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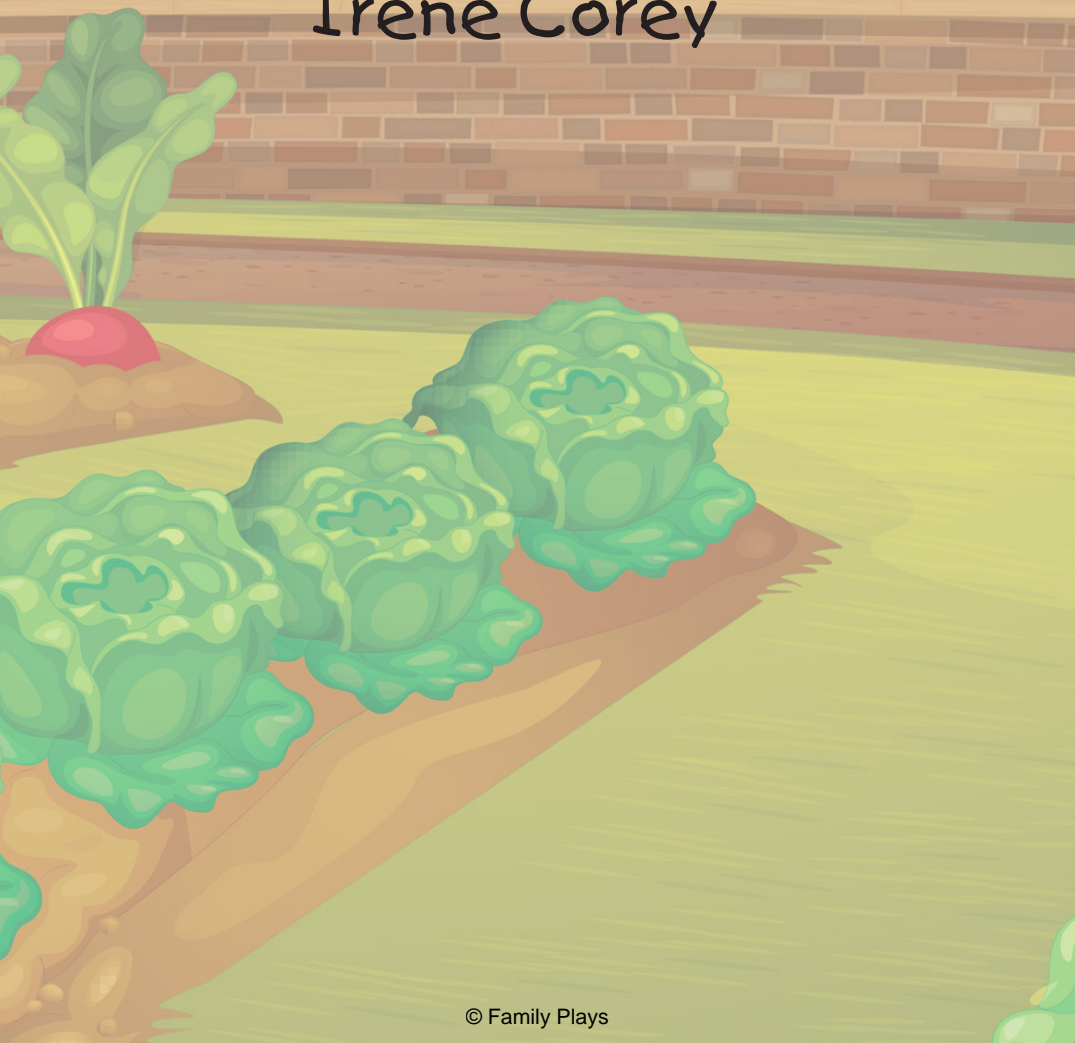
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Family Plays

