

Pancakes, Pancakes!

by

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Adapted from the book by Eric Carle

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Representation:
Creative Artists Agency
www.caa.com

CHARACTERS

MOTHER/JACK 'S MOTHER

JACK

ROOSTER

MILLER/HENS

PRODUCTION NOTES:

The play is a celebration of Eric Carle's process and his work. Production and design choices should be guided by that principle.

CLOTHESLINE:

- *We should only see two lines, meaning that the pulley's at the ends of the clothesline should not be visible.*
- *The impressions given should be that the top line and the bottom line are unified, so when the bottom line is sent off-stage, the top line is sent on-stage in an infinite cycle. But, in practice, the two lines can work independently for production purpose.*
- *Mother has the power to move the clothesline and change its properties (it's height, distance from the audience, etc.) to suit the production.*

SCRIMS:

- *Ideally, the scrims also function as rear-projection and/or front-projection screens, but the technical elements are can to be as high-tech or low-tech as the parameters of each production require.*
- *The scrims should be somewhat transparent.*
- *The scrims should be as taut as possible, some structure within them is acceptable, and perhaps preferable.*
- *The scrims should be capable of flying into the wings or fly space thereby allowing us to create dimensionality, movement and multiple locations.*
- *Ideally, there will be slits cut into the scrims to allow for objects/characters to appear and disappear.*

SETS AND COSTUMES:

- *Everything projected on to, or attached to the scrims should be created in the style of Eric Carle's iconic artwork.*
- *Unless, otherwise indicated, everything we see on stage, including props and costumes, should be in this style.*
- *"..." "..." between scenes indicates that the scrim that the previous scene is attached to should fly off and the new scene should fly on.*

AT RISE:

SCENE ONE: A BLANK SPACE -- COMPLETELY WHITE

A white CLOTHESLINE (see NOTES on TITLE PAGE) stretches across the stage.

Behind the Clothesline, a Series of Overlapping White SCRIMS (see NOTES on Title Page).

Jack's MOTHER enters wearing a white lab coat that is covered in paint.

She's carrying a bucket of PALE YELLOW PAINT and a broom.

Mother takes the Pale Yellow Paint and dumps it on the floor.

She takes the broom and begins to spread the colors out into a large square.

Using tubes of paint found in the pocket of her lab coat, and pieces of carpet, etc. she embellishes the square adding texture, color and patterns.

Mother reaches down, and we discover that she's been painting on top of a large piece of tissue paper this whole time. She peels up a PALE YELLOW SQUARE.

Mother attaches Pale Yellow Square to the Clothesline and looks at it. Satisfied, she sends it off into the wings.

And ...

SCENE TWO: SUNRISE AND THE ROOSTER

... as Pale Yellow Square flies off, two other pieces of colored tissue (RED SQUARE 1 and RED SQUARE 2), painted and texturized, fly in on the Clothesline.

Mother take a pair of scissors out of her coat and cuts Red Square 1 into a RED CIRCLE.

Rooster shakes his head -- no?

Mother shakes her head. No.

Rooster pulls out a large, heavy book.
"ROOSTER GREETINGS THROUGHOUT THE
WORLD."

ROOSTER

(turns to a page)

In Deutschland sagt, ein Hahn, (singing) "KEE-KE-RI-KEE?"

Mother shakes her head and returns to
her work.

She flies in paper and begins to
assemble A KITCHEN SCENE.

Rooster, following her, turns to a
different page.

Mother shakes her head and flies in A
TABLE.

Rooster turns to another page.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

Zai Zhonguo, women shuo, "GOU GOU GOU?"

Mother, head shake, flies in A CHAIR.

Rooster, another page.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

En France, nous disons, "COCORICO?"

Mother, head shake, flies in A PITCHER
and A CUP.

Rooster, another page.

Mother, flies in RED PAPER and makes an
APPLE.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

(going down the list)

KUCKEPIKU?

MOTHER

(no)
Sweden.

Flies in A LADLE.

AKE-E-AKE-AKE?

ROOSTER

(no)
Thailand.

Flies in A CAT.

ROOSTER
(giving up)
GAGGALA GAGGALA GU?!!

MOTHER
(no)
Iceland!

Mother flies in a PROGRAM from the
Clothesline, or she gets a program from
an audience member, and hands it to
Rooster.

ROOSTER
(reading the program)
Aaat ... laaan ... taa, Georgia. [*Or INSERT wherever the play
is being performed.*]

Rooster searches through his book,
furiously. Finds the right page.

ROOSTER (cont'd)
In the United States the roosters say, (singing) "COCK-A-
DOODLE-DOO!"

