The Day the Cornfield Stood Still

A Comedy in Two Acts
by Dean L. Dyer

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DEDICATION

It is dedicated to my parents, L.D. and Vonnie Dyer, who have always made home a welcoming place.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Elise Sims has just finished college, and she's ready to take on the world. Now she just has to tell her family about her plans. But they live in Oyer's Corners, a town full of odd folks who make a living by selling tours and souvenirs to UFO seekers. Elise's grandfather, Jebediah Sims, started the UFO legend nearly forty years ago when he claimed he was abducted and taken aboard a flying saucer. New technology is making it increasingly difficult to fake UFO evidence, and the townsfolk are struggling to keep the legend -- and Oyer's Corners -- alive. One faction in town even wants to change the focus to hunting for sasquatches! When a pair of FBI agents appear and announce they are investigating allegations of fraud, it seems all is lost until a couple of real aliens reveal themselves! They open a temporary "portal" that connects Oyer's Corners to the rest of the planets in the galaxy. They declare that the townsfolk will serve on a committee to determine the location of the permanent portal on Earth. In Act II, a host of outrageous politicians, celebrities and religious leaders compete to have the permanent portal opened in their own favorite locations, all of which helps Elise to see her hometown in a new light.

PREMIERE PERFORMANCE

The Day the Cornfield Stood Still premiered for four performances on April 28, 2011, at the Western Community Arts Center in Parma, Michigan. It was produced by Western High School Theatre Arts Department. *(Please see end of script for original cast and crew list.)*

This play was inspired by the short story "The Big Front Yard," by Clifford D. Simak.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(12 M, 14 W, 5 Flexible; doubling possible; extras as aliens.)

ELISE SIMS: Recent college graduate.
ANDREA: Elise's more worldly college roommate.
BARB SIMS: Elise's mother, restaurant operator.
BETTY SIMS: Barb's sister-in-law, restaurant operator.
MR. QUASAR: Mysterious newcomer.
MRS. QUASAR: Mysterious newcomer.
LULU: Old woman who reads minds, only mumbles.
ANNABELLE: Lulu's sister and interpreter.
FLORA JEAN: Middle-aged woman, avid bargain hunter.
LESTER: Old man, always fixing something.
JEBEDIAH SIMS: Elise's grandfather, UFO abductee.
ESTHER JO: Elderly bigfoot hunter, Jebediah's younger sister and Breezy's mom.
RYAN LECRONE: Young police officer, Elise's former boyfriend.
MELVIN: Another police officer, not the brightest.
MAYOR HOGWEED: Town mayor, indecisive and nervous. *(Flexible role; written as female in script.)*
JUNIOR: Bobby's friend and admirer, Mayor Hogweed's son.
BOBBY RAY: Young townie, obsessed with his monster truck.
BREEZY: Another of Bobby's gang. *(W)*
AGENT MUDDLER: FBI agent investigating fraud in Oyer's Corners. (M)
AGENT SCURVY: Muddler's partner. *(W)*
SS AGENT 1 - 4: *(Flexible)* Secret service agents. *(Doubling possible)*
PRESIDENT TACHZMOOR: President of the United States.
THOM CRUDE: Obnoxious Hollywood star.
LINZEE LOWCUT: Another obnoxious Hollywood star.
REVEREND I. M. FOHNEY: Famous televangelist.
SHAMMY FAYE: Rev. Fohney's wife.
REGINALD*:* Non-speaking Sasquatch. *(Doubling possible)*
MARTHA: Non-speaking Sasquatch. *(Doubling possible)*

SETTING

Please see drawing at end of script.

Current day at the Flying Saucer Cafe. The door to the kitchen is up center, and counters with stools flank it. The cash register sits on the left side of the counter. Five or six tables with chairs are scattered about. The back wall of the restaurant is covered with UFO-related posters and other paraphernalia; a sign that says "The Flying Saucer Cafe"; and a chalkboard listing daily specials, which includes "Bett's UFO Special." A standing sign that says "Gift Shop" points off left, while another standing sign with the tour schedule points off right. Rain and occasional thunder can be heard outside. Overall, have fun with this set. An "I Want to Believe" poster from The X-Files is a must! Also add signs advertising merchandise, a cork board with newspaper clippings from "sightings," spaceship models, etc. The weirder the better!