The Magic Garden

Fantasy by
Irene Corey



The Magic Garden

***Fantasy.** By Irene Corey. Cast: 1m., 1w., 17 either gender. The Magic Garden is a fantasy lark of joyful spirits intended for theatre-goers of ages 5 through 9. Reality and fantasy mingle in an ever timely clash of Vegetables versus Sweets. David and Tommy of the local grocery football team have just lost a game to the candy factory team. Fantasy takes over in a conflict between the Vegetable Kingdom and the Candy Kingdom. The Queen of Sweets declares war. King Onion rallies his vegetables, including near-sighted General Carrot, Red and Hot Pepper Soldiers, English Pea and Irish Potato. The queen uses sweet psychology, but ultimately the vegetables narrowly prevail. Costume designs for the vegetables are included by the author, famous for her designs of Reynard the Fox and The Great Cross-Country Race. Flexible staging. Simple set. Approximate running time: 90 minutes. Code: MH7.*

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The Magic Garden

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By

IRENE LOCKRIDGE COREY

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

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(THE MAGIC GARDEN)

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IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

THE MAGIC GARDEN was first produced
by the Georgetown Children's Theatre,
March 27-29, 1957,
in Lewis Auditorium at Georgetown College,
Georgetown, Kentucky.

The Premier Production

PLAYERS

Red, soldier of the Vegetable Kingdom- -Mary Ellen Finley
Hot, soldier of the Vegetable Kingdom- - Mary Lou Thornton
Sweets Queen - - - - - Sallie Bette Bell
Leticia Lettuce - - - - - Jean Etta Gains
Little Sweet (daughter of the Queen) - - -Marlene Welch
Matilda - - - - - Diane Dieffenwierth
The Onion King - - - - - John Lair Oldham
Dandy Lion - - - - - Stevie D. Price
Old Sage - - - - - Raines Taylor
General Carrot - - - - - Milo Hasslock
Patrick Potato - - - - - G. David Redding
Sam Spinach - - - - - Alvin Calvert
David - - - - - Gerald Parker
Tommy - - - - - Jimmy Hall
Mother - - - - - Guin Clifton
Father - - - - - Joe Graber
Candy Soldiers - - - - - Betty Barberick and
Norma Lucas

PRODUCTION STAFF

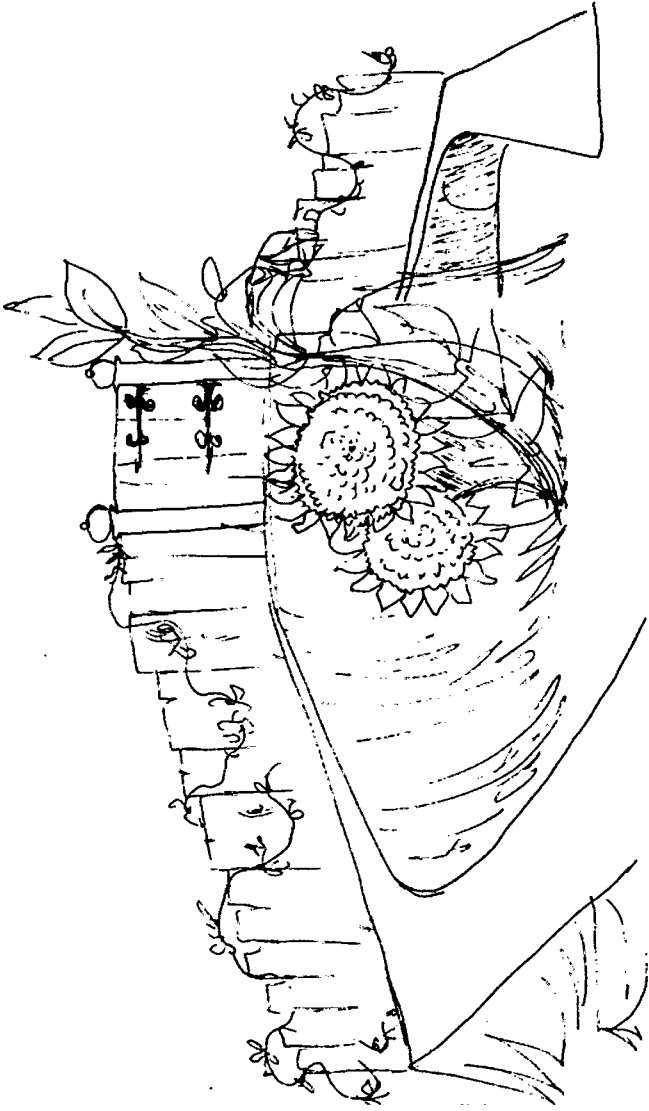
Stage Manager ----- Pat Minton
Assistant Stage Manager ----- Sandy Burns
Lights ----- Bill Clifton and Lila Cruise
Properties ----- Shirley Ledford and Joe Graber
Sound ----- George Bingham