The Red Early Morning Sun begins to
rise.

MOTHER
(yes)
COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO!

As it rises higher and higher up into
the sky, it CHANGES COLOR FROM RED TO
YELLOW.

As the color changes, a smile forms on
the face of the sun, and the lights in
the theater begin to brighten.

As the lights brighten, they begin to
illuminate a charming BUCOLIC SCENE --
a modest house with a thatched roof, as
though from a fairy tale.

Mother begins to add details to the scene with paints and with paper that she flies in on the Clothesline -- SMOKE FROM THE CHIMNEY, GREEN GRASS, etc.

ROOSTER

(singing)

COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO!! COCK-A-DOODLE-DO!!
TO CALL IN THE SUN AND BRING THE MORNING HERE TO YOU!

Suddenly ...

SCENE THREE: JACK'S HOUSE

ROOSTER

(to us)

"COCK-A-DOODLE-DOOOOOO!"

... JACK, a boy with tousled hair, pops up in the window of the house.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

... crowed the Rooster. Jack woke up, looked out the window and thought,

JACK

(the best idea ever)

I'd like to have a big pancake for breakfast.

Jack disappears from the window and ...

SCENE FOUR: MOTHER'S KITCHEN

... appears in the kitchen where there is A DARK DOORWAY that leads to a dark, cellar.

Rooster follows him on.

Jack sidles up next to the door.

JACK

(calling down)

Mother ...

MOTHER (OFF STAGE IN THE
CELLAR)

Yes, Jack.

JACK

I ... I'd like to have a big pancake for breakfast.

MOTHER (OFF STAGE IN THE
CELLAR)

I'm sorry. I can't hear you. Come down to the cellar.

Jack rushes away from the cellar and
sits at the table.

Mother emerges from the doorway.

MOTHER (cont'd)

There you are. I asked you to meet me in the cellar.

Mother flies BLUE-GREEN SQUARE 1 and
BLUE-GREEN SQUARE 2 in. She rolls them
into SLEEVES and attaches them to
Jack's shirt.

JACK

The cellar is scary.

MOTHER

There's nothing in the cellar to be afraid of.

She pecks him on the head and starts to
trim his hair with her scissors.

JACK

Then how come I'm scared?

MOTHER

(good point)

Alright then, what was it that you wanted?

JACK

(the best idea ever)

I'd like to have a big pancake for breakfast.

MOTHER

Well, Jack- ... I'm busy and the cupboards are empty. So, you
will have to help me.

JACK

How can I help?

MOTHER

We'll need some flour.

The kitchen flies away then ...

SCENE FIVE: A FIELD OF WHEAT

... Mother goes to the wings and
unfurls a LONG ROLL OF GOLDEN PAPER.

As she pulls the Golden Paper out, the scene changes so that it appears as though we are in an OCEAN OF GOLDEN WHEAT that pulses and breathes in the wind as far as the eye can see.

Jack, only his head visible amidst the Ocean of Golden Wheat, appears from the wings.

He pulls a DONKEY behind him -- a Donkey that's missing it's ears.

Mother flies on some GREY PAPER and fashions the paper into the Donkey's EARS.

Then, she flies a sickle in, detaches it from the Clothesline and hands it to Jack.

MOTHER

Take a sickle and cut as much wheat as the donkey can carry. Then take it to the mill.

The MILL appears on one of the Scrims in the far distance.

MOTHER (cont'd)

The miller will grind it into flour.

JACK

But, that's so much wheat. Can't you cut it for me?

MOTHER

I'm too busy.

JACK

Why?!

Mother holds the sickle out to Jack.

MOTHER

Do you want a pancake or not?

Reluctantly, Jack takes the sickle and begins to cut the wheat.

Mother exits.

1. PANCAKES SONG ONE WHEAT

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE ABOUT
 A POUND OR SO OF FLOUR THEN YOU
 HAVE TO SICKLE DOWN ONE TENTH OF AN ACRE OF WHEAT.
 SWING THE SICKLE LOW A LITTLE LIKE
 YOU WANT TO GIVE THIS PATCH OF GROUND
 A LITTLE HAIRCUT BUT REMEMBER TO BE CAREFUL OF YOUR FEET.

Cutting the wheat is arduous work, but eventually, Jack has cleared the stage of all the wheat.

ROOSTER

When Jack had cut enough wheat,

Jack bundles up the wheat.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

he put it on the donkey's back ...

Jack hoists the bundle on to the donkey's back.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

And took it to the miller.

Jack leads the laden donkey off-stage.

Suddenly, a whole FLOCK OF SPARROWS soars up from A DISTANT WHEAT FIELD and blocks out the sun. When they disperse ...

