



R. Eugene Jackson

Norman Maine Publishing

YOUNG DAVY CROCKETT
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"...I HAVE LEARNED MORE'N
I EVER THOUGHT
WOULD FIT
IN THIS BIG OLE HEAD
OF MINE."

-DAVY CROCKETT

YOUNG DAVY CROCKETT

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HISTORY/COMEDY. Told with warmth and plenty of down-home humor, this play chronicles Davy Crockett's early life (1801-1804) in a series of easy-to-stage scenes. The story begins with Davy's life at the Crockett family tavern, Davy's wilderness adventures after he runs away from home, and Davy's return to Tennessee and his engagement to Polly Findley. There's also a delightful town dance and Davy's infamous recitation of an ill-written love poem, which he devised to win Mary Hutch's heart. Davy Crockett is best known as a frontiersman, congressman, storyteller, and author, but it was Davy's early years that laid the foundation for his place in American history.

Performance Time: Approximately 70-80 minutes.

YOUNG DAVY CROCKETT

ABOUT THE STORY

This play is based on a factual account of Davy Crockett's young life (1801-1804); however, some events have been altered for dramatic effect. For example, Davy was actually 12-15 years old at the time of this story, but the condensation of events in the play require him to be older.

YOUNG DAVY CROCKETT

CHARACTERS

(7m, 8 w, 1 girl, extras)

DAVY CROCKETT: 15-18, adventurous; wears a hunting knife in a sheath on his belt.

JOHN CROCKETT: Davy's father.

MRS. REBECCA CROCKETT: Davy's mother.

SARAH: 21, Davy's sister.

ELIZABETH: 19, Davy's sister.

REBECCA: 7, Davy's sister.

ADAM MYERS: Wagoner.

WILLIAM GALBREATH: Farmer.

POLLY FINDLEY: 15-18, sweet on Davy.

MRS. FINDLEY: Polly's mother.

BOBBY HUTCH: 16, tall, formally dressed in clothes that are too small for him.

MRS. KENNEDY: Quaker, teacher.

WOMAN

OLD MAN

MRS. GRAY: Farmwoman.

CAPTAIN FORRESTER: Ship captain.

EXTRAS: As tavern patrons, frolic-goers, sailors.

YOUNG DAVY CROCKETT

SETTING

East Tennessee and Baltimore, 1801-1804. The Crockett's tavern has a bar and several tables and chairs.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: Interior of John and Rebecca Crockett's country tavern, 1801.

Scene 2: The exterior of Polly's house.

Scene 3: An outdoor dance area, late afternoon.

Scene 4: Outside Mary Hutch's house, a short while later.

ACT II

Scene 1: A wilderness trail.

Scene 2: A road in the wilderness, a few weeks later.

Scene 3: Interior of the Crockett's tavern.

Scene 4: A street in Baltimore near the docks.

Scene 5: The interior of the Crockett's tavern, months later.

YOUNG DAVY CROCKETT

PROPS

Ale mugs	Stuffed squirrel
Forks	Letter
2 Plates of food	Shawl
Ale pitcher	Bag of clothes
Broom	Cane
Musket	2 Water buckets
Cups	Broken wagon wheel
Plates	Papers
Silverware	Pencil
Pans	Mop
Cleaning and serving items	Cleaning rags
Horse whip	Pistol
Butter churn (or peas to shell, or clothes to fold)	Coins
Cloth game bag	Money pouch
	Duffle bag

SOUND EFFECTS

Upbeat song suitable for period	Horses whinnying
"Old Dan Tucker"	Horses galloping off
Music for dance scene	Loud crash
Traveling music	Pistol fire
	Dreamy music

YOUNG DAVY CROCKETT

ACT I SCENE I

(AT RISE: Interior of John and Rebecca Crockett's country tavern, 1801. John Crockett works at the bar while his wife, Rebecca, is busy serving tavern patrons. Mr. Myers and Mr. Galbreath are seated at a table. A whip lies on the table next to Myers and the two already have a mug of ale each. Davy carries a broom. His three sisters – Sarah, Elizabeth, and Rebecca – carry out other duties of the tavern. Tavern patrons sit at tables and eat and/or drink and listen to an upbeat song of the period. The sisters may dance to all or part of the song. There is applause afterward.)

MRS. CROCKETT: *(Following the song.)* Here you are, Mr. Myers, Mr. Galbreath. *(She places two plates of food on the table and goes back to cleaning.)*

MYERS: Ah! Just what the doctor ordered. Thanks, Miz Crockett. *(Myers and Galbreath dig in. To Galbreath as they eat.)* And that wasn't the worst of it, William. Them horses took off like they'd been struck by a bolt of lightnin'. There I was, hanging on fer dear life, the wagon bouncing back and forth and up and down like a wild bull. I knowed fer sure that was the end of me.

(Davy stops sweeping and listens.)

GALBREATH: Was it?

MYERS: What?

GALBREATH: The end of you?

MYERS: Naw. First, I gave 'em a lash with my whip. *(He shows the whip.)* Then I pulled up my courage and leaped on the backs of the first team of horses, then up on the next team, until I was astride the lead team. I grabbed them two critters by their ears and banged their heads together to knock some sense into them. But they wouldn't listen. They

was still buckin' and kickin'. So I wrassled them to the ground and punished them.

DAVY: (*Unable to restrain himself.*) How'd ya do that, Mr. Myers?

MYERS: Well, Davy, I made them stand in the corner fer a week! (*He and Galbreath laugh. Myers holds up his mug.*) Another round, Miz Crockett.

MRS. CROCKETT: Comin' right up, Mr. Myers.

DAVY: (*To Myers*) Is that a true story, Mr. Myers?

MYERS: Ain't nuthin' but, young Davy.

