken pieces and looks them over.)* Or something.

GABBY: Did you ever see a Sauroposeidon, Professor Broadbeak?

PROFESSOR: Oh, no. They died out long before I was born.

BUSTER: What was the biggest dinosaur you ever saw?

PROFESSOR: Well, that would have to be the Argentinosaurus. It was so big that it shook the ground when it walked.

GABBY: Oh, my gosh. Were you scared?

PROFESSOR: Of course. But not as scared as I was when a pack of Tyrannosauruses attacked it.

LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, BUSTER, and SNAGGLECLAW gasp.

BUSTER: Wow! What happened?

MISS SWEETWATER: *(Steps in front of PROFESSOR.)* Now, students, Professor Broadbeak doesn't have time to discuss his encounter with meat eaters—

PROFESSOR: *(Pushes past MISS SWEETWATER.)* Sure, I do. *(To the STUDENTS.)* The T. rexes came out of the forest and attacked the Argentinosaurus from all sides. The great beast fought back hard, but it was no match for a pack of wild, ravenous meat eaters!

MISS SWEETWATER: Please, Professor. I really don't think this is appropriate—

PROFESSOR: And if we're not careful, the same thing could happen here!

LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, BUSTER, and SNAGGLECLAW scream.

MISS SWEETWATER: *(Calls off SL.)* Thunderfoot! Stormbrow!

THUNDERFOOT and STORMBROW enter SL.

THUNDERFOOT: You called, Miss Sweetwater?

MISS SWEETWATER: Yes, Thunderfoot. Please escort this nutjob off the premises.

THUNDERFOOT: Gladly, Miss Sweetwater.

THUNDERFOOT and STORMBROW grab PROFESSOR. He struggles against them.

PROFESSOR: But we need to do something! If we don't start posting guards around Fernville, the meat eaters will devour us all!

LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, BUSTER, and SNAGGLECLAW scream.

STORMBROW: Be quiet, you loony! You're frightening the children!

PROFESSOR: I mean it! We're all in this together!

THUNDERFOOT and STORMBROW exit SL, dragging PROFESSOR with them.

MISS SWEETWATER: Oh, my goodness. Is everyone all right?

GABBY: Yes, Miss Sweetwater.

LITTLE SPIKE: We're just a little shaken up is all.

MISS SWEETWATER: *(Takes a deep breath.)* Okay then. Let's go over our math problems from yesterday, shall we?

LITTLE SPIKE, GABBY, BUSTER, and SNAGGLECLAW groan. Blackout.

ACT ONE, SCENE 2

AT START: *Lights up. DOCTOR peers through a telescope. PROFESSOR enters SR.*

PROFESSOR: Oh, how humiliating! How completely humiliating!

DOCTOR: *(Looks up from the telescope.)* What's the matter, Professor?

PROFESSOR: Tell me something, Doctor Duckbill. Would you consider me to be a serious dinosaur?

DOCTOR: Why, yes. You're one of the most serious dinosaurs I know.

PROFESSOR: And would you say I always conduct myself with the utmost dignity?

DOCTOR: Of course. I've never known you to conduct yourself with anything less than—Wait a minute. Were you acting like a nutjob again?

PROFESSOR: What? How dare you accuse me of such a thing! Me, the most celebrated scientist in Antarctica!

DOCTOR: All right then. What happened?

PROFESSOR: I got kicked out of Miss Sweetwater's class. But it was completely unfair. I have as much right to be there as the next nutjob!

DOCTOR: Don't tell me you started ranting about the meat eaters again!

PROFESSOR: Of course, I ranted about the meat eaters. Mark my words, Doctor. It's only a matter of time before they invade our town looking for something to eat. And guess what we're made of—meat!

DOCTOR: Look, I know the townsfolk can be stubborn and closed-minded, but you're never going to convince them to change their ways unless you stop losing your cool.

PROFESSOR: I resent that. I have never lost my cool. I know exactly where it is at all times!

SNAGGLECLAW: (*Enters SR, holding a simpler dinosaur model. He stops as if coming to a door.*) Hello, Professor Broadbeak? Are you there, Professor Broadbeak?

PROFESSOR: (*Ducks behind the telescope.*) Oh, no! It's him!

DOCTOR: Him? Who's him?

PROFESSOR: That kid at the door. His name's Snaggleclaw. He destroys everything he touches!

DOCTOR: He looks pretty harmless to me.

PROFESSOR: Harmless? Ha! About as harmless as a bulldozer.

DOCTOR: Bulldozer? What's a bulldozer?

PROFESSOR: I don't know. They haven't been invented yet. But they'll be very destructive!

DOCTOR: I'm going to answer the door.

PROFESSOR: All right, but if the lab crumbles into dust as soon as he steps inside, it's all your fault!

DOCTOR: (*Crosses to SNAGGLECLAW.*) Come in, my child. Come in.

SNAGGLECLAW: (*Steps forward.*) Hello. Is Professor Broadbeak here?

DOCTOR: I don't know. Let me check.

DOCTOR waves for PROFESSOR to come out from hiding. PROFESSOR shakes his head.

SNAGGLECLAW: Are you hiding from me, Professor?

PROFESSOR: *(Embarrassed.)* Hiding? Why, no! Of course not! I was just, um... adjusting this apparatus. *(Comes out from behind the telescope.)* What are you doing here?

SNAGGLECLAW: Well, I felt so bad about breaking your Sauroposeidon that I made you a new one. *(Holds out the model.)* I know it's not as good as yours, but I hoped it would make up for me breaking it.

PROFESSOR: *(Takes the model.)* Thank you, Snaggleclaw. That's very kind.

SNAGGLECLAW: *(Points at the telescope.)* What is that thing anyway?

DOCTOR: That? Oh, that's a telescope.

SNAGGLECLAW: Really? Cool! *(Pause.)* What's a telescope?

DOCTOR: It's an instrument that makes the stars in the sky look closer.

SNAGGLECLAW: Can I look through it?

DOCTOR: Why, certainly—

PROFESSOR: *(Blocks the telescope.)* No, no, no, no!

DOCTOR: What's the matter, Professor?

SNAGGLECLAW: He doesn't want me breaking it, I guess.

PROFESSOR: What? No, that's not it. It's just that—
(SNAGGLECLAW looks sad. PROFESSOR sighs.) Fine. You can look through it. Just be very, very, careful.

SNAGGLECLAW: Thanks, Professor! I will! *(Crosses to the telescope.)* What do I do with it?

DOCTOR: Just put your eye at the small end of the telescope and look through the big end.