SCENE SIX: OUTSIDE OF THE MILL

... we find that the Mill that was in the distance has now moved into the foreground -- up close, we can see the details of the OUTSIDE OF THE MILL -- a stout stone wall, pastoral architecture, a red roof, a smoking chimney, a crane roosting in a large nest, and a large WATER WHEEL.

Mother enters with a BUCKET OF BLUE PAINT and the broom.

She dips the broom in the bucket and touches it to the Water Wheel.

In a sweeping motion, she draws the broom down, and with it, bright ribbons of BLUE-GREEN-YELLOW-WHITE FABRIC.

[NOTE: the effect can also be created with a rear projector.]

The Blue-Green-Yellow-White Fabric becomes a STREAM, and we hear the flow of the water.

The Water Wheel begins to turn.

Mother exits.

The MILLER enters carrying large BUNDLES OF WHEAT.

Jack enters with his laden donkey.

JACK

Miller, Sir.

MILLER

Hello, Jack.

JACK

Can you grind this wheat for me? I need it for a big pancake.

MILLER

I'm sorry, I can't.

JACK

Oh. Why not?

MILLER

I make flour for the whole village. It wouldn't do for me to make flour for just one big pancake.

JACK

My mother says our cupboards are empty and we have no flour to make a pancake.

MILLER

You could buy a bag of flour.

JACK

I haven't got any money.

MILLER

Then I'm sorry, Jack. There's nothing I can do.

Miller heads downstage and begins to spread out his Wheat.

JACK

(to Donkey)

Oh no! What am I going to do?! Eat eggs, I guess.

ROOSTER
Eggs?!

JACK
Scrambled.

ROOSTER
(an arm around Miller)
Listen. I hear that you're short-handed today.

MILLER
It's true. My cousin, Walter, the baker, who usually helps me, is busy making some new kind of bread for the Duke.

ROOSTER
Well, if Jack adds his wheat to your pile and helps you with your work, you could certainly pay him with a bag of flour.

MILLER
That could work.

JACK
How can I help?

MILLER
First, we need to separate the grain from the chaff.

TWO FLAILS fly in on the Clothesline.
Miller and Jack take them.

ROOSTER
(to us)
The miller gave Jack a flail and spread Jack's wheat onto the ground.

Jack and Miller spread the Wheat onto the ground.

ROOSTER (cont'd)
And Jack helped with the threshing.

Jack and Miller begin to flail the Wheat on the ground.

2. PANCAKES SONG TWO GRAIN/FLAIL
FLAP THAT FLAIL, SPIN IT ALL AROUND
WHACK THAT WHEAT THAT'S LAYING ON THE GROUND
TWO TIMES FIVE; I KNOW IT'S A PAIN
BUT YOU GOT TO FLAIL THE WHEAT IF YOU WANT TO GET THE GRAIN

YOU HIT TWO TIMES FIVE TIMES EIGHT TIMES NINE,
THAT'S YOUR PILE AND THIS ONE'S MINE
YOU GOT TEN TIMES FIFTEEN FORTY-FOUR BOOM!
YOU DONE MADE A MESS SO YOU BETTER GET THE BROOM.

As Jack and Miller thresh, the stage begins to fill with the dust from their threshing. Pieces of straw fall from the ceiling.

Jack and Miller disappear into their work; they disappear into the DUST.

When all the dust settles there are two piles: one LARGE PILE OF STRAW and one SMALL PILE OF GRAIN.

Jack's hair is covered in dust and straw, and he's tired. This was hard work.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

And soon, there was a big pile of straw and chaff and a small pile of grain.

JACK

All that work, and all that wheat for such a small pile of grain!

Miller bends over the Small Pile of Grain with a bag.

MILLER

That's just the way of things. But, that will be enough to make the biggest pancake you've ever seen. Come on,-

Jack helps Miller sweep the grain into a burlap bag. *[NOTE: The word "sweep" should be interpreted loosely here. Production designers should feel free to assemble up this "grain" however they choose.]*

MILLER (cont'd)

Good work Jack. Two pairs of hands means half the work.

JACK

(re: the bag of grain)

Are we ready to make a pancake with this?

MILLER

Not yet. Come, let's grind this wheat into flour.

Jack and Miller exit and ...

SCENE SEVEN: INSIDE THE MILL

... we find ourselves INSIDE THE MILL -- wooden beams, wheels and cogs.

Mother is there, struggling with something very heavy on the Clothesline, which nearly sags to the ground.

