

SAGEBRUSH SIDEKICKS

OR GABBY HAYES, WHERE ARE YA WHEN WE NEED YA?

A WESTERN MELODRAMA

By Geff Moyer

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SYNOPSIS: Legendary western hero Skipalong Rafferty needs a new sidekick. His last three have died under unusual circumstances. So Skipalong has his personal secretary, Netti Buntline, hold a “Sidekick Contest,” which consists of various “sidekick endeavors” such as: making horribly tasting coffee, running out of bullets during a gunfight and throwing his pistol at the bad guy, chasing after a villain and losing his britches in the process, making absurd faces at the taste of a shot of Red Eye, getting loose from a hogtie, and a few other “challenges.” But bizarre accidents keep causing Skipalong to lose the services of his many personal secretaries, resulting in a tie between all four of the scruffy sidekick contestants. Now Skipalong has to make the choice himself, and a few twists are going to put him in a predicament he never expected.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 MEN, 5 WOMEN)

NETTI BUNTLIN (f)..... A proper, but cheery young lady. (47 lines)

FUZZY McDONALD (m)..... A potential sidekick. (75 lines)

LUMPY DAVENPORT (m)..... A potential sidekick. (76 lines)

GRUBBY FINGERS (m)..... A potential sidekick. (95 lines)

SADDLESORE SAM (f)..... A potential sidekick who is hiding a secret.
(80 lines)

PEARL DIVER (f)..... A saucy saloon girl. (32 lines)

HILDEGARD HEINIE (f)..... A stern schoolmarm. (46 lines)

BUFFALO BECKY (f)..... A former mule skinner. (37 lines)

SKIPALONG RAFFERTY (m)..... A short, pompous western hero. (42 lines)

SETTING

A corral somewhere in the West.

TIME: Daytime, 1880s.

PROPERTIES

- ☐ 4 pistols, holsters and belts
- ☐ 4 shot glasses
- ☐ 4 tin coffee cups
- ☐ 4 wooden pistols
- ☐ 1 bottle of Red Eye
- ☐ 1 clipboard
- ☐ 1 pencil
- ☐ 1 wooden pointer stick
- ☐ 1 straw man on rolling platform
- ☐ 1 large knife

PRODUCTION NOTES

Unlike many melodramas, which offer "over-the-top" acting and hissing at the villain, the roles of the sidekicks in SAGEBRUSH SIDEKICKS should be "underplayed." They are simple - yes, rather dumb - cowboys ***seriously*** trying to get a job as the sidekick for a legendary western hero. The more seriously they take their challenges, the funnier the situations. The same holds true for the ladies conducting the contest. The more frustrated, perplexed, and bewildered they become, the funnier their situations, too. Don't try to ***make*** the audience laugh; just ***let*** them laugh. While the four sidekicks appearances should be somewhat similar (beards and ragged clothes), their personalities are very different. The extreme differences in the female characters also offer many fun challenges to five brave ladies. The set may be as simple or as complex as you wish - from just a split rail fence symbolizing a corral, to a background of a livery stable or open area representing "them parts unknown." Remember, the best comedy comes from drama.

SCENE ONE

SETTING: *The stage is a corral with a wooded fence US, stretching from SL to SR. Scattered around are a few hay bales. A rustic picnic table sits CS. Our four potential sidekicks are standing on the US side of the rustic picnic table, facing the audience. Each has a beard and moustache. THEY are all dressed in classic, shaggy, western "sidekick" clothing, complete with hat, and each wears a gun belt with holstered pistol. On the table in front of them are four shot glasses with liquid, four tin coffee cups with liquid, and four pistols crudely carved out of balsa wood or Styrofoam – they must have enough weight to be thrown. A bottle of Red Eye also rests on the table. As lights come up, our four "potential sidekicks" are mulling about the stage. NETTI BUNTLINE enters clapping.*

NETTI: *(SHE is constantly cheery.)* Congratulations, gentlemen, you are the four finalists in our Sidekick Contest. My name is Netti Buntline. I am Mr. Skipalong Rafferty's personal secretary. You all four have met the first three challenges with flying colors. You all have beards, you got knocked out easily, and not one of you could get the girl.