SNAGGLECLAW: All right. *(Looks through the telescope.)* Oh, wow. I see some weird life form. It looks very scary, but also kind of crazy.

PROFESSOR: What?!! *(Realizes SNAGGLECLAW is looking at him. Steps away from the telescope.)* Oh, uh, never mind that. Try looking again.

SNAGGLECLAW: Oh, yes, I see now. Those lights in the sky look so big!

DOCTOR: Those aren't just lights, Snaggleclaw. Those are stars and planets. Worlds just like this one, only millions of miles away.

SNAGGLECLAW: What's that big white thing?

DOCTOR: That would be the moon.

SNAGGLECLAW: And what's that small reddish light to the left of it?

DOCTOR: That's the planet Mars.

SNAGGLECLAW: And what's that dim-looking object right below Mars?

PROFESSOR: Dim-looking object? Oh, it's probably just a smudge on the lens. The doctor likes to snack while she's stargazing.

DOCTOR: Sorry.

PROFESSOR: *(Wipes the lens with his sleeve.)* There. Take another look.

SNAGGLECLAW: Nope. It's still there.

PROFESSOR: What? *(Looks through the telescope.)* Well, that's funny. Maybe it's not a smudge. Maybe it's real.

DOCTOR: Let me see. *(Looks through the telescope.)* Oh, I saw that yesterday. I believe it's an asteroid, one of the thousands of rocks that orbit the sun. Except that yesterday it was only half that big.

PROFESSOR: That's odd. Asteroids don't grow.

DOCTOR: No, they don't.

PROFESSOR: Then why would it appear to be getting bigger?

SNAGGLECLAW: Maybe it ate too much?

PROFESSOR: No. Asteroids don't grow and they definitely don't eat. There must be another reason why it's getting bigger.

DOCTOR: I've got it! The asteroid must be getting closer.

PROFESSOR: Oh, that's very exciting! I've always wanted to see an asteroid up close.

DOCTOR: You don't understand, Professor. If the asteroid grew that much in one day, it must be hurtling toward us at a very high rate of speed.

PROFESSOR: Oh. *(Realizes.)* Oh!

SNAGGLECLAW: How long until it hits us?

PROFESSOR: I don't know. I'll have to calculate it. *(Grabs a pen and clipboard from the worktable.)* If we take the angle of velocity and multiply it by the square root of Jupiter and divide the whole thing into a week from Tuesday, we get—Oh, dear.

DOCTOR: What's the matter, Professor?

PROFESSOR: The asteroid is going to strike the earth in three days!

DOCTOR: Oh, no! That's horrible! (*Thinks.*) Wait. Maybe it's not that horrible. I mean, the earth is a pretty big place. The asteroid may not hit Fernville.

PROFESSOR: Doctor, it doesn't matter whether the asteroid hits Fernville or not. According to my calculations, that asteroid is traveling at a speed of twenty miles per second. If it strikes our planet at all, the impact will be earth-shattering. And I mean that quite literally!

SNAGGLECLAW: Gee, whiz. I've broken a lot of things in my life, but I never thought I'd break a whole planet.

PROFESSOR: It's not your fault, Snaggleclaw. You're just the one who spotted the asteroid.

DOCTOR: What are we going to do?

PROFESSOR: There's only one thing we can do. We have to warn the citizens of Fernville.

DOCTOR: But they're just going to laugh at you again.

PROFESSOR: No, they won't. I promise, not a single dinosaur will laugh at me.

DOCTOR: How can you be so sure?

PROFESSOR: Because you're going to tell them.

DOCTOR: Oh, no, no, no, no. I don't want to be a laughingstock.

PROFESSOR: But everyone respects you.

DOCTOR: Sure, they do now. But they won't after I tell them a flying rock is going to strike the earth and possibly end life as we know it.

PROFESSOR: Well, somebody's got to tell them.

SNAGGLECLAW: Why don't we tell them together? They can't laugh at all of us.

DOCTOR: That's true.

PROFESSOR: Surely, they'll believe three serious-minded scientists.

SNAGGLECLAW: Well, two serious-minded scientists and one clumsy kid.

DOCTOR: Well, one serious-minded scientist, one clumsy kid, and one nutjob.

PROFESSOR: Ooh, that word.

DOCTOR and SNAGGLECLAW laugh. PROFESSOR frowns, then laughs with them. Blackout.

ACT ONE, SCENE 3

AT START: *Lights up. JABBERJAW and LOFTYNOSE hang a banner that reads "HAPPY BIRTHDAY, FERNVILLE" between two trees.*

JABBERJAW: How about here?

LOFTYNOSE: Looks good to me.

They pin the banner into place, then stand back to admire their work.

JABBERJAW: Yep. That's just about perfect.

SHARPTONGUE: *(Enters SR.)* You need to hang that a little higher.

LOFTYNOSE: But it's already pretty high, Sharptongue.

SHARPTONGUE: I know, but the kids are going to be running through here soon. I don't want them knocking it down.

JABBERJAW: You heard her, Loftynose. Let's hang it a little higher.

LOFTYNOSE: *(Weary.)* All right, Jabberjaw.

JABBERJAW and LOFTYNOSE pin the banner higher.

JABBERJAW: Isn't this exciting? We haven't had a celebration in Fernville for so long.

LOFTYNOSE: I know. It feels good to get the whole town together and make a special day of it.

Shuffling slowly, GRAYTOOTH enters SL. He wears eyeglasses.

SHARPTONGUE: Hello, Old Graytooth.

JABBERJAW: Hi, Dad. I'm glad you could make it.

GRAYTOOTH: *(Squints up at the banner.)* Why did you hang that so high?

JABBERJAW: What? Sharptongue told us to!

LOFTYNOSE: Don't you like it?

GRAYTOOTH: No! It's so high up, I'll have to put on my spectacles just to read it!

SHARPTONGUE: But you're already wearing your spectacles!

GRAYTOOTH: *(Takes off his eyeglasses and examines them closely.)*

So that's where they got to! Guess I need a second pair of spectacles so I can find my first pair of spectacles. *(Puts his eyeglasses on again and settles onto the park bench.)*

JABBERJAW: Well, Loftynose, sounds like we'd better move it down.

LOFTYNOSE: *(Wearier.)* I guess so.

JABBERJAW and LOFTYNOSE pin the banner lower.

GRAYTOOTH: You know, when I was a hatchling, we didn't have time for parties and fancy decorations. We were too busy hunting for food, foraging for miles in the hot sun to find one lousy leaf.

JABBERJAW: I thought you said things were better back then.

GRAYTOOTH: Don't get smart with me! Things were better and worse. It all depends on how I'm feeling.