Mother flies in a very HEAVY LOOKING SHEET OF GREY PAPER. When she picks it up, TWANG!, the Clothesline shoots back into place, but Mother has no problem manipulating the Grey Paper.

She takes out her scissors and cuts the Grey Paper into a large MILLSTONE and attaches the Millstone to the Scrim amidst the wheels and cogs.

Jack, Miller and Rooster enter.

Mother draws a SPIDERWEB onto the rafter and exits.

CAMEO: The VERY, BUSY, SPIDER, descends and looks out on to the scene.

ROOSTER

(to us)

The miller poured the grain on a large flat stone.

Miller pours the grain on a large flat stone.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

(pointing at the millstone)

On top of it was a round millstone connected to the water wheel on the outside of the mill.

We hear the familiar sound of water from the stream and the creaking of the water wheel.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

The water wheel turned round and round, turning the millstone round and round too, to grind the grain into flour.

3. PANCAKES SONG THREE MILL WHEEL

A MILL WHEEL WEIGHS ABOUT A THOUSAND POUNDS

YOU GOT TO USE IT IF YOU WANT TO GET YOUR GRAIN GROUND DOWN

THIS IS THE HOPPER PUT YOUR GRAIN RIGHT IN IT

THE WHEEL TURNS A HUNDRED AND TWENTY TIMES A MINUTE

AND IT GRINDS ON DOWN AND IT GRINDS ON DOWN MILL WHEEL'S
TURNING AROUND AND AROUND

IT DOESN'T TAKE LONG TO GET ONE POUND OF FLOUR

YOU WON'T HAVE TO WAIT MORE THAN HALF AN HOUR.

YOU WON'T HAVE TO WAIT MORE THAN HALF AN HOUR.

Miller scoops the FLOUR into a bag.
[NOTE: Again, "scoops" should be interpreted liberally.]

ROOSTER (cont'd)
 At last the miller handed Jack a bag of flour.

MILLER
 Here you go, Jack. Enjoy your pancake.

Miller hands Jack a BAG OF FLOUR.

JACK
 Thank you!

Miller shakes Jack's hand.

MILLER
 And come back to help out any time.

JACK
 I will!

Jack throws the Bag of Flour over his shoulder and races off stage, followed by Rooster ...

SCENE EIGHT: A CHICKEN COOP

... The sound of HENS clucking.

We find ourselves in front of a CHICKEN COOP -- a WHITE DOG atop. The Hens are inside.

Mother is there, using a paintbrush to embellish the GRASS.

A SNAIL crawls across the grass throughout the scene.

CAMEO: The HUNGRY CATERPILLAR follows it.

Jack rushes on, the Bag of Flour on his shoulder.

JACK
 Here's the flour! Let's make ... A PANCAKE!

MOTHER
 Not yet.

JACK
Huh?

MOTHER
Now we need an egg.

JACK
(frustrated)
What?

MOTHER
You can't make a pancake without breaking a few eggs.

ROOSTER
You too?

Mother pats Jack on the head and exits.
Beat.
The Caterpillar has turned itself into a BUTTERFLY and flies off.
Jack watches it go with delight. Then,
...

JACK
Alright. Time to go get an egg.
... Rooster clears his throat.

ROOSTER (cont'd)
Jack ...
Slowly, Jack turns around. Rooster is standing in front of the Chicken Coop looking unhappy.

ROOSTER (cont'd)
Where do you think eggs come from?!

Rooster's arms fold across his chest.

JACK
(more trepidation)
I need it for-

ROOSTER
A big pancake?!

Jack swallows hard.

JACK
... a big pancake.

ROOSTER
Mm-hm. Do you know how hard it is for a hen to lay an egg?

Rooster points Jack to the wings.
"Scram."

ROOSTER (cont'd)
Cockle-doodle-do.

Jack begins to trudge off. He puts his hands in his pocket and finds some grain.

The CHEEPING OF CHICKS from the Chicken Coop.

Jack smiles and tosses the grain into the Chicken Coop to the sounds of grateful chicks.

Then, under Rooster's stern glare, he continues on his way.

HENS (FROM THE COOP)
(they have an idea)
Bwuck-bwuck-bwuck! (etc.)

ROOSTER
(doesn't like the idea)
Cockle-doodle-!

HENS (FROM THE COOP)
(he'd better listen!)
BWUCK-BWUCK-BWUCK! (etc.)

ROOSTER
Cockle-doo-!

Rooster and Hens have an extended and heated argument in "Chicken."

Rooster can't get a work in edgewise.

A torrent of squawking, punctuated by feathers flyings out of the chicken coop. The Hens squawk.

Rooster loses the argument.