DAVY: Wish I could be a wagoner and have adventures like that.

GALBREATH: If you want to have adventures, Davy, you don't want to be no wagoner like Myers here. Even us farmers have our fun. Why, I could tell you stories...

(*Mrs. Crockett fills their mugs from a pitcher.*)

MRS. CROCKETT: David, you stop listenin' to these crazy tales and get back to work, you hear? (*She returns to her work.*)

DAVY: Yes, Ma. (*Davy sweeps only until Mrs. Crockett is out of sight. To Galbreath.*) Yeah? Tell one.

GALBREATH: What?

DAVY: Tell me a story.

GALBREATH: Well, all right, boy, if you've a mind to listen. One summer I went trackin' the Great White Buffalo. I'd heard tell he was tall as an oak and as big as a barn. And shore 'nuff, he was. I found him at a waterin' hole. I snuck up on him by climbin' a tree and leapin' on his back. He turned his head 'round and says to me, he says, "Who're you?" I says, "I'm William Galbreath, and I'm takin' you back East." So he starts jumpin' and moooin' and clawin' and buckin'. But I stayed on. He jumped clean over the Tennessee River. But I hung on. Fer 90 days and 90 nights he kept it up. Still I hung on.

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DAVY: And what happened?

GALBREATH: I'm comin' to that part, Davy. Finally, I says to him, I says, "You can jump and moo and claw and buck till Christmas, but I'm gonna hang on till I die." *(He pauses.)*

DAVY: What happened then?

GALBREATH: Well, sir, he kilt me—right then and thar. *(The two men laugh.)* And I ain't been the same since.

(Galbreath and Myers laugh again.)

DAVY: Wow! Maybe I could be a buffalo hunter.

GALBREATH: Better watch out. You might get yoreself kilt, too.

(They laugh.)

DAVY: I'm a purty good bar [*bear*] hunter.

MYERS: You don't say.

GALBREATH: Them stories get around. Is it a fact you shot your first bar when you was ten?

DAVY: No. That's a lie. *(Pause.)* I was eight.

GALBREATH: Eight? Well, well. That's mighty young.

DAVY: And I didn't shoot him. I stared him down—till he jist layed down and died.

MYERS: Stared him to death!

(They laugh.)

DAVY: An' I done won three dollars and a quarter of beef at the shootin' contest. That's how good I am.

GALBREATH: You don't need to be a wagoner or a hunter, Davy. Seems to me you got enuff adventures right here.

DAVY: No, Mr. Galbreath. I gotta git out and see thangs and do thangs. I wasn't made fer sittin' home and tendin' the tavern or a field.

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GALBREATH: Don't you think you ought to get a little book-larnin' first? You ever been to school?

DAVY: Why, shore.

(Sarah, Elizabeth, and Rebecca approach the table.)

SARAH: Four whole days!

DAVY: Well, I might decide to go back fer four more days.

GALBREATH: Four days? That don't sound like much.

DAVY: That's more'n I need. *(He picks up his musket.)* I got Ole Betsy here. Together, we can do most anythang. Why, I can shoot a flea off a bird's wing at a hundred paces. I can skin a bar quicker'n you can say "Davy Crockett." And I can fight better'n a cornered wolf. I don't need no schoolin'. All I need is some wide roamin'.

JOHN: David, why don't you *roam* back to the pantry and git your ma some more flour.

MYERS: Well, that's some purty wide roamin', I'd say. All the way to the back room.

(Myers and Galbreath laugh.)

DAVY: Yes, Pa. *(He hesitates and turns to Sarah.)* And Mary Hutch? She's goin' with me, shore as the moon comes out tonight.

SARAH: Mary Hutch? Bobby's sister?

ELIZABETH: Yore dreamin', Davy.

DAVY: Why do you say that, Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH: 'Cause Sarah and me seen her with that other boy.

SARAH: That's right.

ELIZABETH: That...what's-his-name?

REBECCA: Uh, Richard?

ELIZABETH: That's it. Richard Bottoms.

GIRLS: *(Sassy.)* Ewww!

DAVY: That don't mean nuthin'. A boy and a girl can walk together.

SARAH: But they wasn't walkin'.

REBECCA: They was kissin'.

DAVY: Naw. Ya got that wrong, sis. She's my girl. An' we're planning on marryin' up tomorrow.

SARAH: Well, she may be marryin' up, but it won't be with you.

GIRLS: (*Sassy.*) Ewww!

DAVY: (*To the men, indicating the girls.*) A man cain't trust his sisters 'cause they're always joshin'.

SARAH: Ain't joshin' this time, Davy.

GALBREATH: Take heed, boy. Maybe they know somethin' you don't.

MRS. CROCKETT: Girls? Back to your chores. (*They pause.*) Now!

GIRLS: (*To Davy.*) Ewww!

(*Sarah, Elizabeth, and Rebecca return to their jobs.*)

DAVY: (*Obviously trying to change the subject.*) You got any more stories, Mr. Myers?

(*Myers shows his whip again.*)

MYERS: I got more stories than I can shake a whip at, boy, but I thank you best do as yore pa says.

(*Davy glances at John.*)

DAVY: (*To Myers.*) Jist one more.

MYERS: Naw. I ain't got time to waste on you. When you git to be a man, ask me agin. Till then, you oughta be mindin' yore pa.

GALBREATH: Oh, give the kid a break, Myers.

MYERS: He don't need no break, Galbreath. What he needs is a big dose of good hard work. And I ain't so much as seen him raise that broom since we been here.

DAVY: I do my chores.

MYERS: Well, do 'em someplace else.

JOHN: David Crockett!

DAVY: Yes, Pa. I'm goin', Pa. *(To Myers and Galbeath.)* Next time yore in town then. *(He exits into a back room.)*

GALBREATH: Shore. Next time.