JABBERJAW: And how are you feeling today?

GRAYTOOTH: Miserable.

MAYOR: *(Enters SL.)* Greetings, fair citizens!

JABBERJAW: Oh, Mayor Spiketail! What do you think of our banner?

MAYOR: It's too low.

JABBERJAW and LOFTYNOSE groan.

LOFTYNOSE: But we just moved it down!

MAYOR: Well, move it back up. I want the banner to be seen all the way to the Crag!

JABBERJAW: *(Sighs.)* Yes, Mayor.

JABBERJAW and LOFTYNOSE pin the banner higher. NIBBLER enters SR. She scurries across the stage, stopping every so often to eat insects off the ground.

NIBBLER: *(To herself.)* Oh, this bug is good! And this bug is good! And this one is just the best! But I've got to keep moving. Always keep moving. Don't want to get stepped on. Not with these monsters around. Ooh, check out this bug! It looks so juicy! And this one looks juicy! And this one looks the absolute juiciest! *(Exits SL.)*

JABBERJAW: Whoa! Did you see that?

LOFTYNOSE: I saw it, all right, but I don't believe it.

SHARPTONGUE: What was that thing?

MAYOR: That must be one of those newfangled animals Doctor Duckbill told me about. I believe it's called a mammal.

JABBERJAW: But it didn't have any scales at all!

LOFTYNOSE: I know. Its body was covered with some long, stringy things.

SHARPTONGUE: What good are those? They couldn't possibly protect you.

JABBERJAW: Indeed. The creature didn't have any protection at all. No armor, no horns, no spikes. Nothing.

LOFTYNOSE: It was completely defenseless.

JABBERJAW: And tiny! So tiny!

SHARPTONGUE: How does it even survive?

MAYOR: Don't worry. I'm sure those creatures will go extinct long before we do.

JABBERJAW: Well, I should hope so!

LOFTYNOSE: Useless little creatures.

SHARPTONGUE: Worse than useless. They're absolutely repulsive!

JABBERJAW: *(Looks off SL.)* Uh oh.

LOFTYNOSE: What's the matter?

JABBERJAW: That nutjob professor is coming this way.

LOFTYNOSE: Oh, no! Didn't he already cause enough trouble at school?

SHARPTONGUE: Why? What happened at school?

LOFTYNOSE: My daughter Gabby said he frightened all the students by telling them the meat eaters are going to attack the town!

SHARPTONGUE: Again with the meat eaters? Doesn't he know how ridiculous he sounds?

JABBERJAW: No kidding. The meat eaters haven't attacked us yet and you can bet they never will.

MAYOR: Fear not, fair citizens. I know how to handle nutjobs like these.

PROFESSOR, DOCTOR, and SNAGGLECLAW enter SL. MAYOR blocks their way.

MAYOR: Stop right there.

PROFESSOR: Mayor Spiketail, I'm glad you're here. We have some very important news to share with the townsfolk.

MAYOR: Well, I'm sorry, but we're all very busy right now. Can't you come back at a later time, say three or four years?

PROFESSOR: We would if we could, Mayor, but we can't. We have to tell them now.

MAYOR: Oh, no, you don't. We've had enough of your foolish predictions and warnings. Unless this one means the end of life as we know it, we simply don't care.

SNAGGLECLAW: Ha ha. Funny you should mention that.

PROFESSOR: It does mean the end of life as we know it.

MAYOR: What?!

DOCTOR: We don't wish to alarm you, Mayor, but an asteroid is hurtling toward us at a very high rate of speed.

MAYOR: And what, pray tell, is an asteroid?

DOCTOR: It's basically a rock in space.

GRAYTOOTH: Get a load of the "scientists," everyone! They're afraid of a little rock!

GRAYTOOTH, JABBERJAW, LOFTYNOSE, SHARPTONGUE, and MAYOR laugh.

DOCTOR: But it isn't a little rock. It's actually quite large, about five or six miles across.

JABBERJAW: Well, which is it, Doctor? Five or six? It can't possibly be both!

DOCTOR: Look, its precise size isn't important. What's important is that it's headed directly toward the earth!

LOFTYNOSE: Well, even if it does strike the earth, what are the chances it'll strike one of us?

DOCTOR: That's not the point. If the asteroid strikes the earth at all, it'll cause massive devastation.

PROFESSOR: Earthquakes! Tsunamis! Shock waves! Wildfires! Thermal radiation!

SHARPTONGUE: Oh, come on. You're just sensationalizing things.

JABBERJAW: It couldn't possibly be that bad.

PROFESSOR: Fine. If you don't believe us, take a look for yourselves. Our telescope will show you.

GRAYTOOTH: Nothing doing. If I can't see it with my own two eyes, it doesn't exist.

PROFESSOR: But it's real, I tell you! It's real!

MAYOR: Now you listen to me, Professor. All this talk about asteroids and earthquakes and the end of the world is a real downer. Today is the eighty millionth anniversary of Fernville. We should be celebrating!

PROFESSOR: No! We should be stopping the asteroid!

MAYOR: Tell me, Professor. How exactly do you expect us to do that?

PROFESSOR: Oh, well, um, we haven't actually thought that far.

MAYOR: Then please excuse us, Professor. We have a celebration to prepare for. Good day.

PROFESSOR: But, but—

MAYOR: I said, good day!

DOCTOR: (*Gloomy.*) Good day, Mayor Spiketail.

DOCTOR exits SL, dragging PROFESSOR with her. SNAGGLECLAW exits SL after them.

GRAYTOOTH: If you ask me, they're all nutjobs!

JABBERJAW: I agree. First it was the meat eaters. Now it's a rock hitting the earth! Oh, I'm sorry. An "asteroid."

LOFTYNOSE: Hey, look, everybody! A giant space rock is hurtling toward me! (*Pretends to get hit. GRAYTOOTH, JABBERJAW, SHARPTONGUE, and MAYOR laugh.*)

MAYOR: Good one, Loftynose. Now let's get back to work. We're all in this together, you know.

Blackout.

ACT ONE, SCENE 4

AT START: *Lights up. RUMBLEBELLY, PERKY, UMBERSNOUT, and THICKSKULL lounge around.*

RUMBLEBELLY: I'm hungry.

PERKY: Rumblebelly, you're always hungry.

RUMBLEBELLY: Hey, can I help it if I have a fast metabolism?

PERKY: How can you have a fast metabolism? You never do anything.

RUMBLEBELLY: What do you mean I never do anything? I do a lot of things!

PERKY: Oh, yeah? What are you doing right now?