FUZZY: *(Rubbing his noggin.)* No one said nothin' 'bout gettin' thumped on the head.

NETTI: Oh, yes, that always happens to sidekicks, and the winner of our contest can look forward to many more incidences of being rendered unconscious.

LUMPY: I don't think that girly really wanted to get got.

NETTI: Of course she did! But the sidekick never gets the girl. Only our hero, Skipalong Rafferty.

GRUBBY: We ever gonna meet this Skipalong Rafferty?

NETTI: In due time, gentlemen, in due time; right after the final rounds of our contest.

LUMPY: We gonna git thumped on the head agin?

NETTI: No, no, no more thumping. Like I said, that will come after you get the job. Now, the first round is very simple. And since I do not know any of your names, it's the perfect way for me to find them out. It requires you to say just one sentence, and it's a sentence that every sidekick must know how to say: **"I'll get them varmints or my name ain't..."** say your name. Okay? *(Points at GRUBBY.)* You! You go first.

GRUBBY: Just say it?

NETTI: Like a sidekick would say it.

GRUBBY: "I'll get them varmints or my name ain't say your name!"

NETTI: Uh, no. You're supposed to say your **own** name.

GRUBBY: Oh. "I'll get them varmints or my name ain't say your **own** name."

NETTI: *(A moment.)* What's your name?

GRUBBY: Grubby Fingers.

NETTI: *(SHE is scribbling on her clipboard.)* What was your last job?

GRUBBY: Politician.

NETTI: Are you serious?

GRUBBY: Yes, ma'am. I was the mayor of Dreadful Draw.

NETTI: Isn't that a ghost town?

GRUBBY: I was still the mayor.

NETTI: Okay. *(SHE scribbles on clipboard.)*

GRUBBY: *(Trying to look at clipboard.)* Whatcha you writin' down thar?

NETTI: Can you read?

GRUBBY: Jist a few letters..

NETTI: Then I said you did a fine job with the first test.

GRUBBY: So that big red "F" means "Fine?"

NETTI: It sure does. Next! *(SHE points to LUMPY.)* You! **"I'll get them varmints or..."** *(gestures for him to finish the statement.)*

LUMPY: "I'll get them varmints or..." *(HE repeats her gesture.)*

NETTI: *(Sighs.)* Your name?

LUMPY: Lumpy Davenport, ma'am.

NETTI: Previous vocation.

LUMPY: Let's see! The last vocation I took was up to Hot Springs to soak the boils on my buttocks.

NETTI: No, I meant your last job.

LUMPY: Stagecoach driver. That's why I have them boils on...

NETTI: I understand.

LUMPY: *(Trying to peek at clipboard.)* Ma'am, I'd prefer you didn't write down nothin' bout my buttocks. Kinda personal, ya know?

NETTI: I completely agree.

LUMPY: *(Boasting to GRUBBY.)* I gotta big red "Fine" too!

NETTI: *(To FUZZY.)* Alright, let me explain this once again. You say, **"I'll get them varmints or my name ain't...."** and right there, right after the word "ain't" you say **your** name. Understand?

FUZZY: Yes, ma'am.

NETTI: Good! Go!

FUZZY starts to walk away.

NETTI: Where are you going?

FUZZY: I don't know. You just told me to "go." Ya didn't say where!

NETTI: (*Frustration is growing.*) I meant...(*sighs.*)...your name, please.

FUZZY: Fuzzy McDonald.

NETTI: Previous vo... what was your last job?

FUZZY: Flipped burgers at the local hash house.

NETTI: (*To SADDLESORE.*) Let's make this simple. What's your...?

SADDLESORE: "I'll get them varmints or my name ain't Saddlesore Sam!"

NETTI: Hallelujah! Very good! You win the first round.

GRUBBY: That was what we was supposed to say?