ROOSTER (cont'd)
(just as Jack is about to exit
into the wings)
Jack ...!

Jack stops and turns around.

JACK

Yes?

ROOSTER (cont'd)

(a proposal)

Jack went to the black hen, and fed her and her chicks all the grain that had slipped into his pocket while he had been threshing.

Jack reaches into his pocket and pulls out more grain. He tosses it into the coop.

We hear the COMMOTION of a coop full of chickens leaping from their perches and eating the grain.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

And he promised to bring back grain every time he threshes wheat for the miller.

JACK

I can do that. I will do that.

We hear the sounds of LABORIOUS COMMOTION -- a hen laying an egg. It's hard going.

A clock ticks.

Rooster paces, concerned by what's happening in the coop.

4. PANCAKES SONG FOUR EGG
 YOU DON'T NEED A ROOSTER TO LAY AN EGG
 IT STARTS WITH LIGHT, IT STARTS WITH LIGHT
 A HEN SEES THE SUN AND IT STARTS THE EGG
 IT NEVER--HAPPENS--AT NIGHT

B PART:

SHE SITS ON THE NEST FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES
 AND THEN SHE STANDS UP AND IT STARTS
 SHE LOWERS HER BACK AND SHE RAISES HER TAIL
 AND 30 SECONDS LATER SHE UP AND DEPARTS

A PART:

IT STARTS WITH LIGHT, THAT'S HOW IT'S BEGUN
 AND ISN'T IT AMAZING THAT IT LOOKS LIKE THE SUN?
 ONCE EVERY DAY SHE DELIVERS DELIGHT
 AND IT NEVER--HAPPENS--AT NIGHT.

The Laborious Commotion reaches its peak and ends.

Rooster goes into the Chicken Coop and emerges with an EGG.

Rooster hands the egg to Jack.

JACK (cont'd)
(sees the value of the egg)

Thank you.

Jack rushes off stage with the precious Egg ...

SCENE NINE: A MEADOW

... Mother stands in the meadow, next to a PAPER SHREDDER, putting the final touches on a LARGE COW.

She attaches a BELL to the Cow's neck. It rings.

The Cow moos.

She flies in a GREEN SQUARE. She feeds the Green Square into the Paper Shredder and feeds the GRASS to the Cow.

Jack emerges with the Egg.

JACK

Mother!

MOTHER

Jack!

Mother feeds the cow some more "grass."

The Large Cow moos.

JACK
(holding up the egg)

The hens gave me an egg.

Mother takes the Egg.

MOTHER

That's wonderful.

JACK
 (hopeful)
 Let's make a pancake?

MOTHER
 Now we need some milk.

Jack sighs, but he rolls up his sleeves, ready for the next task.

Mother takes the top of the Paper Shredder off. It is now a MILK PAIL.

She sets the milk pail under the cow's udder.

Jack sits down and begins to milk the Large Cow.

Mother exits.

We hear the milk streaming into the Milk Pail as the cow moos.

JACK
 (counting)
 One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

Jack finishes just as Mother re-enters.

JACK (cont'd)
 Here's the milk! Let's make a pancake!

MOTHER
 Uh-uh. We need some butter.

Jack tears his hair in frustration.

Mother flies in a CHURN on the Clothesline and sets it down before Jack.

She takes wadded up WHITE PAPER from Jack's bucket and places it in the Churn.

MOTHER (cont'd)
 Here's some cream from the top of the milk. Sit down and churn it into butter.

Jack sits down and begins to churn furiously.

Mother places her hand on his shoulder.

5. PANCAKES SONG FIVE BUTTER
 MILK THE COW
 SKIM OFF THE CREAM
 PUT IT IN THE CHURN
 YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN

SHAKE IT UP AND DOWN
 FOR ABOUT 20 MINUTES
 OPEN UP THE CHURN
 AND YOU GOT BUTTER IN IT

SCRAPE OUT THE CHURN
 YOU GOT YOUR BUTTER
 GO ON TAKE IT IN
 AND SHOW IT TO YOUR MOTHER

Mother's singing calms Jack down and he churns steadily and carefully.

After a while, Jack opens up the lid of the Churn. Mother looks in. She's pleased.

MOTHER

I think that's enough.

JACK

Finally! The cream turned into butter. Let's make a pancake.

MOTHER

Not quite.

Jack sighs.

Mother flies in a piece of WAX PAPER. She takes a BUTTERY YELLOW PIECE OF PAPER out of the churn and wraps it in the Wax Paper.

MOTHER (cont'd)

Come with me.

She helps Jack to his feet and they rush off stage to ...