(Myers stands.)

MYERS: Well, so long, Galbreath. Gotta rest up fer my next trip to Baltimore. Got a load of yore grain and other stuffs to deliver.

GALBREATH: You was just a little hard on the boy, don't you thank?

MYERS: Naw, I don't. See ya next trip. *(He picks up his whip, gives it a sharp snapping action, and smiles.)* Gotta have a good whip with that horse team of mine.

(Myers exits. Galbreath calls after him.)

GALBREATH: Take it easy, Myers. And don't let them horses git away from you. *(He chuckles to himself and takes a drink from his mug.)* Well, John, guess I need to git on myself. It's gittin' late.

JOHN: William, I wonder if I might speak with you.

GALBREATH: Why, shore, John. What's this about?

(Mrs. Crockett and John cross to Galbreath.)

MRS. CROCKETT: The truth is, Mr. Galbreath, our little tavern here isn't doin' so well.

(Galbreath looks at the other tavern patrons in the room.)

GALBREATH: Looks good to me. Right here on the trail twixt Abington and Knoxville. Ever'body passes through here sooner or later.

JOHN: You'd think so. But most of the time, we don't have the customers it takes to keep the place open.

MRS. CROCKETT: Ever since that storm came up and wiped us out back in Cove Creek, we ain't been doin' so good.

GALBREATH: Yeah, you and me, John, we built that thar mill up from nuthin', and along comes this flood and washes the whole thang away. Laid us both pretty low fer a spell.

JOHN: But, with your new farm up here, you've gotten back on yore feet. We're still strugglin'.

MRS. CROCKETT: And not makin' it.

GALBREATH: Well, what can I do to help ya?

MRS. CROCKETT: We're a little hard up jist now, and some bills are overdue.

GALBREATH: Are ya askin' fer money?

JOHN: A loan. A few dollars to tide us over.

MRS. CROCKETT: We'll pay ya back. Honest.

GALBREATH: Well, I dunno. I ain't doin' that great myself.

(Pause. He glances at Mrs. Crockett.)

JOHN: All right. Well, thanks anyway, William.

(Galbreath takes a few steps away.)

MRS. CROCKETT: Come back to see us again, Mr. Galbreath.

(He stops and turns back to them.)

GALBREATH: Well, I guess I could spare a few dollars.

MRS. CROCKETT: Oh, Mr. Galbreath!

GALBREATH: Fer a few months.

(Mrs. Crockett goes to Galbreath and takes his hands.)

MRS. CROCKETT: Thank you. Thank you.

(John shakes Galbreath's hand.)

JOHN: It'll help us git back on our feet fer shore.

(They smile and congratulate each other. Uplifting music plays through the scene change. Blackout.)

SCENE II

(AT RISE: The exterior of Polly's house. Polly is at work, churning milk, shelling peas, or washing or folding clothes and humming to herself. Mrs. Findley, Polly's mother, enters.)

MRS. FINDLEY: Polly, are you goin' to the frolic with us this afternoon?

POLLY: Yes, ma'am. I'm hopin' to catch a certain man's eye there.

MRS. FINDLEY: Not that wild boy, Davy Crockett, I hope. He's a rascal and a braggart.

POLLY: *(With a smile and a sigh.)* Yes, Ma. I know.

MRS. FINDLEY: Well, hurry it up. Lunch will be ready soon's your pa gets in. *(She exits into the house.)*

POLLY: Yes, Ma.

(Bobby Hutch enters.)

BOBBY: Howdy, Polly Findley.

POLLY: Oh, how do, Bobby Hutch. What are you doin' way out here?

BOBBY: Jist walkin' by.

POLLY: It's a mighty long walk from yore place to be jist walkin' by.

BOBBY: Yeah. I jist found that out. I come by to take you to the frolic. I'm a bit early, but I thought I'd stay fer lunch.

POLLY: Well, Bobby, I'm goin' with my ma and pa and sisters. And I don't remember invitin' you to lunch.

BOBBY: Aw, you don't want to go with them. Not when I'm around. I'm real tough, you know. I can lick most anybody in Jefferson County.

POLLY: What's lickin' folks got to do with the frolic?

BOBBY: Well, I know gals like big, strong men like me, that's whut. So I let 'em know how tough I am.

POLLY: It means nothing to me.

BOBBY: Shore it does, Polly. You'd look good on my arm. Other gals'd be mighty jealous of you. *(Pause.)* When's lunch?

POLLY: My lunch is comin' soon. As fer yore's, maybe you better ask yore own ma.

BOBBY: Oh, come on, Polly. I come all this way.

POLLY: You should have asked me sooner.

BOBBY: Why? We're both goin', ain't we? So why don't we jist go together?

POLLY: Well, I, uh, I got other plans, that's all. I thought... *(Davy walks by carrying his musket and a bag of game. Polly becomes excited.)* Why, there's Davy Crockett. Davy? Oh, Davy?

DAVY: Oh, hey, Polly. What'cha want? Hey, Bobby.

(Bobby grunts a reply.)

POLLY: *(To Davy.)* Well, I, uh, am I goin' to see you at the frolic this afternoon?

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DAVY: I reckon so. After all, I'm the best hot-footer 'twixt here and Knoxville, ain't I?

POLLY: Well, I guess you are.

(Bobby glares at him.)

DAVY: What you doin' way out here, Bobby? And what you doin' all dressed up in that there preacher suit?

BOBBY: I come out here to take Polly to the frolic, if it's any of your business. And I don't see as how it is.

POLLY: I've already told him I'm goin' with my ma and pa, Davy. I'll be wearin' my new white dress with white lace and pretty pink bows. *[Note: Describe the dress she will be wearing if different.]*

DAVY: That's nice. *(Pause.)* Well, I gotta git home, Polly. Family's a-waitin' fer this meat I got here.