RUMBLEBELLY: Dreaming about my next meal.

RUMBLEBELLY closes his eyes and sighs. PERKY shakes her head.

UMBERSNOUT: What's taking Crusher so long? He should have been back by now.

THICKSKULL: I sure hope he brings us some good grub.

RUMBLEBELLY: I know. I could really go for a nice Ankylosaurus right now.

UMBERSNOUT: Not me. The last time I tried to eat one of those, I got a spike right in my eye.

THICKSKULL: And they're so hard to chew. They've got all those armored plates!

PERKY: Yeah. Ankylosauruses are a lot of work. I'm not sure they're worth the effort.

UMBERSNOUT: Give me a good old-fashioned hadrosaur any day. They're slow, they're plump, and they don't have any plates or spikes.

PERKY: But their meat tastes terrible. Yuck!

RUMBLEBELLY: I'll tell you what makes a good snack. Microceratops.

UMBERSNOUT: Oh, yeah. The problem with those is you can't stop eating them.

RUMBLEBELLY: I know, right? You tell yourself you're going to eat just one and before you know it, the whole herd is gone.

UMBERSNOUT: What I wouldn't give for just one bite of a Gallimimus.

THICKSKULL: What do those taste like, Umbersnout?

UMBERSNOUT: Chicken.

THICKSKULL: Chicken? What's a chicken?

UMBERSNOUT: I don't know. They haven't appeared yet. But they're going to be delicious!

PERKY: Hey, you know what would taste good right now? A nice, crisp fern.

RUMBLEBELLY, UMBERSNOUT, and THICKSKULL look disgusted.

RUMBLEBELLY: A fern?

UMBERSNOUT: What are you? Some kind of herbivore?

PERKY: What? No! I love meat! I just think that sometimes, you know, we might want to supplement our diet with an occasional fern or leaf. I mean, look how easy the plant eaters have it. They don't have to hunt for their next meal. The whole world is their dinner plate!

RUMBLEBELLY: I can't believe I'm hearing this.

UMBERSNOUT: There's something wrong with her, I tell you.

THICKSKULL: Perky's an omnivore! Perky's an omnivore!

CRUSHER enters SR, stomping his feet and roaring. RUMBLEBELLY, PERKY, UMBERSNOUT, and THICKSKULL fall silent.

CRUSHER: Did I hear somebody say the "O" word?

PERKY: Uh, no, boss. I don't know what they're talking about.

CRUSHER: Good. Because I'd hate to have to stomp someone into little pieces, which is what I do to meat eaters who go soft.

UMBERSNOUT: Yeah, Perky. You'd better not go soft!

PERKY: (*Nervous.*) Not m-m-me! I'm tough as r-r-r-rocks!

CRUSHER: (*Sarcastic.*) Sure, you are.

THICKSKULL: Hey, boss. Did you bring us any food?

CRUSHER: Did I bring you any food? What do you think this is? A five-star restaurant? You're a Tyrannosaurus rex, king of the dinosaurs. You need to get your own food!

THICKSKULL: But we've tried, boss. We've really tried.

RUMBLEBELLY: It's getting harder and harder to catch anything. I think this area is all tapped out.

CRUSHER: Oh, boo hoo! Things are tough around here? Well, guess what. Things are tough all over!

UMBERSNOUT: You tell them, boss!

PERKY: Things aren't tough in Fernville. In Fernville, they have all the food they can eat!

RUMBLEBELLY: Oh, man. Just thinking about those big, juicy sauropods makes my mouth water.

THICKSKULL: Hey, why don't we attack those guys?

CRUSHER: Attack Fernville? Are you crazy? There must be a hundred plant eaters there. As soon as they saw us coming, they'd be ready with their horns and their spikes and their whiplike tails!

THICKSKULL: Then let's attack them when they don't see us coming.

UMBERSNOUT: Aw, you're crazy!

CRUSHER: Wait a minute. Thickskull might have a point.

UMBERSNOUT: He does?

THICKSKULL: I do?

CRUSHER: Sure. We could wait until the plant eaters are distracted, then launch a surprise attack.

UMBERSNOUT: Great idea, Thickskull!

CRUSHER: I didn't say it was a great idea.

UMBERSNOUT: Mediocre idea, Thickskull.

THICKSKULL: Thanks. I think.

RUMBLEBELLY: *(Crosses to SL. Peers off SL.)* Hey, boss. Check this out. It looks like the plant eaters are up to something!

CRUSHER: What? Let me see. *(Crosses to SL. Peers off SL.)* Hey, you're right! They're putting up some kind of banner. I can make it out all the way from here.

PERKY: What does it say? What does it say?

CRUSHER: I don't know. Meat eaters can't read. But I bet they're having a celebration.

RUMBLEBELLY: Hey, boss. Why don't we wait until the celebration starts and attack them then?

CRUSHER: Yeah, that would definitely take them by surprise. If we moved fast enough, we might be able to catch two or three stragglers before they knew what hit them.

RUMBLEBELLY: And bring them back here to eat!

THICKSKULL: Yum!

UMBERSNOUT: A feast of fresh sauropod!

PERKY: With a nice garden salad on the side. (*CRUSHER, RUMBLEBELLY, UMBERSNOUT, and THICKSKULL shake their heads and Exit SL.*) What? It's a joke. A joke!

PERKY exits SL. Blackout.

ACT ONE, SCENE 5

AT START: *Lights up. DOCTOR, PROFESSOR, and SNAGGLECLAW stand around looking depressed. A small crystal is on the worktable, opposite from the telescope.*

DOCTOR: I hate to admit it, but the mayor's right. There's no point warning the townsfolk about the asteroid unless we plan to do something about it.

PROFESSOR: But what can we do? The asteroid is somewhere up there and we're all the way down here.

DOCTOR: Well, we can't give up so easily. We're scientists. We should be able to figure something out.

PROFESSOR: You're right. Let's use our gray matter to come up with a scientific solution. (*PROFESSOR, DOCTOR, and SNAGGLECLAW pace in a circle, grunt, and scratch their heads. DOCTOR and SNAGGLECLAW stop when PROFESSOR stops.*) Wait a minute. I've got an idea!

SNAGGLECLAW: Ooh! Ooh! What is it?

DOCTOR: Yes, yes! Please tell us!

PROFESSOR: What if we shot a rocket at the asteroid and knocked it off course?

DOCTOR: That's a great idea, Professor. Unfortunately, there's one minor drawback.

PROFESSOR: What's that?

DOCTOR: Rockets haven't been invented yet.

PROFESSOR: Oh, right. I forgot about that.