SCENE TEN: A FOREST

... a white stage with a few LIMBS FROM TREES sticking in from the wings. An AX is stuck into a stump.

Jack and Mother enter.

MOTHER

We need to build a fire, and we'll need firewood.

Mother flies in a LONG THIN STRIP OF BLUE PAPER that extends across nearly the entire Clothesline.

She cuts small triangles out of the bottom of the paper transforming it into A SAW.

She sends the Clothesline back into the wings until the point where only a foot or two of the Blue Saw remain visible on stage.

She pulls the Clothesline back and forth and we hear the sound of the saw biting into wood.

MOTHER (cont'd)

Don't forget to chop it when you're through.

Jack hangs his head. Tired. Frustrated. Hungry.

Mother puts her arm around him.

MOTHER (cont'd)

You're almost done. And, it's going to be a really, really, really, really, really big pancake.

That puts a smile on Jack's face.

With that, she pats him on the head and exits.

Jack steels himself and goes to the clothes line. He begins to saw the Clothesline back and forth, and we hear the sound of the sawteeth biting into wood.

6. PANCAKES SONG SIX WOOD
FIRST MAKE A NOTCH CUT 10 INCHES WIDE
AT THE ANGLE OF 90 DEGREE
THEN YOU MAKE A BORE CUT NICE AND DEEP
ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE TREE

THEN YOU LET GRAVITY DO THE REST,
G-R-A-V-I-T-Y
THE TREE FALLS DOWN
TOWARD THE NOTCH
I WOULDN'T EVER TELL YOU A LIE

THE YOU PUT THE ROUND ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK
 STAND WAY BACK AND TAKE GOOD AIM:
 AIM FOR THE CENTER, LET THE AXE FALL
 AND TRY TO SPLIT ALONG THE GRAIN.

TRY TO LET GRAVITY DO THE WORK
 G-R-A-V-I-T-Y
 SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG BUT IT MIGHT TAKE AN HOUR I WOULDN'T EVER
 TELL YOU A LIE

YOU'RE GONNA NEED ABOUT
 A QUARTER OF A CORD
 TO MAKE THIS KIND OF FIRE
 A STACK OF SPLITS
 ABOUT 4 FEET HIGH
 OR MAYBE JUST A LITTLE BIT HIGHER

Jack, at the end of his strength,
 struggling ... struggling ...
 struggling until ... he slips and falls
 down.

But ... CREEAAAAK! ... in the wings the
 sounds of limbs cracking. The Tree
 Limbs disappear from view.

We hear the crash of a large tree
 falling. The world shakes. Leaves fall
 from the sky.

SILENCE.

We hear some birds.

Jack sits looking at the tree he's
 felled.

He stands up and picks up the ax.

With great resolve he heads off stage
 to chop the tree into firewood ...

SCENE ELEVEN: MOTHER'S KITCHEN

... Mother stands before a table with
 ALL OF JACK'S INGREDIENTS laid out in
 front of her.

Rooster peeks his head in through the
 window.

She goes to a WOOD-FIRE STOVE. She flies in a GREY-BLACK SQUARE and cuts it into a FRYING PAN.

Suddenly, the Clothesline sags all the way to the ground.

Jack rushes in.

JACK

Mother, I'm home!

MOTHER

Jack! Where's our firewood?

Jack begins to pull on the Clothesline. He pulls and pulls with all his might, until ...

... a HEAVY LOOKING BROWN SQUARE is pulled on to the stage. There are some GREEN LEAVES still attached to it.

Jack removes the Brown Square from the Clothesline and TWANG! the Clothesline shoots back into place.

But, Jack has no problem manipulating the Brown Square once it's off the Clothesline.

He takes the Heavy Looking Brown Square and tears it into strips -- FIREWOOD.

JACK

Here's the firewood. Let's make a pancake?!

MOTHER

Alright, Jack! Let's make a pancake.

JACK

Hooray!

Jack does a dance and gives Rooster a high-five.

7. PANCAKE SONG SEVEN CELEBRATION

PAN-CAKES

(HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH) PANCAKES, PANCAKES

(HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH)

WE FINE'LY GET TO MAKE IT

I DON'T THINK THAT I CAN TAKE

BUT THERE CAN BE NO MISTAKE IT

IS AT LAST WE CAN PANCAKE IT
 AND I HOPE THAT WE DON'T BREAK IT
 OR OBTAIN A BELLY-ACHE IT
 WOULD BE TERRIBLE TO FAKE IT
 OR SHAKE A RATTLESNAKE
 IF IT'S A DREAM I HOPE I WAKE IT
 BECAUSE NOW IT'S TIME TO MAKE IT
 SING IT!
 PAN-CAKES
 (HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH)
 PANCAKES, PANCAKES
 (HALLELUJAH, HALLELUJAH)
 LET'S EAT!