POLLY: Cain't you stay a few minutes?

BOBBY: *(To Polly.)* Aw, let him go. Who cares?

POLLY: I care.

DAVY: Cain't stay. I got to git myself all spruced up. Gonna ask Mary Hutch to marry me today.

POLLY: *(Shocked.)* Mary Hutch? Yore gonna wed Mary Hutch?

DAVY: Yep. I'm gettin' the itch to move on, Polly, an' I'm aimin' to get hitched up first an' take my woman with me.

BOBBY: My sister ain't gonna marry you. She's got better sense than that. She ain't gonna marry no illiterate, foul-smelling country boy like you.

(Davy puts his musket and game bag down.)

DAVY: You take them words back, Bobby Hutch, or I'll thrash you right here and now. I'll tear you up and scatter yore pieces all over East Tennessee.

(Bobby moves closer to face Davy.)

BOBBY: You and who else? I'll skin you alive and hang yore carcass out to dry.

POLLY: Now, boys. Stop that fussing.

DAVY: *(To Bobby.)* I'll break you in two and feed half of you to the wolves and the other half to the bars.

BOBBY: I'll break yore head off and use it for a cork on my fishin' line.

POLLY: Bobby! Davy! Please don't start a scuffle in my front yard. Ma'll get awful mad.

DAVY: He called me foul smellin'.

BOBBY: And il-literate.

DAVY: What's that? Some kind o' animal?

BOBBY: It means you cain't read.

DAVY: Can so.

BOBBY: You wouldn't recognize yore own name if you saw it printed on a piece of paper.

DAVY: Would so.

POLLY: Will you two please stop this? If you have to fight, do it someplace else. Davy, you be careful. Bobby is real big.

BOBBY: And real strong, too. I'm gonna prove it to him right now.

DAVY: Come on and git it, Bobby Hutch.

(They lock arms, growl at each other, and circle. Mrs. Findley enters from the house.)

MRS. FINDLEY: Bobby Hutch and Davy Crockett, I see you two! *(Arms still locked, they stop and look at her.)* Now get on down the road if you're goin' to fight. I don't want none of it in my yard. Go on, now. *(They break off and glare at each other.)* That's better. And keep it that way. *(She exits into the house.)*

BOBBY: I'll get you! And you ain't marryin' my sister.

DAVY: Any time. And I am, too. She almost done agreed on it.

POLLY: *(Almost in tears.)* Davy Crockett, you...you hard-headed...! And Bobby Hutch, get off our property. I never want to see either of you again—ever! Do you hear me?

BOBBY: *(To Polly.)* All right. If that's the way you want it. *(He starts off.)* I'll be at the frolic. You'll know me because I'll be the one surrounded by all the purty girls. If you want to dance with me, you'll have to stand in line. *(He struts off.)*

DAVY: What'cha cryin' 'bout, Polly? Somethin' wrong? You ain't cryin' over a little tussle, are ya? *(She sniffs.)* Well, what are you cryin' 'bout? *(She sniffs again.)* Well, I got to git home and skin this game. *(He starts off and stops.)* Polly, will you stop cryin' if'n I give you some of this meat? *(He pulls a bloody squirrel from his bag and holds it up. She screams and turns her back.)* It's jist a squirrel. I know it ain't as good as bar meat, but it's still real tasty. *(She does not answer.)* I guess that ain't gonna help none. *(He stuffs it back into his bag.)* Well, I gotta move on. The world's passin' me by, and I ain't seen enuff of it yet.

POLLY: *(Through her tears.)* Davy Crockett, are you completely blind? Cain't you see what's happenin' here?

DAVY: Well, I see yore a-cryin'.

POLLY: And don't you know why?

DAVY: I guess I don't, Polly. You wanna tell me?

POLLY: No.

DAVY: *(Exasperated.)* Well, if'n you don't tell me, how am I s'posed to know?

POLLY: I don't want to tell you what your own eyes should be showin' you. If you'd try openin' them up.

DAVY: My eyes 'er open.

POLLY: But they're not seein'.

DAVY: I see good enuff so's I can shoot straight and find my way through the woods.

POLLY: *(Angrily.)* Oh, go away, Davy. Go away and don't come back. Do you hear me? Go on, now. Go!

DAVY: All right. I'm goin'. I jist don't know what all this "you ain't seein'" and "you must be blind" stuff is all about. *(He picks up his things.)* I'll wave to ya at the frolic. *(He exits.)*
POLLY: Yes. You do that, Davy. You do that. *(She wails, stomps her foot, and exits into the house in frustration. Music plays for the scene change. Blackout.)*

SCENE III

(AT RISE: An outdoor dance area, late afternoon. Music is playing and people are dancing. Present are John and Mrs. Crockett and their three daughters; Galbreath and his wife; Mrs. Kennedy who does not dance; and other Frolic-goers as desired. At the end of the number, people applaud, cheer, and then gather in small groups with cups of refreshments and plates of food. Bobby approaches Sarah, Elizabeth, and Rebecca.)

BOBBY: Hey, Sarah Crockett. Wanna dance with me? I'm admired by one and all, and I'm a real good dancer.
SARAH: You don't know how to dance. All the girls are complainin' 'bout you steppin' on their toes.
BOBBY: That's 'cause they don't know all the fancy steps I know.
SARAH: I think it's 'cause you don't know what to do with your feet.
BOBBY: Well, shore I do. I put 'em on the ground, wait fer the music to start, and then I jump around and stomp the ground...like this. *(He sings and stomps awkwardly.)* Huh? What ya thank of that?
SARAH: I think my mule can dance better'n that. *(She moves to another part of the dance area.)*

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BOBBY: Well, Elizabeth, I guess that means I'm all yores...at least fer now.

