

A one-act dramatic play

The Silly Chicken

by Idries Shah



CAST

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

The Silly Chicken

The Clever Man

First Group of People of the Town

Second Group of People of the Town

Third Group of People of the Town

A Camel

(Ideas for dress for the People of the Town: Girls might wear beautifully colored scarves and clothing with interesting patterns and colors. Boys might wear long shirts, not tucked in, and vests. Caps without brims, for instance, for boys head coverings.)

THE SCRIPT

Narrator 1: Once upon a time in a country far away, there was a town...

Narrator 2: and in the town there was a chicken, and he was a very silly chicken indeed.

Narrator 3: He went about saying...

The Silly Chicken: tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck.

All of the Narrators: And nobody knew what he meant.

Narrator 1: Of course, he didn't mean anything at all, but nobody knew that.

Narrator 2: They thought that...

The Silly Chicken: tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck...

Narrator 3: must mean something.

Narrator 1: Now, a very clever man came to the town, and he decided to see if he could find out what the chicken meant by...

The Silly Chicken: tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck.

Narrator 2: First he tried to learn the chicken's language.

Narrator 3: He tried, and he tried, and he tried. But all he learned to say was...

The Clever Man: tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck, tuck-tuck-tuck.

Narrator 1: Unfortunately, although he sounded just like the chicken...

All of the Narrators: he had no idea what he was saying.

Narrator 2: Then he decided to teach the chicken to speak our kind of language.

Narrator 3: He tried, and he tried, and he tried.

Narrator 1: It took him quite a long time, but in the end, the chicken could speak perfectly well...

All of the Narrators: just like you and me.

Narrator 2: After learning to speak as we do, the chicken went into the main street of the town and called out...

The Silly Chicken: The earth is going to swallow us up!

Narrator 3: At first the people didn't hear what he was saying...

All of the Narrators: because they didn't expect a chicken to be talking human language.

Narrator 1: The chicken called out again...

The Silly Chicken: The earth is going to swallow us up!

Narrator 2: This time the people heard him, and they began to cry out...

First Group of People: Good heavens!

Second Group of People: Good gracious!

Third Group of People: Dear me!

First Group of People: The earth is going to swallow us up!

All of the People of the Town: Yes, indeed! The chicken says so!

Narrator 3: Thoroughly alarmed, all the people packed up their most precious things...

All of the Narrators: and began to run to get away from the earth.

[All of the People of the Town, and the Camel, run from one side of the room to the other, and around in circles.]

Narrator 1: They ran from one town...

Narrator 2: to another. They ran through the fields...

Narrator 3: and into the woods and across the meadows. They ran up the mountains...

Narrator 1: and down the mountains. They ran down the world and up the world...

Narrator 2: and around the world. They ran in every possible direction.

All of the Narrators: But they still couldn't get away from the earth.

Narrator 3: Finally they came back to their town. And there was the chicken...

Narrator 1: just where they had left him before they started running.

Narrator 2: They asked the chicken...

Second Group of People: How do you know the earth is going to swallow us up?

The Silly Chicken: I don't know.

Narrator 3: At first the people were astonished, and they said again and again...

Third Group of People: You don't know?

First Group of People: You don't know?

Second Group of People: You don't know?

[All of the People of the Town glare at the Silly Chicken.]

Narrator 1: And they became furious, and they glared sternly at the chicken and spoke in angry voices.

Third Group of People: *[in angry voices]* How could you tell us such a thing?

First Group of People: *[in angry voices]* How dare you!

Second Group of People: You made us run from one town to another!

Third Group of People: You made us run through the fields and into the woods and across the meadows!

First Group of People: You made us run up the mountains and down the mountains!

Second Group of People: You made us run down the world and up the world and around the world!

Third Group of People: You made us run in every possible direction!

All of the People of the Town: And all the while we thought you knew the earth was going to swallow us up!

[The Silly Chicken smooths his feathers.]

The Silly Chicken: Cackle. Cackle. Well, that just shows how silly you are! Only silly people would listen to a chicken in the first place. You think a chicken knows something just because he can talk?

Narrator 2: At first the people just stared at the chicken, and then they began to laugh.

[All of the People of the Town laugh in the background.]

Narrator 3: They laughed, and they laughed, and they laughed...

All of the Narrators: because they realized how silly they had been, and they found that very funny indeed.

Narrator 1: After that, whenever they wanted to laugh they would go to the chicken and say...

First Group of People: Tell us something to make us laugh.

The Silly Chicken: Cups and saucers are made out of knives and forks!

[All of the People of the Town laugh.]

Second Group of People: Who are you?

Third Group of People: Yes, who are you?

The Silly Chicken: I am an egg.

[All of the People of the Town laugh in the background.]

Narrator 2: The people would laugh at this, too, because they knew he wasn't an egg.

First Group of People: If you're an egg, why aren't you yellow?

The Silly Chicken: I am not yellow because I painted myself blue.

[All of the People of the Town laugh in the background.]

Narrator 3: The people would laugh at this, too, because they could see he was not blue at all.

Second Group of People: What did you paint yourself with?

The Silly Chicken: With red ink.

[All of the People of the Town laugh and give a big 'Hah-hah!']

All of the Narrators: And at this they laughed the hardest of all.

Narrator 1: And now people everywhere laugh at chickens...

Narrator 2: and never take any notice of what they say...

Narrator 3: even if they can talk...

ALL: because, of course, everybody knows that chickens are silly.

All of the Narrators: And that chicken still goes on and on in that town, in that far-away country, telling people things to make them laugh.

THE END