FUZZY: Why didn't you say that?

LUMPY: You never said say, "Saddlesore Sam."

GRUBBY: How was we supposed to know to say his name?

FUZZY: This ain't a fair contest!

GRUBBY: Are all them other rounds gonna be fixed so only Saddlesore can get 'em right? If so, I'm...

NETTI: Gentlemen, gentlemen, please! Nothing is fixed. It is a fair contest. Sam just... just got lucky, that's all.

FUZZY/LUMPY/GRUBBY: Oh! That's okay then! Anyone can get lucky! Way to go, Sam! Good job! (*THEY all smack SAM on the back.*)

NETTI: Alright, ready for Round Two? You will all notice a shot of Red Eye in front of each of you. When a sidekick takes a shot of Red Eye, he always makes a comical reaction to it. You know, like some silly facial expression and gesture, maybe some kind of ridiculous noise. So, to help you get that reaction, we're using our own special Red Eye mixture, especially prepared for this contest.

SADDLESORE: What's in it?

NETTI: You don't want to know. Now, we're going to do this by twos. So the first two...

FUZZY: We gonna take **two** shots?

NETTI: No. Two of you will compete first. Then the next two.

GRUBBY: Two of us are drinkin' from the same glass? That ain't sanitary.

NETTI: (*Impatiently.*) Fuzzy has one glass! You have one glass! When I say "shoot," you both do it! Ready?

FUZZY/GRUBBY: Ready.

NETTI: SHOOT!

BOTH MEN draw their pistols and fire. We hear a dog yelp in the distance and a glass window shatter.

NETTI: WHAT ARE YOU DOING!? ARE YOU CRAZY!?

GRUBBY: You told us to shoot!

NETTI: The Red Eye! SHOOT the Red Eye.

BOTH MEN aim their pistols at the shot glasses of Red Eye.)

NETTI: STOP!! NO!! Holster your pistols.

FUZZY: Don't know how ya 'spect us to shoot it with our pistols holstered.

NETTI: DRINK the Red Eye! GULP the Red Eye! SWALLOW the Red Eye! You got it?

FUZZY: Shooot! Why didn't ya just say that to begin with?

GRUBBY: (*To NETTI.*) You ever done this before? No offense, but you need some practice with yer descriptions.

NETTI: At the count of three, DRINK your Red Eye. One, two, three!

THEY drink, but neither reacts to the Red Eye. A moment.

NETTI: Where's the reaction? You're supposed to do a comical reaction! You're supposed to crinkle up your face, snort and huff, something! Anything!! Like this! (*Frustrated, SHE grabs the bottle of Red Eye and quickly gulps down a big swallow and slams the bottle back down on the table.*) Now you're supposed... (*Suddenly realizing what SHE has just done, SHE freezes. Her eyes grow huge as SHE begins to gasp for air, as if her throat were on fire – which it is.*) **W A T E R !!!**

SHE runs off stage. The FOUR CONTESTANTS stand there for a long moment, looking at each other.

FUZZY: Is that what we were supposed to do? Run off yellin' "Water!?"

LUMPY: (*Looking offstage.*) She's still runnin'! Be outta town soon.

GRUBBY: What'd we do now?

SADDLESORE: Guess we wait.

GRUBBY: Where you from, Saddlesore? I don't recall seeing you around these parts.

SADDLESORE: Ain't from these parts.

FUZZY: What parts are ya from?

SADDLESORE: Other parts.

LUMPY: Where are them other parts?

SADDLESORE: Thataway!

LUMPY: Thataway?

SADDLESORE: Thataway.

GRUBBY: What's over thataway?

SADDLESORE: Them parts.

LUMPY: Oh, you mean them parts unknown.

SADDLESORE: Yep.

LUMPY: Yeah. I know them parts.

GRUBBY: Oh yeah! Before the railroad came through, they used to be part of them other parts.

FUZZY: (*Fondly reminiscing.*) That was when this was all parts unknown.