Prompter ----- Guin Clifton
Special Effects ----- Joe Graber, Professor H.Y.
Mullikin

Set Construction ----- Buddy McGohan, Lane Wells,
Larry Browning

Girls' Wardrobe Mistress ----- Ida Sue Bridwell
Boy's Wardrobe ----- Bill Clifton
Business Manager ----- Marilyn Walker
House Manager ----- Caroline Miller
Make-up Mistress ----- Martha Moore
Designer of Setting and Costumes ----- Irene Corey
Costume Construction Assistants: The Stagecraft Class,
Bill and Guin Clifton, Pat Minton,
Betty Barberick. Also Joe
Grabner and the mothers of the
children.

Director ----- Orlin Corey



Design of setting

LOCALES OF THE PLAY

It is recommended that the play be staged on a unit setting, with levels if possible, against a cyclorama lighting, to suggest a large garden of both vegetables and flowers. Ideally there should be a front drape of trees, with a forestage in front. Hopefully at one side of the forestage there is the suggestion of a kitchen, with table and chairs.

SCENES OF THE PLAY

- ACT I:
- Scene One: Kitchen of the Brown's
 - Scene Two: Garden of the Brown's/Vegetable Kingdom
 - Scene Three: The Forest (forestage)

INTERMISSION Audiences are requested to promptly return as poor King Onion cannot possibly be freed from his sticky seat above a bomb until they permit the play to resume. All this time the bomb-clock is ticking.

- ACT II:
- Scene One: Still the Forest
 - Scene Two: The Vegetable Kingdom
 - Scene Three: The Kitchen of the Brown's
- Curtain Call is in the Garden

Music of chief song,
and original costume designs
by Irene Corey
are at the rear of this playbook.

The Cast

(in order of appearance)

Mother
David
Tommy
Dad
Dandy Lion
Red
Hot
Matilda, the English Pea
Patrick Potato
General Carrot
Sam Spinach
Leticia Lettuce
Old Sage
King Onion
The Sweets Queen
Little Sweet
Two Sweets Soldiers
Announcer

THE MAGIC GARDEN was a smash success, with standing room only audiences. Its press reviews were ovations in themselves, and it remarkably garnered press attention from the major papers of Kentucky. It may have been the first play for children to be so heralded in the Commonwealth. It is fondly remembered and revived by participants in the original production. Special appreciation is expressed to PATRICIA MINTON TAYLOR of Bowling Green, Kentucky, and HELEN OLDHAM of Georgetown, Kentucky.

Act I, Scene 1

(Spotlight on one corner of the stage apron where a small table and a single stool stand. MOTHER is setting a plate on the table, heaped with food).

MOTHER: *(Calling to DAVID)* Daaa-vid! Oh, David. Suppertime!

DAVID: *(Appears at the opposite side of the stage apron, with TOMMY. They are both eating candy bars, DAVID cramming the rest into his mouth as he hears his mother call.)* Okay! *(Both boys are wearing football jerseys, with the name of a local grocery store printed on the back. They have just finished playing and are scruffed up from head to toe).* Well, I gotta go now. I'll see you, Tommy.

TOMMY: Yeah. It was a good game, anyway. See ya later. *(Exits)*
(DAVID slowly drags to the kitchen)

MOTHER: There you are! It's about time. How did the game go?

DAVID: Hi, Mom. Aw, they won.

MOTHER: Oh, that's too bad. You'll have to do better next time. The Candy Factory has a mighty good team. Now run and wash your hands. *(DAVID goes offstage, still in hearing distance).* I've put your supper in here. Your Dad and I had to go ahead and eat early because Tommy's folks are coming over to see a special television show.

DAD: *(Entering)* David home yet?

MOTHER: Yes. Just. He's washing up.

DAD: Who won the game?

MOTHER: The Candy Factory team.

DAD: Tough luck. But they seem to have the best team. The Grocery Store boys haven't been doing so well lately.

DAD: Don't know what's wrong. They seem to have a good coach.