ELIZABETH: I don't think so.

(Elizabeth crosses to Sarah. Bobby watches her leave and then turns to tiny 7-year-old Rebecca. Brief pause.)

REBECCA: *(To Bobby.)* Don't even think it!

(Rebecca crosses to Sarah and Elizabeth. Davy enters near Bobby.)

BOBBY: Well, who am I supposed to dance with then?

(Bobby turns and comes face to face with Davy.)

DAVY: Don't look at me. I ain't dancin' with you!

BOBBY: And I ain't asked you.

DAVY: But I am the best dancin', prancin', double shufflin' *wildcat* in these here parts.

BOBBY: More like a *polecat*, I'd say...and a stinkin' polecat at that.

DAVY: And if you weren't Mary's brother, I'd flatten you fer that.

BOBBY: Go ahead and try it, Davy Crockett.

DAVY: I thought you was gonna be fightin' off all the womenfolk, Bobby. You musta struggled right valiant-like 'cause I don't see none of 'em around you at all.

BOBBY: There was a long line of them just waitin' fer me, but I told them I was tooken. I said I'm savin' myself fer Polly.

DAVY: Did you tell Polly that?

BOBBY: She'll find out soon enough.

DAVY: And soon as she does, she'll be headin' fer the hills...hidin' from you. *(He laughs.)*

BOBBY: You ain't funny.

DAVY: Well, I must be. I'm a-laughin'. *(He laughs again.)*

BOBBY: What are you doin' here? I thought you'd be skinnin' them squirrels 'bout now.

DAVY: They're done skint, and I'm here to dance with Mary. I'm a might late, but she was s'posed to meet me here. I don't see hide nor hair of her.

BOBBY: You ain't likely to, neither. Leastways, not here.

DAVY: What does that mean? You ain't took her off and hid her, have you? 'Cause, if you have, I'm likely as not to wipe up the dance floor with yore shirt...and you still in it.

BOBBY: Just try it, pumpkin head. I could take you on any time. *(Pause.)* I shouldn't oughta give you this, but she made me promise.

DAVY: Give me what?

BOBBY: This message. *(He pulls a letter from his pocket.)*

DAVY: Is that fer me? From Mary?

(Davy reaches for it. Bobby pulls it back.)

BOBBY: That's right, lover man. *(He tosses it to the ground.)*
Read it. If you can. *(He exits, laughing.)*

DAVY: *(Calls after him.)* Ain't nothin' wrong with bein' a lover-man, Bobby Hutch. *(He picks up the letter and smells it. He smiles.)* Smells right nice. It's from Mary, all right. I'd know that smell anywheres. *(He opens it.)* And it's got writin' on it. *(He holds up the letter and turns it several ways.)* I wonder what it says?

(Mrs. Kennedy approaches Davy.)

MRS. KENNEDY: *(To Davy.)* I thought I recognized thee, Davy Crockett. Is it a letter thee is reading?

DAVY: Well, uh, yeah, Miz Kennedy. It shore is. What are you doin' here? I thought you Quakers didn't cotton much to dancin'.

MRS. KENNEDY: Thee is correct. But we enjoy the company of our neighbors like everyone else.

DAVY: Well, there are a lot of folks enjoyin' themselves here.

MRS. KENNEDY: I thought I might talk thee into returning to the school room, Master Crockett. Thee has been there only three days –

DAVY: Four.

MRS. KENNEDY: Four days in thy 15 years. Thee cannot learn much in so few days. I would be happy to take thee aside for extra bookwork.

DAVY: Why would you do that?

MRS. KENNEDY: Why? Because thee has such potential, Master Crockett. With thy natural senses and a little book-learning, thee could be somebody important – maybe even a politician or a writer – if thee had a mind to.

DAVY: Naw, Miz Kennedy. I don't need no book-learnin'. I got my musket, and I know the wilderness like I know my own hand. That's all I need. Thar's plenty of fish and game in them woods to keep me goin'.

MRS. KENNEDY: There won't always be, what with more and more settlers moving in all the time.

DAVY: Well, when the game gets short, I'll jist move on farther west.

MRS. KENNEDY: Into the wild country? Thee is very brave.

DAVY: Naw. I jist wanna know what's over the next mountain, Miz Kennedy...what's across the next stream.

MRS. KENNEDY: As thee wishes. But the school is always open to thee. Come by whenever thee wishes.

DAVY: Thanks, but no thanks. *(He looks at the letter again.)*

MRS. KENNEDY: Does thee need help in reading the letter?

DAVY: What? Uh, no. I can read. Leastways, enuff to make this out. *(She moves away. Davy tries to read the letter.)* D-E-A...? What kind of writin' is it that goes round and down like that? I wonder if old Bobby Hutch was pullin' somethin' on me with this here note. D-E-A...R? *(The Music for "Old Dan Tucker" begins. Hearing the music, Davy stuffs the letter into his belt and calls out.)* Hold on. That's my song they're a-playin'. *(To the crowd.)* This one's mine, folks.

(Davy sings the words clumsily and off pitch but with gusto. Folks loudly, but in fun, protest his bad singing. He dances one chorus with one of his sisters. Later, they all join in for the final chorus. Afterward, folks applaud and cheer and ad-lib about Davy's awful singing.)

DAVY: Whoo-ee! That plumb tuckered me out. Thank I'll take me a breather.

(Davy gets himself a drink as Polly enters with her mother. Both are dressed for the frolic.)

MRS. FINDLEY: Looks like the whole town is here today, Polly.

POLLY: And then some, Ma. *(She spots Davy.)* Uh, Ma, you go ahead. I see someone.

(Mrs. Findley looks in the direction of where Polly is staring.)