SNAGGLECLAW: Back to the old drawing board, I guess.

PROFESSOR, DOCTOR, and SNAGGLECLAW sigh and return to pacing, grunting, and scratching their heads. PROFESSOR and SNAGGLECLAW stop when DOCTOR stops.

DOCTOR: Ooh! Ooh! I think I've got it!

PROFESSOR: What is it, Doctor?

SNAGGLECLAW: We can't wait to hear it!

DOCTOR: All right. Picture this. We take the world's biggest pillow and place it right where the asteroid is going to land. Then when the asteroid hits it—boom!—the pillow absorbs all its energy, softening the blow.

SNAGGLECLAW: Ooh. I like that idea.

PROFESSOR: Unfortunately, that's not going to work either.

DOCTOR: Why not?

PROFESSOR: Because pillows haven't been invented yet.

DOCTOR: I knew it was too good to be true.

PROFESSOR, DOCTOR, and SNAGGLECLAW sigh and return to pacing, grunting, and scratching their heads. PROFESSOR and DOCTOR stop when SNAGGLECLAW stops.

SNAGGLECLAW: You know something? I don't think I have the energy to pace anymore.

PROFESSOR: Me neither.

DOCTOR: Let's stop.

PROFESSOR, DOCTOR, and SNAGGLECLAW stop and sigh. Shine a spotlight or rotating light pattern on the crystal to make it appear to glow.

SNAGGLECLAW: Whoa! What's that bright light?

DOCTOR: What bright light?

SNAGGLECLAW: The one shining in my face. It's hurting my eyes.

DOCTOR: Oh, that's coming from one of our phosphorescent crystals.

We charge them up in the sunlight during the day and use them to provide light all night.

SNAGGLECLAW: Can you make the light any brighter?

DOCTOR: Well, I suppose. But wouldn't that hurt your eyes even more?

SNAGGLECLAW: I'm not thinking about my eyes. I'm thinking about the asteroid.

DOCTOR: The asteroid?

SNAGGLECLAW: Yes. Suppose we could charge up the crystal real nice and bright, then focus the beam on the asteroid and destroy it before it reaches earth.

DOCTOR: Blast the asteroid while it's still in space? Sounds crazy!

PROFESSOR: Yes, but sometimes crazy is just what we need!

DOCTOR: Well, we can certainly try an experiment. (*Crosses to the telescope.*) Snaggleclaw, could you bring me the crystal?

SNAGGLECLAW: Sure thing, Doc. (*Picks up the crystal. Stumbles as he crosses to DOCTOR.*) Oops!

DOCTOR: No! Don't drop it!

PROFESSOR: It'll shatter into a million pieces!

SNAGGLECLAW falls but manages to prevent the crystal from hitting the ground.

DOCTOR: Are you all right, Snaggleclaw? (*Helps SNAGGLECLAW to his feet. SNAGGLECLAW sets the crystal next to the telescope.*)

SNAGGLECLAW: Yeah. I'm just glad it didn't hit the ground.

DOCTOR: Me too.

PROFESSOR: You know what? Maybe we should try the experiment later.

DOCTOR: Yes. That would be better.

SNAGGLECLAW: I get it. You don't want me messing things up.

PROFESSOR: No, no! It's just that we need time to prepare the crystal.

DOCTOR: Yes. We need to, um, charge it up first.

PROFESSOR: That's right! We wouldn't want to run the experiment with an uncharged crystal.

SNAGGLECLAW: I suppose. Can I come back tomorrow?

DOCTOR: Of course, you can.

PROFESSOR: We won't start the experiment without you.

SNAGGLECLAW: All right. See you then. (*Exits SR.*)

PROFESSOR: Whew! That was a close one!

DOCTOR: Indeed. I thought the crystal was a goner!

PROFESSOR: Are you ready to run the experiment, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Never been readier, Professor!

DOCTOR points the big end of the telescope toward the crystal.

PROFESSOR adjusts the position of the crystal accordingly. Blackout.

ACT ONE, SCENE 6

AT START: *Lights up. The banner hangs high above a podium. LOFTYNOSE sets a pie on a card table. GABBY, BUSTER, and LITTLE SPIKE play hide-and-seek. GABBY and BUSTER are hiding while LITTLE SPIKE stands against a tree with her eyes closed. JABBERJAW and GRAYTOOTH enter SL. JABBERJAW carries a pie.*

JABBERJAW: Come along, Dad. The festivities are about to begin.

GRAYTOOTH: Are there going to be fireworks?

JABBERJAW: Of course, there are going to be fireworks. It wouldn't be a celebration without them!

GRAYTOOTH: Well, tell them to keep it down. It's almost my naptime.

JABBERJAW: I'll do what I can. *(Helps GRAYTOOTH settle onto the park bench.)* How's that, Dad?

GRAYTOOTH: *(Looks up at the banner.)* Fine, but I still say you hung that banner too high.

Shaking her head, JABBERJAW crosses to the card table, where she sets her pie. GRAYTOOTH nods off.

LITTLE SPIKE: Ninety-eight! Ninety-nine! One hundred! Ready or not, here I come! *(Opens her eyes and turns around. She sees BUSTER, who is plodding away.)*

BUSTER: Aw, not again!

LITTLE SPIKE: *(Tags BUSTER.)* Ha ha! You're it!

BUSTER: Little Spike, you've got to give me more time to hide!

LITTLE SPIKE: I counted to a hundred. How much time do you need?

BUSTER: More than that. I'm a sauropod. I can't move faster than a shuffle.

GABBY: Buster, we're all sauropods. None of us can move faster than a shuffle.

SNAGGLECLAW enters SL, deep in thought.

LITTLE SPIKE: What's the matter, Snaggleclaw? You look a little sad.

SNAGGLECLAW: Huh? Oh, no. I'm not sad. I've just got a lot to think about, I guess.

GABBY: This isn't a day for thinking, silly. This is a day for having fun!

LITTLE SPIKE: Why don't you join us?

SNAGGLECLAW: You want me to play with you?

LITTLE SPIKE: Sure. I mean, you can't be any worse than Buster.

BUSTER: Hey!

GABBY: Wait a minute, Little Spike. I don't know if we want that klutz joining us.

BUSTER: Yeah, he may wreck something.

LITTLE SPIKE: We're playing hide-and-seek. What's he going to wreck?

BUSTER: All right, but he's got to be "it."

LITTLE SPIKE: Fine. Snaggleclaw? Why don't you go over to that tree and count while we hide? When you get to a hundred, you can turn around and look for us.