MOTHER

But ...

All celebration is abruptly halted.

Jack turns white.

Beat.

JACK

But ...?

MOTHER

But, wouldn't you like to have something sweet on your
 pancake?

JACK

(relief!)

Yes!

MOTHER

What would you like?

JACK

Strawberry jam!

MOTHER

Strawberry jam sounds delicious!

JACK

Yes!

MOTHER

The strawberry jam is in the cellar.

Jack turns white again.

JACK

The cellar?!

The Dark Doorway to the cellar is flown
back in.

JACK (cont'd)
Maybe I don't need strawberry jam. Maybe I'll just-

MOTHER
Oh! You can go and tap a tree for syrup!

JACK
Tap a tree?!

MOTHER
And bring sand to the glass blower to blow into a bottle-

JACK
A glass blower!

MOTHER
And pulp some wood to make a paper label for the /bottle-

JACK
Pulp /some-?

MOTHER (cont'd)
/For your paper binder, you have your choice of Styrene
acrylic, dextrin, or oxidized starch. My personal preference
would be a natural starch like carboxymethyl cellulose. (a
new idea) Oh-!

ROOSTER
Jack! Just go get the strawberry jam!

Jack looks like he might cry.

Mother goes to him and puts her arm
around him. Jack hugs her close.

JACK
It's dark in the cellar.

MOTHER
Your eyes will adjust.

JACK
(wants to cry)
Can't you go and get it for me?!

MOTHER
You can cut wheat, load a donkey, separate grains from chaff,
grind flour, milk a cow, churn butter, and cut firewood,
can't you? Didn't you do all those things today?

JACK
(with pride)

Yes, I did.

ROOSTER

And he fed the hens.

MOTHER

That's right! Well, then I think you've worked entirely too hard to let a dark cellar keep you from having a pancake with your favorite strawberry jam.

Jack separates from Mother and stands up tall.

MOTHER (cont'd)

Go. While you're getting the jam, I'll start making the pancakes. They'll be hot and crisp when you get back. What do you say?

JACK
(still with trepidation)

I say, "okay."

MOTHER

Okay. Rooster and I are right at the top of the stairs.

Jack heads into the Dark Doorway ...

SCENE TWELVE: THE CELLAR

... the stage is dark and we see nothing except for Jack.

Above Jack, we can see the LIGHT FROM THE DOORWAY to the kitchen. We can vaguely see MOTHER'S FORM up there.

Jack creeps in the darkness.

He knocks into something.

JACK

Mother!

MOTHER (FROM THE KITCHEN)

Jack, Jack, what do you see?

JACK

I can't see anything.

MOTHER (FROM THE KITCHEN)

Sounds like you need a lantern.

JACK

Where am I going to find a-?

Jack looks down and realizes that his sleeves are made of paper. He tears them off and sees that he has two Green Squares.

He takes Green Square 1 and tears it in half. He turns flips it over so that the white underneath the green faces out.

He forms the piece of paper into a cylinder.

He uses Green Square 2 and forms a handle on top of the lantern. He takes another piece of paper and forms the base of the lantern.

JACK (cont'd)

I have a lantern, Mother! I made a lantern. But ...

Mother comes down the steps.

MOTHER

(impatient)

"But," what?

JACK

I need your help.

MOTHER

Jack-

JACK

I'm not supposed to light it!

Mother smiles.

MOTHER

I can do that for you.

Nonchalantly, mother lights a match and lights the lantern.

A beautiful flame begins to glow.

Mother turns around and heads back up. She stops at the top of the stairs.

MOTHER (cont'd)

Nice lantern, Jack.

Mother exits.

Illuminated, we see that the cellar is a beautiful place filled with delicious things to eat.

As Jack searches through the cellar, he sings ...

8. PANCAKCES SONG EIGHTS STRAWBERRY JAM

STRAWBERRY JAM
 4 CUPS OF BERRIES
 STRAWBERRY JAM
 THE RECIPE NEVER VARIES:
 LEMON JUICE AND SUGAR
 AND HOT STERILE JARS
 HEAT IT UP, AND COOL IT DOWN
 IT'S BETTER THAN CAVIAR
 STRAWBERRY JAM
 IS GOOD ON PANCAKES
 STRAWBERRY JAM
 HAS GOT WHAT IT TAKES
 OPEN UP AND SPOON IT OUT
 AND THERE YOU ARE:
 STRAWBERRY JAM IS BETTER THAN
 SWINGING ON A STAR.