MRS. FINDLEY: Not that wild Crockett boy! *(Polly smiles.)* Well, what's a mother to do?

(Mrs. Findley sighs and then mixes with the others. Polly crosses to Davy.)

POLLY: Well, howdy, Davy. I didn't 'spect to see you here all alone.

DAVY: Reckon I didn't 'spect to be all alone, Polly. I'm waitin' fer Mary Hutch.

POLLY: Oh, sure. Mary Hutch. *(She becomes coy.)* How do you like my new dress? Ma and I made it. I'm getting real good with the spinnin' wheel and the loom, you know. Ma's a real good teacher. And I can do all sorts of things around the house. I can churn, clean...take care of young-uns. I have a bunch of brothers and sisters, you know.

DAVY: I have a gaggle of 'em myself. Some of us work in Pa's tavern. A couple of my older brothers done went off on their own, though. Ain't seen John Junior in near 'bout two years. 'Bout ready to strike out on my own, too, soon's I wed up with Mary.

POLLY: Do you really love her? I mean, really deep down?

(Davy considers the question.)

DAVY: Cain't say as I do right now. Only knowed her three days, Polly. She's been livin' with her uncle in North Carolina, I hear tell. Jist come to East Tennessee a few weeks ago. But I'll larn to love her, sure's I can shoot a bar at 200 yards.

POLLY: Well, you know, some people think you ought to have love fer a woman afore you marry her.

DAVY: Cain't wait, Polly. I'm tellin' you, my want to travel is hot inside me...mighty near hot 'nuff to bust my boilers.

POLLY: But what if some girl who's attractive and good at homemakin' was to fall in love with you? Like right now?

DAVY: Ain't no such person... 'cept maybe Mary Hutch.

POLLY: *(Angrily.)* Mary Hutch, Mary Hutch! That's all you think about, Davy Crockett!

DAVY: So it is, Polly. But ain't that right if'n I'm 'bout to wed her?

POLLY: Oh, Davy! Why can't you understand?

DAVY: Understand whut?

POLLY: Oh, nuthin'. Nuthin' at all.

(Bobby enters, spots Polly, and crosses to her.)

BOBBY: Howdy, Polly. You look mighty fetchin' today. Purty dress.

POLLY: Well, at least *you* noticed.

BOBBY: I, uh, got rid of all them gals that was beggin' me to dance with 'em. Told 'em I was savin' all my dances fer you.

POLLY: Oh, Bobby, no. I don't want to.... *(She looks at Davy and then back at Bobby.)* Oh, all right. Let's dance.

(Dance music plays. Everyone dances, with Polly and Bobby playing prominent roles. Davy returns his attention to the letter.)

DAVY: D-E-A... *(He watches the dance.)* To heck with any old letter. My feet's burnin' to mix it up. Look out, folks. Here comes Davy Crockett, the best dancin', prancin', double-shufflin' wildcat in these parts. *(He jumps into the circle and does a wild solo. The others clap and urge him on. At the end, he falls into Bobby's arms. Bobby promptly drops him.)* Ouch! *(He gasps for breath as he stands. To Bobby.)* Dancin's near 'bout as hard as pullin' a loaded wagon over the Knoxville Trail with your bar hands. I'm give out. Believe I'll go on over to Mary's house an' see what's keepin' her.

BOBBY: Yore wastin' yore time.

DAVY: Mary is worth my time. *(He starts off.)*

BOBBY: *(Calls after him.)* Didn't ya read the note I give ya?

(Without turning back, Davy exits. Sarah, Elizabeth, and Rebecca rush to the place where he exited.)

ELIZABETH: *(To Sarah.)* What do you think?

SARAH: I think he's goin' home.

REBECCA: Weren't you listenin'? He's goin' to Mary Hutch's place.

ELIZABETH: Then whut are we waitin' fer?

SARAH: We've got to see this! Let's go!

(They exit after Davy.)

POLLY: *(To Bobby.)* What is it about him that makes him want to roam so badly, Bobby? It's like he cain't sit still long enough to see the birds feedin'. Instead, he's got to go chasin' them wherever they decide to fly.

BOBBY: Oh, let him go. I won't miss him, that's fer shore. He'll never amount to a hill of beans. He's jist a loudmouth, bragging, illiterate, good-fer-nothing.

POLLY: How dare you speak of Davy Crockett that way!

(She slaps him.)

BOBBY: Owww! Now why'd you go and do a thang like that fer?

POLLY: Because you have no respect, Bobby Hutch. Davy is a fine man, greatly talented in the ways of the wilderness, and loved by everybody in town.

BOBBY: He ain't loved by ever'body. I don't love him.

POLLY: Well, by ever'body who is somebody. And that's more than I can say fer you.

(Polly exits. Bobby goes after her.)

BOBBY: Oh, now, Polly. Yore jist upset. I'm a good old boy and you should respect that. *(Pause.)* Okay. Don't respect that. But you shouldn't pass up this chance to dance with me. *(Pause. Aside.)* If Davy is goin' to my place, I thank I oughta be thar to greet him. Yeah.

(Bobby laughs and exits. Music. Blackout.)

SCENE IV

(AT RISE: Outside Mary Hutch's house, a short while later. Davy enters.)

