

Scene 1: Wilbur

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CHARLOTTE'S WEB

Act I

(He exits.)

WILBUR. It does look delicious. But I don't want food. I want love. I want a friend. Someone who will play with me.

CHARLOTTE (offstage). Do you want a friend, Wilbur? I'll be a friend to you. I watched you all night, and I like you.

WILBUR. Where are you? And *who* are you?

HOMER (offstage). I think this will do the trick, Lurry.

(HOMER, with a container and spoon, and LURVY enter.)

HOMER. Now he won't like this medicine, so you hold him and I'll feed it to him. (LURVY gags WILBUR who protests.) Come on, boy. This is sulphur and molasses. It'll cure what ails you.

LURVY. Okay, dose him up, Mr. Zuckerman. (HOMER gives

WILBUR a spoonful. WILBUR gags.) There, that wasn't so bad, was it? (WILBUR makes a face and gags vigorously.)

HOMER. I think I'll give you a second dose, just for good measure. (He forces another spoonful down WILBUR who gags again.) Good work, Lurry. That pig will be well in no time. (He and LURVY exit. WILBUR catches his breath and clears his throat.)

WILBUR. Attention, please! Will the party who just spoke to me make himself or herself known? (A pause.) Please tell me where you are if you are my friend.

(CHARLOTTE enters.)

→ WILBUR (excitedly). Oh, hello. What are salutations?

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CHARLOTTE. It's a fancy way of saying "hello."

WILBUR. Oh. And salutations to you, too. Very pleased to meet you. What is your name, please? May I have your name?

CHARLOTTE. My name is Charlotte.

WILBUR. Charlotte what?

CHARLOTTE. Charlotte A. Cavatica. I'm a spider.

WILBUR. I think you're beautiful.

CHARLOTTE. Thank you.

WILBUR. And your web is beautiful, too.

CHARLOTTE. It's my home. I know it looks fragile. But it's really very strong. It protects me. And I trap my food in it.

WILBUR. I'm so happy you'll be my friend. In fact, it restores my appetite. (He begins to eat.) Will you join me?

CHARLOTTE. No, thank you. My breakfast is waiting for me on the other side of my web.

WILBUR. Oh. What are you having?

CHARLOTTE. A fly. I caught it this morning.

WILBUR (choking). You eat . . . flies?

CHARLOTTE. And bugs. Actually, I drink their blood.

WILBUR. Ugh!

CHARLOTTE. That's the way I'm made. I can't help it. Anyway, if I didn't catch insects and eat them, there would soon be so many they'd destroy the earth, wipe out everything.

WILBUR. Really? I wouldn't want *that* to happen.

CHARLOTTE. Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to have my breakfast. (She exits behind the web.)

WILBUR (with uncertainty). Well, I've got a new friend, all right. But Charlotte is . . . brutal, I think. And bloodthirsty. How can I learn to like her, even though she is pretty, and very clever, it seems. (He glances back at the web, then slowly lies down.)

end.

Scene 2: Charlotte

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CHARLOTTE'S WEB

Act I

~~CHARLOTTE. My beloved pig. (The pig enters from the left and she goes into the pig pen.)~~
CHARLOTTE. I'm glad that's over. I'm sure the smell will go away soon. (A pause.)

WILBUR. Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE. Yes.

WILBUR. Were you serious when you promised you would keep them from killing me?

CHARLOTTE. I've never been more serious in my life.

WILBUR. How are you going to save me?

CHARLOTTE. Well, I really don't know. But I want you to get plenty of sleep and stop worrying. (WILBUR stretches out on the straw as the lights begin to dim.)

WILBUR. Okay. Good night, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE. Good night, Wilbur. (A pause.)