SNAGGLECLAW: Okay. *(Crosses to a tree and closes his eyes.)*
One. Two. Three. Four...

GABBY, BUSTER, and LITTLE SPIKE hide behind the podium.

BUSTER: Hey, I wanted to hide here!

GABBY: Well, I got here first!

LITTLE SPIKE: Keep it down! He's going to hear us!

MISS SWEETWATER enters SR with a pie and sets it on the card table.

LOFTYNOSE: Miss Sweetwater! I didn't know you were going to enter the pie baking contest.

MISS SWEETWATER: Oh, yes. I decided to make an old recipe of my great-granddinosaur's. It's a eucalyptus pie.

LOFTYNOSE: Heavens! I don't think I could ever make a eucalyptus pie.

MISS SWEETWATER: Oh, the recipe isn't difficult at all.

LOFTYNOSE: The recipe isn't the problem. It's the leaves. Eucalyptus trees are so tall I could never reach them!

MISS SWEETWATER: Well, my Uncle Max is a titanosaur so I just let him reach up with his long neck and get them down.

LOFTYNOSE: It sure would be nice to have a titanosaur in the family. Sadly, everyone in my family are shorties.

MISS SWEETWATER: Well, I'm sure your ginkgo pie will be very good.

LOFTYNOSE: Are you kidding? I can't reach ginkgo leaves either.

MISS SWEETWATER: Then what did you put in your pie?

LOFTYNOSE: Oh, some of those spiky new green things that keep popping up all over.

JABBERJAW: (*Disgusted.*) Do you mean grass?

LOFTYNOSE: Yes! That's what it's called.

JABBERJAW: I'm sorry, but I can't eat anything off the ground. It's so unsanitary. All those meat eaters walking around with their dirty feet!

LOFTYNOSE: Please, don't even mention those horrible creatures. It'll put a damper on the whole celebration.

JABBERJAW: Don't worry, Loftynose. The meat eaters wouldn't dare bother us today.

SHARPTONGUE enters SR, limping and carrying a pie. She sets it on the card table.

LOFTYNOSE: Sharptongue, what happened to you?

SHARPTONGUE: Wouldn't you know it? I got stuck in the blasted tar pit again!

MISS SWEETWATER: Oh, no! That's terrible!

LOFTYNOSE: You know, you really ought to move to a better neighborhood. Those tar pits can be dangerous!

JABBERJAW: So how did you get out?

SHARPTONGUE: Oh, the usual way. I waited until a titanosaur got stuck in it and climbed out on his neck.

MISS SWEETWATER: Oh, no! Uncle Max!

Alarmed, MISS SWEETWATER exits SR. NIBBLER and WHISKERS enter SL. They pick insects off the ground and eat them.

NIBBLER: See, Whiskers? Didn't I tell you these bugs were delicious?

WHISKERS: And so many of them! Why, they're crawling all over the place!

NIBBLER: I'm telling you, these big blowhards don't know what they're missing. All they eat are plants.

WHISKERS: Well, sure, but don't you ever worry about getting trampled?

NIBBLER: No. You've just got to keep your eye on them and be ready to scoot out of their way.

WHISKERS: Uh oh. Here comes one now.

JABBERJAW takes a plodding step toward them. NIBBLER and WHISKERS scurry over to SR.

JABBERJAW: Yuck! There are those repulsive creatures again.

LOFTYNOSE: What are they doing?

JABBERJAW: They're eating bugs. Can you imagine?

SHARPTONGUE: How disgusting! Not even the meat eaters do that!

JABBERJAW: And that's not all. I've heard that some of them actually live in the ground!

LOFTYNOSE: The ground? How can they even do that? Isn't the ground all hard?

JABBERJAW: Get this. They dig holes with their claws. And then they crawl inside, like they're trying to hide!

LOFTYNOSE: What? Do they think there's going to be another ice age or something?

JABBERJAW: I don't know. All I know is there seems to be more and more of them every day.

SHARPTONGUE: If you ask me, they should all be sent back to where they came from.

LOFTYNOSE: Where did they come from, by the way?

SHARPTONGUE: Somewhere up north, I believe.

JABBERJAW: Sharptongue, darling, we live in Antarctica. Every direction is north.

SHARPTONGUE: Well, they can keep heading south, for all I care.

NIBBLER and WHISKERS exit SR. MAYOR enters SL.

JABBERJAW: Oh, look. The mayor has arrived.

SHARPTONGUE: Well, it's about time! I thought we'd never get started.

LOFTYNOSE: Where is my Gabby? I told her to stay close to me.

JABBERJAW: And my Buster. I swear he was right here!

LOFTYNOSE and JABBERJAW go to look for their children. GABBY, BUSTER, and LITTLE SPIKE are still hiding behind the podium.

BUSTER: Stop pushing!

GABBY: I'm not pushing! You're pushing! (*Pushes BUSTER out from behind the podium.*)

SNAGGLECLAW: Ready or not, here I come! (*Opens his eyes and turns around. Seeing BUSTER, SNAGGLECLAW tags him.*) You're it, Buster!

BUSTER: Aw, man!

MAYOR: (*Crosses to the podium.*) Little Spike, I must insist that you conduct this foolishness elsewhere! My podium is not a playground!

LITTLE SPIKE: Come on, guys. Let's continue the game somewhere else.

SNAGGLECLAW: All right.

LITTLE SPIKE and SNAGGLECLAW hide behind two of the trees. GABBY and BUSTER are pulled aside by LOFTYNOSE and JABBERJAW.

LOFTYNOSE: Gabby, you get over here!

JABBERJAW: You too, Buster! Mayor Spiketail is about to speak.

BUSTER: Aw, Mom! I don't want to listen to some boring old speech!

JABBERJAW: Well, I don't want to either, but if I have to listen to it, you have to listen to it!

MAYOR takes his place behind the podium. LOFTYNOSE, GABBY, JABBERJAW, BUSTER, and SHARPTONGUE find places to stand and listen to MAYOR.

MAYOR: Greetings, fair citizens! May I be the first to wish you all a very happy eighty millionth birthday! Well, I don't mean you individually. That would be silly! I mean the town, of course! (*LOFTYNOSE, JABBERJAW, and SHARPTONGUE chuckle politely. GABBY and BUSTER roll their eyes.*) As citizens of Fernville, we can take pride in the fact that our fine town has lasted so long. Truly this is a testament to our strength, our courage, and our willingness to work together. Oh, we've had our challenges. There was the volcanic eruption of seventy-five million B.C. Of course, we lost a few citizens in that, but only the slow ones so it was all right. Then there was the tar pit incident of sixty-eight million B.C., but it only took out the dumb ones so that was even better.