DAVY: Mary? Mary? It's me...Davy Crockett, the straightest shot, the fastest runnin', the fiercest fightin', the quickest skinnin', the best bar-killin' hunter west of the Smokies. I've come to ask you to marry me. *(Silence.)* Mary? Mary, you in yore house? *(He taps on the door or window. A pan drops inside.)* Good. I knowed you was in thar. Here's somethin' I thought up special fer you, Mary. It's a poem. Now, let me see if'n I can remember how it goes. *(He recites it mechanically and haltingly.)* "How d'ya do, Mary Hutch, Mary Hutch/I love you very much." *(Pause.)* You see how it rhymes thar? *(He continues his recitation.)* "As long as I live, I'll be shore to give/You my skint squirrels and other such." *(He listens for her response. Getting none, he speaks.)* Thar's more. I know you'll like this here part. "Say you do, Mary Hutch, Mary Hutch/Love me too, very much./And long as you live, you'll be happy to give/Me whatever I want." *(Pause.)* That part don't rhyme too good, but you know whut I mean. *(Unseen by Davy, Bobby pokes his head out the window or door. Davy continues.)* "We'll build a cabin o' logs/Far away from any nosy neighbor." *(Bobby covers his head with a shawl and pinches his cheeks to make them pink. He flutters his eyelashes.)* "We'll raise cattle and hogs/Which will be a lot of labor." *(Davy sees Bobby, does a double take, but continues the poem hesitantly.)* "So it's true, Mary Hutch, Mary Hutch/That I love you very much."

(Bobby blows him a kiss. Davy is shocked at "her" appearance. Sarah, Elizabeth, and Rebecca appear at the side.)

SARAH: *(Quietly, to Elizabeth.)* What's he doin'?

ELIZABETH: I don't know.

REBECCA: Cain't you hear? He's recitin' a poem to Mary Hutch.

SARAH: Our brother is recitin' poetry?

ELIZABETH: I didn't know he even knowed whut a poem was.

DAVY: *(He continues.)* "As long as we breathe, we'll always weave... *(He pauses.)* ...uh, somethin', somethin', something in a clutch." *(He is pleased.)* So, what do ya thank, Mary? Did you hear how I rhymed "hutch" and "clutch?" Purty smart, huh? So how did ya like my poem?

BOBBY: *(In a high-pitched voice.)* It was okay.

DAVY: Okay? It took me most of an hour to thank that up.

BOBBY: *(In normal voice.)* Maybe you shoulda took two hours.

SARAH: *(To Elizabeth.)* That don't sound like Mary.

ELIZABETH: In fact, it don't sound like a gal.

DAVY: *(Suspicious.)* Hey. What's happened to yore voice? You don't sound like yoreself.

BOBBY: *(In high-pitched voice.)* I have a bad cold. *(He does several fake coughs.)* A very bad cold. *(He coughs again.)*

DAVY: Yeah? Well, I have a bad feelin' ...that you ain't Mary Hutch at all! Come here, you!

(Davy grabs Bobby and pulls him through the window or door and onto the ground. The sisters scream but stay hidden.)

BOBBY: Ouch! Owwww! That hurt!

DAVY: I ought to hurt you a lot more'n that, Bobby Hutch! You sneaky snake! I was a-recitin' to Mary. Whar is she, and why are you warin' that woman's shawl?

BOBBY: Davy Crockett, you done put yore hands on me fer the last time!

(They face each other, growling. The sisters step into the open.)

SARAH: Davy! No fightin'!

DAVY: Sarah? Elizabeth, Rebecca? What're ya doin' here?

SARAH: We jist, uh, happened by. Now, no fightin'.

ELIZABETH: Ya know what Pa would say.

DAVY: *(To Bobby.)* What have you done with Mary? Whar is she?

BOBBY: I knew you couldn't read, you old liar.

DAVY: What are you talkin' 'bout? What's readin' got to do with it?

BOBBY: It was in that thar note I gave you at the frolic, stupid. It was from Mary.

DAVY: I, uh, I know that, frog face.

BOBBY: Well, if you had read it, ignoramus, you would have known that Mary eloped with Richard Bottoms three hours ago.

DAVY: Eloped? What's that? Some terrible disease?

SARAH: It means she run off with another man, Davy.

DAVY: Without even sayin' goodbye?

BOBBY: It's all thar, in that letter, ya dope.

DAVY: Oh, yeah, well. I knew that. I was jist... *(Pause.)* Richard Bottoms? Ugly Richard Bottoms?

BOBBY: And what do you think you are? You spend so much time huntin' and skinnin' bars, you're startin' to look and smell like 'em.

DAVY: Nobody talks to Davy Crockett like that, mutton chop.

REBECCA: Mutton chop? Cain't you thank of anythin' worse to call him than "mutton chop?"

DAVY: Rebecca, you stay outta this.

BOBBY: *(To Davy.)* Monkey head.

REBECCA: *(She smiles.)* Now, that's better.

DAVY: *(To Bobby.)* Okay. Now you gone and done it!

(Grunting and panting, Bobby and Davy wrestle to the ground and roll and tumble. The sisters scream as Bobby gets on top of Davy.)

BOBBY: So, Davy Crockett, you ain't so strong after all, are ya?

DAVY: Oh, yeah? We'll see 'bout that. *(They roll over, and Davy gets on top of Bobby. The sisters scream again.)* Whut d'ya thank about it now? *(They roll over, and Bobby gets on top of Davy. The sisters scream again. To sisters.)* Will ya stop screamin'! Yore makin' me lose my concentration!

SARAH: Sorry.

ELIZABETH: We won't do it again.

REBECCA: Promise.

(Bobby hits Davy with his fist. The sisters scream. Davy shoves Bobby aside and crosses to his sisters.)

DAVY: *(To sisters.)* Ya see whut ya did? Ya got me hit!

SISTERS: Sorry!

BOBBY: *(He sneers.)* I think fightin' bars is a lot easier than fightin' Bobby Hutch.

DAVY: Yore plumb wrong 'bout that. *(They grab each other.)* You fight like a baby squirrel.

(They fall to the ground and roll over. Davy pummels Bobby, who screams in pain. Rebecca crosses to the fighters, getting into the heat of the moment.)