WILBUR. Thank you, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE. Good night. (The barn is now in shadows. WILBUR falls asleep.) What to do. What to do. I promised to save his life, and I am determined to keep that promise. But how? (A pause.) Wait a minute. The way to save Wilbur is to play a trick on Zuckerman. If I can fool a bug, I can surely fool a man. People are not as smart as bugs. (A beat.) Of course. That's it. This will not be easy, but it must be done. (She turns her back on the audience.) First, I tear a section out of the web and leave an open space in the middle. Now, I shall weave new threads to take the place of the ones I removed. (She chants slightly.) Swing spinners. Let out the thread. The longer it gets, the better it's read. (She begins to "write" with elaborate movements, though her actions are deliberately indistinguishable.) Atta girl. Attach. Pay out line. Descend. Complete the curve. Easy now. That's it. Back up.

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Take your time. Now tie it off. Good. (She chants.) The message is spun. I've come to the end. The job that I've done is all for my friend. (She steps aside as a special light reveals the words "Some Pig" written in the web. *The center part of the web may be pulled off and discreetly discarded by Charlotte. Underneath would be the now-exposed writing which should be similarly velcroed over the next writing and so on.* She reads aloud.) Some pig. (She smiles.) Not bad, old girl, for the first time around. But it was quite exhausting. I'd better catch a little nap before daybreak. (She exits behind the web. The lights begin to brighten and a rooster crows. WILBUR stirs. He is having a bad dream.) **END**

WILBUR. No, no. Please don't. Stop! (He wakes up.) Oh, my goodness. That was a terrible dream. There were men with guns and knives coming out here to take me away.

(LURVY enters with a bucket. WILBUR retreats slightly.)

LURVY. Here you go, pig. Breakfast. Leftover pancakes, half a doughnut, stale toast. (He sets the bucket down.) Absolutely de . . . de . . . (He sees the writing in the web.) What's that? I'm seeing things. (He calls onstage.) Mr. Zuckerman! Mr. Zuckerman! I think you'd better come out to the pig pen quick! (He exits hurriedly.)

WILBUR (unaware of the writing in the web). What did he see? There's nothing here but me. (He feels himself.) That's it! He saw me! He saw that I'm big and healthy and . . . and ready to be made into . . . ham. They're coming out here right now with guns and knives. I just know it. What can I do? (A beat.)

Scene 3: Templeton

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CHARLOTTE'S WEB

Act II

CHARLOTTE. Five hundred and fourteen of them.

WILBUR. You're kidding. Are you really going to leave five hundred and fourteen children?

CHARLOTTE. (with a touch of sadness). If nothing happens, yes. Of course, they won't show up till next spring.

WILBUR. You don't seem very happy about it.

CHARLOTTE. I guess I feel sad because . . . I won't ever see my children.

WILBUR. Of course you will. *We'll all* see them.

CHARLOTTE. Wilbur, I don't feel good at all. My eggs and I may not make it back to the barn.

WILBUR. Charlotte, don't say that.

CHARLOTTE. Now stop worrying about me. This is your big day today. I'm sure you'll win.

TEMPLETON (offstage). What a night!

(TEMPLETON enters. His stomach is bloated.)

TEMPLETON. What a night! What feasting and carousing. A real gorge. I must have eaten the remains of thirty lunches. Oh, it was rich, my friends, rich! (He emits a loud, satisfied sigh.)

CHARLOTTE. You ought to be ashamed of yourself. You'll probably have an attack of acute indigestion.

TEMPLETON. Don't worry about me. Wilbur's the one you should be worrying about.

CHARLOTTE. What do you mean?

TEMPLETON. I've got some bad news for you. As I came past that pig next door -- the one that calls himself Uncle -- I noticed a blue ribbon on the front of his pen. That means he won first prize. (A pause.)

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CHARLOTTE (softly). Oh, no. (WILBUR sits down slowly.)

CHARLOTTE goes to him and puts her arm around him.)

TEMPLETON. Wait till Zuckerman gets hankering for some

fresh pork and smoked ham. He'll take the knife to you, my

boy. (WILBUR stares straight ahead.)

