

AUDITION PIECE #2 : THE TOWNSPEOPLE

(This is the audience's first introduction to the townspeople of Kulyenchikov. There is SLOVITCH the butcher, MISHKIN the mail-carrier, and YENCHNA the street vendor. LEON the new schoolteacher enters and meets everyone mid-scene. The town of Kulyenchikov is under a 200-year-old curse that makes all the residents foolish, but different townspeople have different levels of self-awareness about their own stupidity at different times. Most importantly, remember the townspeople are not cartoon characters—they are just going about their doily business, and they say things that sound humorous and foolish to the audience, but they are used to the curse (and each other) by now.)

SLOVITCH: Good morning, postman.

MISHKIN: Good morning, butcher.

SLOVITCH: A beautiful sunny day, isn't it?

MISHKIN: Is it? I haven't looked up yet. Oh, yes. Lovely. Very nice.

SLOVITCH: Do I have any mail?

MISHKIN: No, I'm sorry. I'm the postman. I have all the mail.

SLOVITCH: My sister in Odessa hasn't been feeling well, I was hoping I would hear from her.

MISHKIN: It's very hard to hear all the way from Odessa. Perhaps she wrote a letter. I'll look.

YENCHNA: Fish! Fresh fish! Nice fresh flounder and halibut! A good piece of carp for lunch.

SLOVITCH: Good morning, Yenchna.

YENCHNA: How about a nice piece of haddock? Is that a beautiful fish?

SLOVITCH: What do you mean fish? Those are flowers.

YENCHNA: They didn't catch anything today. Why should I suffer because the fisherman had a bad day? Try the carp, it smells gorgeous.

MISHKIN: I don't have any letters from your sister, Slovitch. But I have a nice letter from the shoemaker's cousin. Would you like that?

SLOVITCH: Is she sick? I hate reading bad news.

MISHKIN: No, no. In perfect health. Take it. You'll enjoy it.

YENCHNA: Can you believe my daughter hasn't written to me in over a year?

MISHKIN: Doesn't your daughter live with you?

YENCHNA: It's a good thing. Otherwise I'd never hear from her.

LEON: Good morning. My name is Leon Steponovitch Tolchinsky. I'm the new schoolmaster.

MISHKIN: Mishkin the postman.

SLOVITCH: Slovitch the butcher.

YENCHNA: Yenchna the vendor.

LEON: How do you do. I was just talking to a shepherd named Snetsky.

MISHKIN: Oh, yes. Something Something Snetsky. We know him well.

LEON: He was pleasant enough, although—and I hope I don't seem unkind—somewhat deficient in his mental alertness.

YENCHNA: That's Snetsky, all right. He was kicked in the head by a horse.

LEON: Oh, well. What a pity. When was that?

YENCHNA: Tuesday, Wednesday, twice on Friday, and all day Saturday.

LEON: What lovely and fragrant wares you have to sell, madame. Perhaps I might buy some for my new employer. How much are they please?

YENCHNA: The flounder is two kopecks and the halibutis three.

LEON: I beg your pardon?

YENCHNA: If it's too much, I have a nice whitefish for one and a half.

LEON: Perhaps the dialect is a little different in this part of the country. I'm very eager to begin my new duties. Will one of you be so kind as to direct me to the home of Dr. Zubritsky?

ALL THREE: That way!