MOTHER: Well, I don't know about the other team, but David doesn't eat enough to keep a fly alive. I've tried every trick I know, but I think it will take a miracle or something.

(DAVID enters)

DAD: *(Catching DAVID by the scruff of the collar).* Well, look what the cat's drug in. Does this filthy thing belong to you?

DAVID: *(Indignantly, showing his hands).* Filthy! Look at that.

MOTHER: *(Looking at his neck).* Yes, but look at that. Oh well, you'll do for now, with a bath right after supper.

DAVID: Awwwww.

DAD: Never mind. Sit down and eat your supper. Get a load of those vegetables, grown by hand by your old man!

DAVID: *(With distaste)* Carrots.

DAD: . . . will give you eyesight as strong as a mule.

DAVID: Spinach!

DAD: . . . will make you powerful like an ox.

DAVID and DAD: *(Simultaneously)* Potatoes.

DAD: Will make you roly-poly.

DAVID: . . . like a hippopotamus!

DAD: *(Laughing)* That's right. Now stop groaning and start eating. The way you carry on about vegetables I sometimes think I make that whole garden for nothing.

MOTHER: Oh, no. We couldn't get along without the garden. And don't forget your salad, David.

(Doorbell rings)

MOTHER: There they are now. *(Taking off her apron. To DAD)* Let them in, will you? Let me know when you've finished, David. And CLEAN your plate, or no dessert for you. *(As she leaves)* I don't know what we're going to do with him if he doesn't start eating right.

(DAVID plays with his food awhile, tasting a few things and making wry faces. Very tired from the football game, he rests his head on his hand and stares glumly at the food. Slowly he begins to nod. Voices come from the living room).

(Offstage) You sit here, Edna. The men can sit on the couch. The news will be over in a minute.

ANNOUNCER: . . . the latest word from the Farm Bureau. The nation is faced with a large surplus of vegetables. For some reason, undetermined as yet, the demand has not developed as expected. At the present rate the bottom may soon drop out of the market, bringing about a *(begins to fade away)* nationwide crisis in this . . .

(THE LIGHTS fade and flutter slightly on DAVID, and from the other side of the stage DANDY rolls in, comes to a halt at the table. He is startled to see DAVID, then collects himself and taps him on the shoulder).

DANDY: Excuse me, sir, could you direct me to the Brown's garden?

DAVID: *(Waking)* You mean my father's garden?

DANDY: Yes. That is if your father's name is Brown.

DAVID: Yes, it is. That's my name, too. David Brown.

DANDY: Oh, how do you do? I'm very glad to make your acquaintance. You see, I have an urgent message for the Onion King, and I got caught in a huge draft, and lost my way. I ALWAYS seem to be getting caught in a draft. I really think the winds have it in for me, especially that spiteful South

Wind. Now I don't like to talk, but I heard that she . . . but hark! Listen! I think I hear the sound of snoring. The garden must be this way. Thank you very much for your trouble. *(He rushes off).*

DAVID: Hey! Wait!

(Looks after him, puzzled, then decides to follow him. Carefully he sneaks along and squeezes into the crack of the curtain where DANDY disappeared. The sound of snoring grows louder, and the curtain - or scrim parts, reveal the Vegetable Kingdom. The VEGETABLES are all asleep).

DANDY: Wake up! Wake up! I've an urgent message from headquarters. Quickly! Quickly! URGENT, I said. Whatever is the matter with them? I can't seem to rouse them at all. If only I had a dash of water, that would bring them around.

DAVID: Here, I can help you.

DANDY: *(Jumping and reeling away)* OOOOF! How you startled me!

DAVID: *(Running to the corner)* My father's watering can, I know where it is. I'll get it.

DANDY: Oh, lovely boy, good idea. A very good idea.

(DAVID waters plants, sprinkling glitter from the can. They slowly stir, responding as they are sprinkled).

RED: Ow!

HOT: Oooooooo!

RED, HOT: What's new? *(Springing to attention)*

MATILDA: Good morning, everyone! What a glorious day. *(Goes systematically into her daily exercises).* One . . . two. three . . . four, gaining . . . strength . . . to . . . grow . . . some more.