LUMPY: (*Sighs.*) Yeah. I miss them parts.

GRUBBY: Me, too. Hated to part with them parts.

Another GIRL enters. SHE is the classic painted up saloon girl. SHE is carrying NETTI'S clipboard.

PEARL: (*Saucy & brassy.*) Hello, Boys! I'm Pearl Diver; Mr. Rafferty's other personal secretary.

LUMPY: How many's he got?

FUZZY: What happened to the other one?

PEARL: She's still in the privy, so I'm gonna conduct the next rounds. (*Flirting.*) That okay with you fellows?

LUMPY: (*Grinning.*) You betcha!

FUZZY: (*Grinning.*) Fine by me, ma'am!

PEARL: "Ma'am!?" I ain't yer mother, fella!

GRUBBY: I will admit, you are much kinder on the eyes!

PEARL: Well, cowboy, it's funny that you mentioned that, because for Round Three, I git to do the lookin'!

GRUBBY: Huh?

PEARL: Drop your drawers, fellas!

ALL: WHAT!??

PEARL: When a sidekick starts to run after a villain, his pants always fall down around his ankles, but he tries to run with them like that anyway. It's always a funny sight. You fellas are gonna drop your drawers and race from over there to over there! First one to get there, wins the round. (*SHE starts herding them all SL.*) Let's go, doggies! Move 'em out! Hee Yah! Move 'em out! "Rollin', rollin', rollin'! Git them doggies rollin'!" (*SHE gets them SL.*) Alright, fellas, drop 'em.

There is a long moment of hesitation, humming and hawing.

PEARL: Drop 'em or drop out!

FUZZY: I ain't never dropped my drawers in front of a lady.

PEARL: Just where do you see a lady, Cowboy? Git 'em down!

Reluctantly, the MEN drop their britches. THEY are ALL wearing various long johns, preferably ones with button up flaps in the back. The long johns should not be new and fresh looking, but quite the opposite.

PEARL: You fellas ever heard of launderin'? (*SHE crosses SR to finishing point.*) Alright! On your marks, git set, GO!

What follows should be a shuffling, stumbling chaotic race with FUZZY being the winner.

PEARL: We got ourselves a winner!! What's yer name, Cowboy?

FUZZY: Fuzzy McDonald.

PEARL: Congratulations, Fuzzy! You won Round Three. How do you feel?

FUZZY: For a second I thought I was “loose,” then I got my “balance” again, but then started to “drift towards the low side” and almost “slid into the apron,” but then I “wedged it into a flat-out,” saw an opening, and “boogity, boogity,” here I am... in the winner’s circle.

GRUBBY: What’d he just say?

SADDLESORE: You got me! Way to go, Fuzzy!

FUZZY: Thanks.

LUMPY: Good race, Fuzzy!

GRUBBY: You got us fair ‘n square, Fuzzy!

FUZZY: Obligated, fellas!

PEARL: (*SHE looks at the MEN, who are still standing around with their britches around their ankles.*) You fellas feelin’ a breeze? (*A moment.*) You can pull up yer drawers now!

THEY do as SHE scans the clipboard.

PEARL: Accordin’ to Netti’s score sheet here, Saddlesore won the first round, and now Fuzzy’s got the third, but there ain’t no markings for the second. That when the sickness overtook her?

GRUBBY: Tweren’t no sickness!

PEARL: Tweren’t!?

GRUBBY: Tweren’t! Twas the Red Eye!

PEARL: Twas!?

GRUBBY: Twas! She took a sip of Red Eye and...

LUMPY: Tweren’t no sip!

GRUBBY: Tweren’t?

LUMPY: Twas a gulp!

FUZZY: Tweren’t no gulp!

LUMPY: Tweren’t?

FUZZY: Twas a chug!

SADDLESORE: Tweren’t no chug!

FUZZY: Tweren’t?

SADDLESORE: Twas a guzzle!

GRUBBY: (*A moment.*) He’s right. Twas a guzzle!

LUMPY: Yeah! Twas! A guzzle!