Once he finishes, the beam from his lantern falls squarely on a JAR OF STRAWBERRY JAM.

JACK

Found it.

Lights shift ...

SCENE THIRTEEN: MOTHER'S KITCHEN

... back in the kitchen. Rooster has assembled the ingredients.

ROOSTER

(to us)

In the kitchen, Jack's mother had filled the table with the flour, the egg, the milk, the butter.

Mother appears from the Dark Doorway.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

There was also a mixing bowl, a cup, a wooden spoon, a pitcher, a ladle, a frying pan, a plate, a knife, fork, and spoon ...

Mother goes to the table and begins to make the pancake batter.

ROOSTER (cont'd)

She put a cupful of flour into the bowl ...

MOTHER

Not just flour, but rather

*

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE ABOUT
A POUND OR SO OF FLOUR THEN YOU
HAVE TO SICKLE DOWN ONE TENTH OF AN ACRE OF WHEAT.

TWO TIMES FIVE; I KNOW IT'S A PAIN
BUT YOU GOT TO FLAIL THE WHEAT IF YOU WANT TO GET THE GRAIN

A MILL WHEEL WEIGHS ABOUT A THOUSAND POUNDS
YOU GOT TO USE IT IF YOU WANT TO GET YOUR GRAIN GROUND DOWN

Mother clips the Flour to the
Clothesline.

ROOSTER

She broke an egg into the flour and stirred ...

Mother takes Rooster's hand.

MOTHER

Not just an egg, but, rather

YOU DON'T NEED A ROOSTER TO LAY AN EGG
IT STARTS WITH LIGHT, IT STARTS WITH LIGHT
A HEN SEES THE SUN AND IT STARTS THE EGG
IT NEVER--HAPPENS--AT NIGHT
SHE SITS ON THE NEST FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES
AND THEN SHE STANDS UP AND IT STARTS
SHE LOWERS HER BACK AND SHE RAISES HER TAIL
AND 30 SECONDS LATER SHE UP AND DEPARTS

*

Mother tears the Egg in two. Rooster
winces.

Mother clips both pieces to the
Clothesline.

ROOSTER

Jack's mother heated the frying pan over the fire ...

MOTHER

Not just a fire, but rather,

*

FIRST MAKE A NOTCH CUT 10 INCHES WIDE
 AT THE ANGLE OF 90 DEGREE
 THEN YOU MAKE A BORE CUT NICE AND DEEP
 ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE TREE
 TRY TO LET GRAVITY DO THE WORK
 G-R-A-V-I-T-Y
 SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG BUT IT MIGHT TAKE AN HOUR
 I WOULDN'T EVER TELL YOU A LIE

Mother clips some of the Firewood to
 the Clothesline.

ROOSTER

And added a piece of butter ...

MOTHER

Not just butter-

ROOSTER

But rather ...

ROOSTER/MOTHER

*

SHAKE IT UP AND DOWN
 FOR ABOUT 20 MINUTES
 OPEN UP THE CHURN
 AND YOU GOT BUTTER IN IT
 SCRAPE OUT THE CHURN
 YOU GOT YOUR BUTTER
 GO ON TAKE IT IN
 AND SHOW IT TO YOUR MOTHER

Mother clips the Butter to the
 Clothesline.

ROOSTER

The butter melted fast.

Mother sends all of the ingredients off
 into the wings.

She heats the Frying Pan on the Stove.

She pulls the Clothesline back and we
 find that the ingredients have been
 replaced by the original Pale Yellow
 Square that we saw mother make at the
 top of the play.

Mother unclips the Pale Yellow Square,
 wads it up and sticks it into the
 pitcher.

She holds the ladle to the mouth of the pitcher, tips the pitcher, and miraculously, real pancake batter flows out.

She ladles the real pancake batter into the pan. It sizzles when it touches the metal.

Jack emerges triumphantly from the cellar.

JACK

I got the jam!

ROOSTER

COCKLE-DOODLE-DOOO!

MOTHER

(to Jack)

Now watch. I'll turn the pancake over. Ready?

JACK

Ready!

MOTHER

Flip.

ROOSTER

Up and over went the pancake high in the air and landed right in the pan. In another minute or two, the pancake was crisp on the underside as well.

Jack gets a plate and Mother slides the BIG PANCAKE on to the plate.

JACK'S MOTHER

Okay, and now, you must ...

JACK

Oh Mama. I know what to do now!

Jack sets down the plate.

He picks up the pancake and holds it up ... it's a GOLDEN SQUARE.

Just as he's about to eat it-

BLACKOUT.

END OF PLAY.