

BEATING THE RAP

by Robert L. Crowe



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This is a rap song. Set your own beat and have fun. A suggestion: don't emphasize the rhyme. It will take care of itself.

ACE: (loudly) WHAT THIS IS ABOUT ...

TREY: Don't shout. Don't shout.

ACE: What this is about is that we gotta pick ...

TREY: And it better be slick ... slick, slick, slick.

ACE: ... We gotta pick a topic for a drama, mama ... and not about Obama. No politics or religion ... we got to choose what to use in a con-test. And you know the rest.

TREY: Rest? Rest? We can't ... can't rest till the deed is done.

ACE: And we have won ...

TREY: ... or at least showed up ... I interrupt.

ACE: With no idea, are we done before we begun? (points) Is that a stop light? No ...

TREY: It's go, go, go and we're goin' too slow 'cuz we gotta solve this pup before the second hand says, "Your time is up!"

ACE: We're looking for any idea. Any.

TREY: He didn't say many, the word is any.

ACE: (points to audience) If you can think of a link to give us some help. Yelp! Any, any idea that will meet the test ...

TREY: ... Not another test ... I gotta rest from the last one, son.

ACE: The question of this quiz ... is ...

TREY: To pick a topic that will be good for you, and us.

ACE: We're in trouble but we're not under the bus ... yet. We just begun this run so we still gotta chance, always a chance.

TREY: Instead of drama, should we do a dance?

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ACE: *(pause)* ... no ... It's a drama we need, and we need some speed to choose a topic that fills the time, and it should be good ... be good.

TREY: Good.

ACE: The problem is the topic.

TREY: Again?

ACE: Let's adorn ourselves with drama ... no confusion, contusion or illusion ... something dramatic from an ancient day.

TREY: A play?

ACE: A play! Don't pick no comedy; it's too much fun ...

TREY: Fun, fun, fun.

ACE: 'cuz the stuff made of fluff ain't never won. We need something heavy, like "lend me your ear."

TREY: Lets's do a bit from Bill's* King Lear.

ACE: I'll play the King 'cuz I got the tools: *(pause and assume stately pose, say slowly and grandly)* ... "When we are born, we cry that we are come to this great stage of fools."

(They stop and look at each other, then)

TREY: That's the stuff but it ain't enough. How 'bout some dancers, and a singer that rocks and wears a crown! You frown ...

ACE: You clown; we can't use all that fuss. Sounds like Elvis. What it must be is ... the act is US. So ... here. More Lear.

TREY: *(not enthused)* Oh, dear ...

ACE: *(again a stately manner)* "Men must endure. Their going hence, even as their coming hither. Ripeness is all."

TREY: *(pause as he stares at Ace)* Whoa! That's got to be everyone's favorite scene. What does it mean?

ACE: I don't know. Don't know. Don't know the show. Maybe we should go another direction.

TREY: Change our selection.

ACE: Have an election and let the voters choose.

- TREY:** No, no we're sure to lose. We can't count on the bit they choose.
- ACE:** What'll we do ... do?
- TREY:** Working with you ... you, is a chore. Let's try something more.
- ACE:** Something smart, with a heart, and a real cool look. Let's pick, for a start, from a famous book.
- TREY:** Some THING with fame, some THING dramatic. I got the scene, really mean with mystery and history, a literary hit so let me do a bit ...
- ACE:** I'll wait and judge; I'm non-committal. What's the name of this morsel, this tasty vittle that will be our show?
- TREY:** It's called ... "Chicken Little." (*strikes dramatic pose, then goes into wild gyrations*) "The sky is falling. The sky is falling."
- ACE:** Chicken. Chicken. I like FRIED chicken. Finger lickin'. But, chicken's not so good as a drama ... piece.
- TREY:** Ok, Ace, another say. I got a story that is really fine. Listen up. Here's the punch line. (*dramatically chugs across stage*) "I think I can. I think I can."
- ACE:** You can't. (*pause*) What we need is a show, an awesome play that will remain in the ... in the brain of our audience more than a day, something that's big, a gig that's up on top. Aloof. Like, (*gets the idea*) "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof."
- TREY:** Give it a try, a work, a test. A theatrical bit may be the best. Ready?
- ACE:** Steady and on-stage. (*as the character named Brick, slow pace:*) "What is the victory of a cat on a hot tin roof?"
- TREY:** (*as the character named Maggie in high voice, slow pace:*) "Just staying on it I guess, long as she can."
- ACE:** We been contemplatin', agitatin' tryin' to put on a show. You know how complicated that is? Some audiences go and sit and never wonder a bit about the



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