A pause.

PEARL: I'm glad we got that settled. But it don't solve our dilemma with Round Two. You see, there are four of you, which means we have to have either five or seven rounds so there's no possibility of a tie. Well, I guess we'll cross that bridge when we come to it. Let's move on to the next round.

FUZZY: I don't recollect any bridges in these parts.

GRUBBY: Maybe thar's one in them other parts.

LUMPY: Nope! Thar ain't none in them parts either. Saddlesore?

SADDLESORE: No bridge in my parts.

FUZZY: *(To PEARL.)* Is there a bridge in your parts?

PEARL: Fellas, that was just a figure of speech.

THE MEN look like deer in headlights.

PEARL: It means we'll solve that problem later.

GRUBBY: Oh, I see! That way it gives whoever's buildin' that bridge a little more time to git it builded.

OTHER MEN: That's makes sense. Sure does! I git it!

PEARL: Right. Round four. A good sidekick always makes the worst tastin' coffee in the west. Now, I understand each of you brewed up a cup of your own special blends, right?

MEN: *(The MEN go to the US side of the table and stand by their cups.)* Right! Righchere in them cups. Ready to go!

PEARL: *(SHE is on the DS side of the picnic table, walking its length and holding her hand over each cup.)* Good, they're all still a little warm. I never favored cold coffee. *(SHE starts at one end of table and works her way to the other end by taking a sip from each cup.)* We'll start with this one. Whose is it?

SADDLESORE: Mine.

PEARL: What's yer name, Cowboy?

SADDLESORE: Saddlesore Sam, ma'am.

PEARL: I ain't yer mamma neether!

SADDLESORE: Sorry, m... Miss Pearl.

PEARL: *(SHE sips it and makes a horrid face.)* That is pretty durn foul! What's in it?

SADDLESORE: Horse apples and turnip root.

PEARL: *(SHE has moved to the next cup and sips. Another terrible facial expression.)* Whooo! That is nasty, Mr....?

GRUBBY: Grubby. Thank you.

PEARL: What were yer ingredients?

GRUBBY: Castor oil and gun powder.

PEARL: (*Moving on.*) And now you, Fuzzy. (*SHE sips, same horrible reaction.*) This stuff could melt a horseshoe. What'd ya use?

FUZZY: Kerosene and charcoal. Charcoal is for color.

PEARL: Good thing I got a strong stomach. And that leaves yers... Lumpy, right?

HE nods and SHE sips the last cup and is immediately incapable of speech; SHE simply passes out. There is a long pause as the MEN first look to one another, then lean forward to look over the table from the US side, down to the unconscious PEARL.

LUMPY: Does this mean I won, Ma'am?

BLACKOUT.

SCENE TWO

It's about fifteen minutes later. PEARL'S unconscious body has been removed. LUMPY is seated on the fence, with SADDLESORE leaning next to him. FUZZY and GRUBBY are seated on DS bench of the picnic table. There is a short pause after lights come up.

FUZZY: How long's it been now?

GRUBBY: Fifteen, twenty minutes maybe.

LUMPY: I won that last round.

GRUBBY: Ain't officially been announced.

FUZZY: Besides, the test was to make a bad tastin' coffee, not one that kills ya!

LUMPY: She was still breathin' when they hauled her over to the Doc's.

GRUBBY: Yeah, but I don't think the foamin' at the mouth was too good of a sign.

SADDLESORE: I agree with Lumpy. I think he won that round.

GRUBBY: What'd you know? You ain't even from these parts. You don't know what the coffee in these parts is supposed to taste like anyways!

LUMPY: Coffee's coffee! And parts is parts!

FUZZY: *(To LUMPY.)* What fer you stickin' up fer him? You two got some double cross going? You sidin' up agin Grubby and me?

SADDLESORE: It sounds like you two already done that.

GRUBBY: *(Adjusting his gun belt and confronting SADDLESORE.)*
Well, then maybe we jist oughta whittle down our odds right now.