DANDY: Come, come, Matilda! Stop it, I say, it's not morning, it's night, and I have an urgent message for the Kingdom.

MATILDA: Oh, I say. How invigorating. Do tell us more.

DANDY: Over this way, David. We must get General Carrot awake. That's it. That should do it. Wake up, General, wake up. GENERAL! Atten-SHUN!

GEN. CARROT: (*Sputtering to attention*). General Carrot reporting for duty, Sir. (*Looking at large watch hanging from gold chain*). Nine o'clock and all is well . . . (*Looks at watch again*) seven o'clock! May I inquire the meaning of the unseemly disturbance? It's highly irregular, highly . . .

MATILDA: Now don't get yourself into a twiddle, General. It's Dandy, of the House of Lion, Messenger of the King. He says he has important news.

GEN. CARROT: News, do you say? News? May I know the nature of this information which is so important it must come in the midst of body-growing, vision-restoring sleep?

DANDY: Yes, I'll tell you all, just as soon as everyone is awake. General, you tackle Spinach. Matilda, you rouse Leticia Lettuce. And do be gentle. You know how fidgety she is. (*He sprinkles OLD SAGE*) Excuse me, Sir, very sorry to disturb you, Sir.

(OLD SAGE stirs but does not wake).

GEN. CARROT: Mr. Spinach, will you give us the pleasure of your company at once!

SAM: Huh?

LETICIA: (*Shrieking*) Sakes alive!

MATILDA: Now, now, calm yourself, dear. There's nothing to be alarmed about. Just a minor crisis of some sort. Here, sit here. (*Takes chair from apron of stage*).

GEN. CARROT: Mr. Sam Spinach, please cast off your slumbers at once.

SAM: Huhhhh?

PATRICK: Faith, and what would everybody be doin' up at the chirp of the sparrow? There's noise enough to wake the dead, may they rest in peace.

DANDY: *(To OLD SAGE)* Excuse me, Sir, you must wake up, Sir.

LETICIA: Ohhhh, Master Sage. It's something awful! They say there is a crisis. *(Wringing hands)* Whatever shall we do?

(Echoes through the crowd of "Crisis," "What will we do?" "Urgent message." "Something dire," "Plague of insects," "New kind of weeds," etc.)

OLD SAGE: *(Slowly, calming the crowd as he speaks).* Slowly! Slowly! We must find what is on this fellow's mind.

RED: Gee!

HOT: Whiz!

RED, HOT: Some fizz!

DANDY: Oh, King, Sire, will you do us the honor of waking?

(KING ONION lets out a fierce snore which blows DANDY across the stage).

(Jumps back, startled) Oh, my goodness me. What a touchy occupation. My job does call for the most astonishing set of nerves. Your Majesty! Wake up, Your Majesty! Sprinkle him again, David.

(DAVID sprinkles him, generously).

KING: *(Snoring)* Ah, humph!

(Trembles into a loud sneeze which shakes and lowers the entire court to the ground).

KING: Ahhhhhhhh - chooooooovvvv! Great glumps of garlic, what is going on here?

DANDY: *(Slowly raising his head, breathlessly).* Oh, Sire, Oh most tall and green of Kings, I have an urgent message for the Vegetable Kingdom.

(A few heads rise to listen).

The market for vegetables has gone to pot . . . I mean it's shot . . . That is to say.

KING: What's that you're saying? I can't understand a word you're saying. Speak up, you foolish ball of fluff, SPEAK UP, I SAY!

(The court lowers again at this last blast).

GEN. CARROT: *(To DANDY who is trembling).* Come, come, control yourself, Mr. Dandy. Do you mean the supply is ahead of the demand?

DANDY: Worse than that. Oh, worse than that! There is no demand at all!

(Court echoes: "No demand at all?")

KING: Did you say No demand?

DANDY: That's right, Sire. No one is eating vegetables anymore.

KING: *(Seizing DANDY by the ruff, and shouting)* You mean no one is eating vegetables? Not even onions?

DANDY: *(Wilting under the KING's breath, gasping)* . . . Not . . . even . . . onions . . . Oh, King . . . we must have a council of war . . . or your whole Kingdom is doomed . . . to ROT here underground, forever, and never to be used.

LETICIA: *(In high squeek)* Rot? Oooooooooo!