CHARLOTTE. Be still, Templeton! Don't pay any attention to

him, Wilbur.

TEMPLETON. I'll bet he's so scared he's going to faint again.

WILBUR (after a beat, still looking ahead). No, I'm not.

(Another beat.) Whatever will happen, will happen. (He

gains courage.) I may not live as long as I'd like, but I've lived

very well. A good life is much more important than just having

a long life. So starting now, I'm going to stop worrying about

myself. There are more important things than just thinking

about yourself all the time. Like *you*, Templeton. You didn't

even notice that Charlotte has made an egg sac.

TEMPLETON. Egg sac?

WILBUR (pointing to the egg sac). Up there. She is going to

become a mother. For your information, there are five hun-

dred and fourteen eggs in that peachy little sac.

TEMPLETON. Well, congratulations! This *has* been a night!

(He finds an out-of-the-way spot, covers himself with some

straw or an old blanket, and goes to sleep.) **END**

CHARLOTTE. I'm sorry about the blue ribbon, Wilbur. But

you're being very brave about it.

WILBUR. Every is just one of the many things I've learned

from you, Charlotte. . . my friend.

FERN (offstage). Look! Look everybody!

(FERN runs in.)

Scene 4: Fern

(WILBUR, a pig, enters in wide-eyed amazement.)

FIRST MEMBER. His name is — well, actually, he doesn't have a name, yet. For the moment, he's still just a little pig. But as you'll see, he isn't just any ordinary pig.

WILBUR. Who am I? Where am I? I've never been here before. (A beat.) I've never been anywhere before. Everything seems so strange. But I like it. . . I think.

SECOND MEMBER. The new pig has been born here at the Arabables' farm. Before long, you'll meet the Arabables. You'll also meet the others — the people and the animals — who will play an important part in the little pig's life.

THIRD MEMBER. Now, where should we start? Wait a minute. We've already started. It's early morning. We're at the Arabables' farm. Some pigs were born during the night. For now, that's all you need to know. (The CHORUS MEMBERS exit as the lights come up full. A rooster crows. Delighted, WILBUR looks off in the direction of the sound. He excitedly explores his new environment until he hears offstage voices.)

FERN (offstage). Where's Papa going with that ax?

MRS. ARABLE (offstage). Out to the hoghouse. Some pigs were born last night.

FERN (offstage). I don't see why he needs an ax.

MRS. ARABLE (offstage). Well, one of the pigs is a runt. It's very small and weak. (WILBUR looks about in alarm, then points to himself and moulins "me?") So your father has decided to do away with it. (WILBUR runs to a downstage corner in fear.)

FERN (offstage). I've got to stop him.

(FERN, a young girl, enters hurriedly.)

FERN. Papa can't kill it just because it's smaller than the others.

(MARTHA ARABLE, Fern's mother, enters.)

MRS. ARABLE. Stop, Fern! Don't yell. Your father is right. The pig would probably die anyway. (FERN spots WILBUR. She looks at him lovingly for a moment, then starts toward him.)

(JOHN ARABLE, Fern's father, enters from another direction, carrying an ax.)

FERN (shielding WILBUR who cinges behind her). Papa, please don't kill it. It's unfair. (WILBUR nods vigorously.)

ARABLE. Fern, I know more about raising a litter of pigs than you do. A weeding makes trouble. Now run along!

FERN. But it's unfair. The pig couldn't help being born small, could it? (WILBUR shakes his head.) This is the most terrible case of injustice I ever heard of. (WILBUR nods.)

MRS. ARABLE. Fern! (Hopelessly, to ARABLE.) John? (FERN and WILBUR fold their hands pleadingly.)

ARABLE (after a pause). Oh . . . all right. I'll let you take care of it for a little while. (WILBUR collapses in relief.)

FERN (hugging ARABLE). Thank you, Papa. (She runs to WILBUR and pets him.)

END

~~WILBUR (offstage). You can't kill me. I'm sorry, but I'm not a runt.~~