SADDLESORE: Better watch yer step, Grubby. I'm an awful good whittler!

THEY face off.

GRUBBY: You mean awful bold talker!

SADDLESORE: Cos I'm an awful bold man!

GRUBBY: And I'm an awful bolder man!

SADDLESORE: And I'm an awful boldest man.

GRUBBY: And I'm an awful bolderest man!

Another WOMAN enters. SHE wears dark clothing with a high collar blouse. Her hair is tightly pulled up on top. Her glasses are on the end of her nose and SHE carries a wooden pointer stick. SHE is a very stern, hardnosed schoolmarm. SHE also has the end of a rope in her hand. The rope extends on offstage. SHE releases it and lets it lie on the stage.

HILDEGARD: That will be quite enough, gentlemen! Sidekicks are not quick draws. The two of you would just shoot off your own toes. Besides, your grammar is atrocious!

FUZZY: Hey, tweren't you my fourth grade teacher?

HILDEGARD: *(SHE smacks him on the head with her pointer.)* Raise your hand to speak! And there is no such word as "tweren't!"

FUZZY: Tisn't?

HE is whacked again.

FUZZY: Ow!

HILDEGARD: Hand! And I was everyone's fourth grade teacher.

LUMPY: Not mine. I didn't make it that fer.

HILDEGARD: *(SHE smacks him on the head.)* No hand! *(SHE whacks GRUBBY'S hand with the pointer.)* Get your fingers away from that hog leg!

GRUBBY: Ow! Yes, ma'am.

HILDEGARD: Sit down!

MEN: Yes ma'am! *(THEY all immediately sit, regardless of where THEY are currently located.)*

HILDEGARD: My name is Miss Hildegard Heinie, *(flaunting pointer.)* and the first one of you who snickers at that gets this up side his head. I am Mr. Rafferty's other personal secretary.

LUMPY: *(Aside to SADDLESORE.)* Boy, they just keep popping outta the wood pile, don't they?

HILDEGARD: *(SHE whacks LUMPY on the head with the pointer.)* Raise your hand if you have something to contribute, Mr....?

LUMPY: Lumpy. Yes, ma'am.

HILDEGARD: *(In LUMPY'S face.)* If the distracting comments continue, Mr. Lumpy, your head will reflect your name. Are we on the same page?

LUMPY: I ain't quite sure of what all ya just said, ma'am, but I do get the jist of it.

HILDEGARD: Very good, Mr. Lumpy. I am here to conduct the next round.

FUZZY holds up his hand.

HILDEGARD: Yes, Mr....?

FUZZY: Fuzzy, ma'am.

HILDEGARD: Yes, Mr. Fuzzy?

FUZZY: Who won the last round?

HILDEGARD: Whose cup of coffee caused Pearl to get her stomach pumped?

LUMPY: That was mine, ma'am.

HE is whacked on the head.

LUMPY: OW!

HILDEGARD: Where was the hand, Mr. Lumpy? (*Makes a mark on clipboard.*) Congratulations, you won that round. Which of you is Mr. Grubby?

GRUBBY holds up his hand.

HILDEGARD: Well, Mr. Grubby, it appears that you are the only contestant who has not won a round. Let's hope you do better on this next challenge.

SHE reaches down and grabs the rope SHE had brought in earlier. SHE pulls onto stage a dummy mounted on a small rolling platform. The dummy is a standing scarecrow figure dressed as a desperado.

SADDLESORE: Looks like my uncle.

HILDEGARD swats him on the head with her pointer.

SADDLESORE: OW!

HILDEGARD: I did not see your hand raise, Mr. Saddle sore. Now, Round five.

SADDLESORE raises his hand.

HILDEGARD: Yes, Mr. Saddle sore?

SADDLESORE: We ne'er finished round two.

HILDEGARD: We'll cross that bridge when we come to it.

GRUBBY raises HIS hand.

HILDEGARD: Yes, Mr. Grubby.