SHARPTONGUE: Hey!

MAYOR: As we look to the future, we can expect to face additional challenges, some of which we can't even imagine today. But I promise you this. No matter what challenges we face, we will survive. And do you know why? Because we're all in this—

MAYOR's words are drowned out as CRUSHER, RUMBLEBELLY, UMBERSNOUT, THICKSKULL, and PERKY roar off SR. They enter SR, stomping their feet. LOFTYNOSE, GABBY, JABBERJAW, BUSTER, SHARPTONGUE, and MAYOR scream. GRAYTOOTH remains asleep.

JABBERJAW: Oh, no! Meat eaters!

LOFTYNOSE: Mayor! What should we do?

MAYOR: (*Calm.*) The only thing we can do. (*Panics.*) Run!

LOFTYNOSE, GABBY, JABBERJAW, BUSTER, SHARPTONGUE, and MAYOR scream as CRUSHER, RUMBLEBELLY, UMBERSNOUT, THICKSKULL, and PERKY chase them. They ALL exit SL. SNAGGLECLAW and LITTLE SPIKE come out from hiding.

LITTLE SPIKE: This is terrible, Snaggleclaw! The meat eaters are going to eat the whole town!

SNAGGLECLAW: We've got to do something!

LITTLE SPIKE: But what can we do? We're just kids!

LOFTYNOSE, GABBY, JABBERJAW, BUSTER, SHARPTONGUE, and MAYOR enter SL, screaming as they're chased by CRUSHER, RUMBLEBELLY, UMBERSNOUT, THICKSKULL, and PERKY. They ALL exit SR.

SNAGGLECLAW: *(Looks around and sees palm leaves on the ground.)* I've got an idea. *(Picks up palm leaves.)*

LITTLE SPIKE: What are you going to do with those?

SNAGGLECLAW: Just watch. *(Rolls palm leaves into megaphones.)*

LITTLE SPIKE: I don't get it.

SNAGGLECLAW: *(Looks off SR.)* Uh oh! They're coming back again!

LITTLE SPIKE: But—

SNAGGLECLAW: Here! Take one!

LITTLE SPIKE takes a megaphone and they both hide behind trees. LOFTYNOSE, GABBY, JABBERJAW, BUSTER, SHARPTONGUE, and MAYOR enter SR, screaming as they're chased by CRUSHER, RUMBLEBELLY, UMBERSNOUT, THICKSKULL, and PERKY.

SNAGGLECLAW: *(Through the megaphone.)* Roooaaarr!

LITTLE SPIKE: Oh, I get it! *(Through the megaphone.)* Roooaaarr!

LOFTYNOSE, GABBY, JABBERJAW, BUSTER, SHARPTONGUE, and MAYOR exit SL. CRUSHER, RUMBLEBELLY, UMBERSNOUT, THICKSKULL, and PERKY stop at CS.

RUMBLEBELLY: What a minute. What's that sound?

CRUSHER: What sound?

SNAGGLECLAW: Roooaaarr!

LITTLE SPIKE: Roooaaarr!

UMBERSNOUT: That sounds scary!

PERKY: Yeah, like some large, meat-eating animals!

CRUSHER: Who cares? We're large, meat-eating animals!

SNAGGLECLAW: Roooaaarr!

LITTLE SPIKE: Roooaaarr!

THICKSKULL: I don't know, boss. They sound a lot bigger than us!

CRUSHER: Are you kidding me? We've got the run of the whole town and you're scared of a little sound?

SNAGGLECLAW: Roooaaarr!

LITTLE SPIKE: Roooaaarr!

RUMBLEBELLY: You'd better believe it!

UMBERSNOUT: I'm getting out of here!

PERKY: Me too!

THICKSKULL: Sorry, boss!

RUMBLEBELLY, UMBERSNOUT, THICKSKULL, and PERKY exit SR, running. PERKY enters SR and runs over to the pies.

PERKY: Almost forgot these! (*Grabs the pies and exits SR, running.*)

CRUSHER: Unbelievable!

CRUSHER exits SR. SNAGGLECLAW and LITTLE SPIKE come out from hiding.

SNAGGLECLAW: Woohoo! We did it!

LITTLE SPIKE: Give me five!

SNAGGLECLAW and LITTLE SPIKE high five each other.

SNAGGLECLAW: Ow! Your claws are really sharp!

LITTLE SPIKE: So are yours!

SNAGGLECLAW and LITTLE SPIKE massage their hands. LOFTYNOSE, GABBY, JABBERJAW, BUSTER, SHARPTONGUE, and MAYOR hesitantly enter SL.

JABBERJAW: Oh, my!

LOFTYNOSE: Are they gone?

MAYOR: Of course, they're gone. After all, it was my swift and forceful response that frightened them off!

LOFTYNOSE: Well, this shouldn't have happened in the first place!

SHARPTONGUE: Why didn't anyone warn us this would happen?

LITTLE SPIKE: Actually, someone did.

SHARPTONGUE: Who, may I ask, did that?

LITTLE SPIKE: Professor Broadbeak. Yesterday he came to our class and warned us that the meat eaters would attack Fernville someday and no one believed him.

SHARPTONGUE: Well, who knows what to believe where he's concerned? He's been wrong so many times he's like the boy who cried wolf.

LOFTYNOSE: Wolf? What's a wolf?

SHARPTONGUE: I don't know. They haven't appeared yet. But it's not something you want to cry.

MAYOR: Even worse, Professor Broadbeak has stirred up the populace and caused unnecessary panic.

LITTLE SPIKE: All he said was that we should post guards around the town. And do you know what? He was right!

MAYOR: As Mayor of Fernville, I could never condone the posting of guards. It would be an extravagant expense and would only remind us of how unsafe we are.

JABBERJAW: I don't know. It might be nice to have a couple of guards around.

LOFTYNOSE: Indeed. We need someone to keep an eye on those meat eaters.

SHARPTONGUE: If they raised an alarm, it would give us a chance to defend ourselves.

MAYOR: As I was saying, guards are a critical component of our town's security system and I vow to search high and low until I find the best. *(Looks around. Calls loudly.)* Thunderfoot! Stormbrow!

THUNDERFOOT and STORMBROW enter SL.

THUNDERFOOT: You called, Your Majesty?

STORMBROW: He's not a majesty. He's just a mayor.

MAYOR: That's okay. He can call me whatever he wants.

THICKSKULL: See?

STORMBROW: Oh, brother.

MAYOR: *(Clears throat.)* In the interest of guaranteeing the security of our citizens, I've decided to appoint you two town guards.