OLD SAGE: Gently now, let's all be calm. We'll face this thing without a qualm.

KING: Come, Frill Face. Get to the bottom of this, or must I pull you apart, sprout by sprout?

DANDY: *(Staggering)* Your Majesty . . . let me get my breath. Careful of my ruff, you know how easily I shatter. It's the work of the Sweets Queen. She's declared war on the Vegetable Kingdom!

(The Court echoes the word: War! War! LETICIA faints after shrieking, and is fanned by MATILDA).

DANDY: Yes, war. I couldn't phone, the vine was cut. I came as fast as I could.

RED: Left!

HOT: Right!

RED & HOT: Let's fight!

SPINACH: *(Staggering to his feet, still half asleep)* Huh? What's going on? Who wants to fight? Let me at him.

KING: So it's war, is it? I'll give her war. She'll wish she had never tangled with the Onion King, son of Old King Garlic the Great, grandson of Timon the Terrible Hearted, great-grandson of Cuthbert the Yellow-Skinned! Red and Hot, bring me my shield and sword. General Carrot, call up every red-blooded Beet for active service!

DANDY: *(Interrupting)* Oh no, Great King. You don't understand. It's not that kind of war - - that's out of fashion now. It's a psychological war.

KING: *(Stunned)* Psychological war? What in gardenation do you mean by that?

- GEN. CARROT: Ahem. I believe I am able to explain that, your Majesty. It is a war which takes place in the mind, where wits are used instead of swords. The chief target is thought, and the weak point is the nervous system. The subconscious takes precedence over the conscious.
- DANDY: Oh, General, how you do go on! You make it sound so complicated. It's simply this: The Sweets Queen has conducted a publicity campaign among the children, and a very cunning one, if I may say so, to convince them that candy is more important than vegetables. Her purpose is to do away with vegetables all together, so that they will eat only sweets.
- KING: Eat only sweets? Why that would mean the death of all mankind. Why I'll show this preposterous creature a thing or two about the facts involved. Red and Hot, where is my shield and sword? Call out the guards. Call out the army. Send out the Runner Beans to spy on the enemy position! Alert the Cucumber Commandos! We must make everything ready. I know only one kind of war, and that's enough to make her see reason . . .
- DANDY: But, Sire, it's not a question of physical power, it is a matter of cleverness, of quick and precise thinking, and you, O Great Onion King, have all of the qualities demanded by such an occasion.
- PATRICK: Sure, and its right he is, Sire. I'm thinkin' it is yourself that can easily outwit this Sweets Queen.
- OLD SAGE: Your mental work is always faster. You alone can face disaster.
- MATILDA: Heah! Heah!
- KING: (*Flattered but hesitant*) My old fighting methods may be out of date, but I do not like the idea of abandoning them altogether. We will keep everything in readiness, just in case the Queen says one thing and decides to do another! General Carrot, you are in charge of home defense. See that the Pop Corn Battalion in charge of anti-aircraft is

made ready. Patrick Potato, check on the foot soldiers. Sam Spinach, you are in charge of general physical fitness for the whole camp. See that everyone, and I do mean EVERYONE is in the peak of physical condition. (*Spies DAVID for the first time*). Who in the WORLD of seeds and plants is that?

(*RED and HOT point swords at him*).

LETICIA: A spy! A spy! (*General hub-bub*)

DANDY: He's alright, Sire. He lives in the Brown's house. He's on our side, aren't you, David?

KING: (*Interrupting*) Need I remind you gentlemen that this is a time of war? And any stranger must be held with great suspicion. How do you know he's not a spy?

DANDY: I can assure you, O King, he has been very helpful -- he showed me the garden, helped wake you . . .

GEN. CARROT: Just the way to work his way into our confidence.

OLD SAGE: Come now, you are too suspicious. A questioning would be propitious.

MATILDA: That's a proper suggestion.

GEN. CARROT: I will be happy to conduct this interrogation . . .

KING: If there are any questions asked, I'll do the asking! Come here, boy!

(*DAVID goes to the KING*)

I'll be blunt and come right to the point. How do you feel about us? That is, do you like vegetables?

(*DAVID squirms and looks down*)

Well, answer me, pale face!