GRUBBY: Jist when are we gonna come to that there bridge, ma'am? We ain't even left this corral yet.

LUMPY: I'd still like to know where the durn thing is!

HILDEGARD whacks LUMPY on the head with her pointer.)

LUMPY: OW!

HILDEGARD: Raise your hand, Mr. Lumpy!

LUMPY: (*Rubbing his head.*) I'm **glad** I never made it to the fourth grade!

SHE whacks LUMPY again.

LUMPY: Ow!

HILDEGARD: Still no hand, Mr. Lumpy! Any more comments? Anyone?

ALL shake their heads no.

HILDEGARD: Good. Then we shall proceed. Round five! Every sidekick is a terrible marksman and quickly runs out of bullets. When they do run out, they always throw their pistols at the villain. Please take your positions at the table.

The MEN do as ordered as SHE crosses to the straw dummy.

HILDEGARD: This is the villain! In front of each of you is a wooden pistol. (*SHE crosses back to the table.*) Please pick them up.

THEY do.

HILDEGARD: You will notice that the weight is very similar to an empty six shooter.

GRUBBY: Ain't no trigger. (*HE is whacked on the head.*) Ow!

HILDEGARD: I did not see a hand go up, Mr. Grubby. There ISN'T ANY trigger because you don't need one.

GRUBBY: How can...?

SHE raises her pointer, HE raises his hand. SHE nods to him to proceed.

GRUBBY: How can we shoot it if there ain't no trigger?

HILDEGARD: Please pay closer attention, Mr. Grubby. I said you have expended all of your bullets. The weapon is empty. Thus, there is no need for a trigger.

FUZZY raises his hand.

HILDEGARD: Yes, Mr. Fuzzy.

FUZZY: Where'd we spend them?

LUMPY: Yeah, I ain't never been able to buy anything with a bullet.

HE is whacked.

LUMPY: Ow! I'm getting' plum tired of that!

HE is whacked again.

LUMPY: Ow!

SADDLESORE: *(Raises hand, then speaks.)* How do ya spend bullets?

HE is whacked.

SADDLESORE: OW! I raised my hand.

HILDEGARD: You did not wait for me to recognize you.

SADDLESORE: You already know who I am!

HE is whacked again.

SADDLESORE: OW!

HILDEGARD: ENOUGH! Would you all like to stay after school?

THEY look at each other, puzzled. SHE realizes what SHE said and regains her composure.

HILDEGARD: You will THROW the wooden pistols at the villain. *(SHE crosses back to the side of the dummy.)* This villain! One at a time! The first one to strike a blow directly on the head is the winner of the round. You throw from the far side of the table! Do you all understand? *(Pause.)* Do you all understand?

THEY all look at each other for a moment then nod their heads yes.

HILDEGARD: Who would like to begin?

LUMPY raises his hand.

HILDEGARD: Go ahead, Mr. Lumpy!

LUMPY looks at the OTHERS with a little grin, THEY all nod to him, and LUMPY throws the wooden pistol right at HILDEGARD.

HILDEGARD: Not me, you idiot!

Then SADDLESORE throws his wooden pistol at her.

HILDEGARD: STOP IT! YOU'RE DOING THAT ON PURPOSE!

SHE begins to retreat SR. Then GRUBBY takes a few steps towards her and throws his wooden pistol, also striking her.

HILDEGARD: OW!

FUZZY throws his at her. SHE is backing towards SR, protecting herself, as the MEN who have already thrown retrieve their wooded pistols and start throwing again. Soon SHE is being pelted with wooden pistols and chased off stage screaming. SHE has dropped her pointer in her hasty retreat. LUMPY picks it up, snaps it in two and throws it offstage.

LUMPY: YA FORGOT SOMETHUN'!

GRUBBY: *(Pushing straw dummy offstage.)* And take yer villain wit ya!

The MEN are laughing and whooping as THEY return to the table and refill their glasses of Red Eye.

SADDLESORE: *(Toasting.)* Here's to the fourth grade!

BY GEFF MOYER

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