THICKSKULL: Really? That's great!

STORMBROW: What do we have to do?

MAYOR: You have to keep an eye out for the meat eaters. If you see them coming to attack Fernville again, you have to alert the town.

THUNDERFOOT: What if the meat eaters don't come?

MAYOR: Then you don't have to do anything.

THUNDERFOOT: So we don't have to stand guard?

MAYOR: No! You still have to stand guard!

THUNDERFOOT: But we don't have to do anything else?

MAYOR: No.

THUNDERFOOT: Gee, sounds like we've been guards for years.

STORMBROW: Where do you want us to be, Mayor?

MAYOR: Stormbrow, I want you to guard the east side of town. Thunderfoot, you can guard the west.

SNAGGLECLAW: Uh, Mr. Mayor, sir? May I suggest that one of them guard the lab instead?

MAYOR: The lab? Why would I post a guard there?

SNAGGLECLAW: Because Professor Broadbeak and Doctor Duckbill are the smartest dinosaurs in all Antarctica. It would be terrible if anything happened to them.

MAYOR: Sorry. You need to make a better argument than that.

SNAGGLECLAW: All right then. Look at it this way. Professor Broadbeak is less likely to act like a nutjob if there's a guard watching him.

MAYOR: Good point. Stormbrow, I've changed my mind. I want you to guard the lab. Thunderfoot, you can guard the rest of the town.

STORMBROW: We're on our way, your "majesty."

MAYOR: You know, it sounds a lot more convincing when he says it. *(Indicates THUNDERFOOT. STORMBROW exits SL. THUNDERFOOT exits SR.)* All right. Now that that's settled, we can finally start the most important part of the festivities. The pie judging! *(Sees the empty card table.)* Wait a minute. What happened to the pies?

JABBERJAW: I don't know. They were here a minute ago.

LOFTYNOSE: Maybe the meat eaters took them.

SHARPTONGUE: Why would the meat eaters take them? They're meat eaters. Not pie eaters!

MAYOR: Now this is a crisis! Come on, everyone. We've got to find those pies!

Alarmed, LOFTYNOSE, GABBY, MAYOR, and LITTLE SPIKE exit SR. JABBERJAW, BUSTER, SHARPTONGUE, and SNAGGLECLAW exit SL.

GRAYTOOTH: *(Wakes.)* Did I miss anything?

Blackout.

ACT ONE, SCENE 7

AT START: *Lights up. STORMBROW stands guard at SL holding a club. PROFESSOR shoves against him, trying to get him to leave. DOCTOR watches.*

PROFESSOR: Go away, you big brute! This is our lab! You don't belong here!

STORMBROW: I can't go away. I'm here on direct orders from the mayor himself.

DOCTOR: We don't believe you. The mayor never cared about our work before.

STORMBROW: Well, he does now. And I'm not leaving.

SNAGGLECLAW: *(Enters SR.)* Professor! Doctor! What's going on?

PROFESSOR: This miniature mountain won't leave the lab even after I politely asked him to. *(Shoves against STORMBROW again.)*

SNAGGLECLAW: Professor! Stop! It's okay! I asked the mayor to send him here!

PROFESSOR: You did? Why would you do a thing like that?

SNAGGLECLAW: Because the town was just attacked by meat eaters!

PROFESSOR: It was?

SNAGGLECLAW: Yes! They tried to grab a couple of our citizens, but they went away empty-clawed.

DOCTOR: Wow. I guess we were so busy with our experiment, we missed the whole thing.

PROFESSOR: I knew this was going to happen someday! The townsfolk should have listened to me.

SNAGGLECLAW: Well, they're listening to you now. That's why the mayor sent Stormbrow. He's supposed to guard the lab.

STORMBROW: Will you let me do my job now?

PROFESSOR: Yes, yes. Just stand over there somewhere. *(Waves toward SR. STORMBROW shrugs and takes a position at SR.)*

SNAGGLECLAW: Wait a minute. What was that about an experiment?

PROFESSOR: Experiment?

DOCTOR: We didn't say anything about an experiment.

SNAGGLECLAW: Sure, you did. You said you already ran one.

DOCTOR: Oh, that experiment. Yes, we're all done.

SNAGGLECLAW: But you promised me you were going to wait!

DOCTOR: Um, yes. We did promise that—

PROFESSOR: But then the crystal got all charged up—

DOCTOR: And it was so quiet, what with everyone at the celebration—

SNAGGLECLAW: *(Sad.)* Including me.

PROFESSOR: I'm sorry, Snaggleclaw. But look on the bright side. You didn't miss anything.

DOCTOR: The experiment was a complete failure.

SNAGGLECLAW: What? Why?

PROFESSOR: We're not sure. The doctor actually came up with a clever way to focus the beam.

DOCTOR: As a matter of fact, I simply pointed the big end of the telescope at the crystal. You see, just as the telescope magnifies the light coming from the stars, so it should magnify and focus the light coming from the crystal.

SNAGGLECLAW: That's a great idea!

DOCTOR: Unfortunately, it didn't work. The beam wasn't bright enough to blast a leaf, let alone an entire asteroid.

SNAGGLECLAW: So, let's get a bigger crystal.

DOCTOR: But that's the biggest crystal in Fernville!

SNAGGLECLAW: Then we've got to look somewhere else.

DOCTOR: Well, sure, but where?

STORMBROW: There's only one place you can find a crystal that big. The Crags.

Surprised, PROFESSOR, DOCTOR, and SNAGGLECLAW turn to STORMBROW.

PROFESSOR: The home of the meat eaters? They'd tear us limb from limb!

DOCTOR: And then they'd eat those limbs!

SNAGGLECLAW: Maybe we can reason with them. After all, the asteroid is a threat to them too.

PROFESSOR and DOCTOR burst out laughing.

PROFESSOR: Reason with the meat eaters? Ha! The last plant eater who suggested that almost ended up being a meat eater's lunch.

DOCTOR: That would be me.

SNAGGLECLAW: So what? We're just going to do nothing?

DOCTOR: We didn't say we'll do nothing. The professor and I are going to continue our experiments. Perhaps we can figure out a way to focus the beam even more.

SNAGGLECLAW: But that could take days!

DOCTOR: Well then, we'd better get started.

DOCTOR and PROFESSOR proceed to adjust the microscope. SNAGGLECLAW crosses to DSC.

SNAGGLECLAW: *(To himself.)* I don't care what they say. There's only one way to stop the asteroid. And if that means I have to go to the Craggs, then I'll go to the Craggs. I just hope I don't become somebody's lunch.

Blackout.

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