ACT I

Scene 1: Flying Saucer Cafe, Saturday morning.
Scene 2: Flying Saucer Cafe, late Saturday night.
Scene 3: Flying Saucer Cafe, Sunday morning.
Scene 4: Flying Saucer Cafe, Sunday evening.

ACT II

Scene 1: Flying Saucer Cafe, Monday morning.
Scene 2: A secluded spot in the town park, late Monday morning.
Scene 3: Flying Saucer Cafe, Monday afternoon.
Scene 4: Flying Saucer Cafe, Monday evening.

SFX: Thunderstorm and occasional flashes of lightning; a monster truck engine shutting down; bell when café door opens.

(Please see additional Production Notes at end of script.)

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: Flying Saucer Cafe, Saturday morning. BETTY is near the cash register. The QUASARS are seated at a table down left. BARB has a coffeepot and is offering them a refill, but they refuse and begin to stand. SFX: Thunderstorm and occasional flashes of lightning.)

MR. QUASAR: No, thank you. We have things to do today and must get coming.
MRS. QUASAR: Going. He means we must get going.
BARB: *(Laughs.)* Coming, going. When you get to be our age it's all the same if you really think about it.

(The QUASARS look at each other briefly then laugh far too enthusiastically. They make their way up to the cash register where BETTY is waiting while BARB picks up their dishes and heads for the kitchen.)

BETTY: HI folks. How was everything?
MRS. QUASAR: Oh, we did not have everything. We just had coffee and rolls.
MR. QUASAR: They were nutritious and satisfying.
BETTY: Uhhh, yeah. Great. That'll be $4.65 please.
MRS. QUASAR: I will give you a five dollar bill and you can give me back 35 cents. Is that correct?
BETTY: *(Pauses, assessing them.)* Sure. You folks just moved into the old Osborne place, didn't you?
MR. QUASAR: That is correct. We are from Toledo. That is a city in the state of Ohio, population 293,131.
MRS. QUASAR: Oh, 293,129 now.
BETTY: Well, welcome to Oyer's Corners. I'm Betty, and my sister-in-law, Barb, was your waitress. We appreciate you coming in.
MR. QUASAR: Coming, going. When you get to be our age it's all the same if you really think about it. *(The QUASARS burst into loud laughter again.)*
BETTY: Uhhh ...yeah. *(Waiting for them to leave.)* Well, try to stay dry out there.

(The QUASARS stop laughing abruptly and stare at her.)

MRS. QUASAR: Out where?
BETTY: *(Pointing off left).* Out there. You know...on the way to your car.

(MR. and MRS. QUASAR look at each other again and nod with understanding.)

MRS. QUASAR: Oh, yes. Outs*ide.* On the way to our car. Because it is raining.
MR. QUASAR: Yes. Thank you. We will be going now.
MRS. QUASAR: Coming, going. When you get to be our age it's all the same if you really think about it.

(The QUASARS burst into loud laughter again as they exit left. BARB enters from kitchen.)

BETTY: *(With her back to Barb, still watching the Quasars.)* Do you find those two to be a little strange?
BARB: Yeah, a little. But then strange is what we do around here. Besides, the way the weather has been lately, everybody is gettin' a little stir crazy. I think it's rained every day since the Quasars moved in.

(BETTY shrugs and nods in agreement. SFX: A loud crash of thunder and the roar of a loud truck engine shutting down is followed by the sound of the cafe door banging open. JEBEDIAH, ESTHER JO, ANNABELLE, LULU, LESTER, MAYOR HOGWEED, FLORA JEAN, BOBBY RAY, JUNIOR, MELVIN and BREEZY enter en masse from right, closing umbrellas, shaking off and hanging up rainwear, and clustering around the tables. JEBEDIAH remains standing and scopes the restaurant out. ESTHER JO sits on the left side of the counter. ANNABELLE and LULU sit next to each other at a down center table. MAYOR HOGWEED and FLORA JEAN sit at down right table. LESTER sits on the left side of counter up from Esther Jo and immediately begins repairing something there. BOBBY RAY, JUNIOR, MELVIN, and BREEZY work their way to up left and circle a table but remain standing. BETTY and BARB circulate pouring coffee, taking orders, etc.)

End of Freeview

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