REBECCA: Hit 'im again, Davy! Hit 'im!

(Sarah and Elizabeth pull Rebecca away.)

SARAH: Rebecca, no!

(Polly enters, still dressed for the frolic.)

POLLY: Davy Crockett, stop that this minute! Stop it!

(Polly tries to pull Davy off.)

ELIZABETH: Polly!

POLLY: Davy, you'll kill him. Stop it. Get off him. I'll run and git your pa. I swear I will. *(She finally pulls him off Bobby. Both of the boys gasp for breath.)* You could have done him harm. Now, what's this all about?

DAVY: What are you doin' here, Polly? I thought you was at the dance.

POLLY: I was on my way home, and I heard all this ruckus. Why were you two fightin'? *(To sisters.)* And why were you jist standin' there watchin'?

REBECCA: 'Cause Davy was winnin', that's why.

POLLY: Bobby? *(He groans.)* Davy? *(Davy hands Polly the letter.)* A letter? *(She smells it.)* Smells like a girl. *(She holds her nose.)* Mixed with the odor of a dead animal. Pew!

DAVY: It's from Mary.

POLLY: I can see that. *(She reads it.)* "Dear Davy. This is to inform you that I have run off with Richard Bottoms of the Michael Bottoms' of Abbington. I hope you will understand. Your friend, Mary Hutch." Oh, dear.

SARAH: That's awful.

ELIZABETH: Sorry, Davy.

DAVY: Friend? She calls herself my friend, and then she runs off with Bottoms? I've made up my mind.

POLLY: What?

DAVY: I'm ain't gonna wed her after all.

(Bobby crawls to his knees.)

BOBBY: Well, that would be kinda hard, seein' as how she married somebody else. Somebody a lot better'n you.

SARAH: Don't say that. Ain't nobody better'n our brother.

ELIZABETH: And if you say that agin, we'll...we'll—

REBECCA: Davy'll give you another whuppin'.

DAVY: I will!

(Bobby moans in pain.)

BOBBY: If'n you thank you can git away with this, Davy Crockett, yore wrong. I'm gonna go get the sheriff and tell him whut you done to me. *(He looks at his jacket.)* Look at this. You ripped my Sunday go-to-meein' suit. Yore gonna be spendin' some long days and nights behind bars, if I have anythang to say about it.

DAVY: Boo!

BOBBY: Ahhh! *(Bobby flinches and then stumbles off nursing his wounds.)* You'll regret this, Crockett. I promise ya. You'll regret this.

POLLY: *(To Davy.)* Well, at least now you know why Mary never showed up at the frolic. Look, Davy, I know she meant a lot to you, but maybe it's for the best. *(He looks at her.)* I mean, she was awful fickle.

DAVY: Fickle? Is that anythang like a pickle?

SARAH: No. It means she had a different beau fer ever' day of the week.

(Polly gives Sarah a look, indicating she wants some time alone with Davy.)

POLLY: Sarah?

SARAH: Whut? Oh, okay. *(To sisters.)* I think we should go now, girls.

REBECCA: Go now? And miss the rest of the fun?

POLLY: Rebecca? Go...now!

(The sisters look at Polly, see that she is serious, and exit chatting among themselves about whether they should leave or not.)

DAVY: You mean, I wasn't Mary's only man?

POLLY: Let's jist say that a girl who cain't stay true to one man fer more'n a day wouldn't make much of a wife.

DAVY: Awww, it wasn't her fault. All the boys was after her.

POLLY: You'll find somebody else. I'm sure of it.

DAVY: I don't rightly thank so, Polly.

POLLY: Sure you will. There's plenty of girls who'd be right proud to call you husband.

(She kisses him lightly on the cheek.)

DAVY: Thanks, Polly, but no woman would want me now. I know I ain't got no learnin'. An' I ain't got no property. In fact, I ain't got nuthin'.

POLLY: You know, Davy, they say, "There's as good fish in the sea as ever been caught out of it."

DAVY: What's that mean?

POLLY: She's not the only girl in the world. There's one for you...somewhere.

DAVY: Yeah, well, I thank I better be movin' along.

POLLY: You goin' home?

DAVY: Nope. I'm pushin' on...alone, I guess. My pa ain't gonna like what I done to Bobby. And I surely ain't gonna wait around fer the sheriff.

POLLY: But, Davy, you cain't jist up and leave like that. Not without saying goodbye to...well, to your folks and all.

DAVY: I gotta. I gotta go. It's the only thang to do right now. I feel it in my bones. And when you feel it in yore bones, ya gotta do it.

POLLY: Davy, no. Are you really shore about this? Really shore?

DAVY: As shore as I can be, Polly.

POLLY: But whut about yore friends, yore family? Whut about me?

DAVY: All I know is I been turned down fer marryin', and I whapped old Bobby Hutch bad 'nuff fer the sheriff to come after me. If that ain't good cause fer movin' on, then the sun don't come up in the east and set in the west.

POLLY: I do wish you'd reconsider, Davy. There's more here than you know.

DAVY: Not fer me. It's like this, Polly: First, make shore you're right, and then go ahead. Well, this is right, so it's

time fer me to go ahead. *(Pause.)* Say goodbye fer me, Polly. Tell my ma and pa that I love 'em, and they'll always be in my heart.

POLLY: All right, Davy. I will.

DAVY: So long, Polly. Wish me luck. *(He exits.)*

POLLY: So long, Davy. I hope you find whut yore lookin' fer.

(She waves to him. The sisters, who have been watching just out of sight, now reappear and look off after Davy. They wave too. Sad music plays. The lights slowly fade to black. Curtain. Intermission. NOTE: The action may be continuous without an intermission. If so, go directly to the next scene, using a musical interlude for the scene change.)

[End of Freeview]