

George and the Whopper

A play adapted from the book by Chris McTrusty

Cast:

GEORGE

MUM

DAD

LANCE – George's best friend.

MRS CRABAPPLE – lives down the street, widow, friend of George.

The MAYOR

The MAYOR'S WIFE

MRS A - Garden Club member

MRS B – Garden Club member

The STATE PREMIER

PRIME MINISTER'S ASSISTANT

The PRIME MINISTER

The PRIME MINISTER'S WFE

Scene 1: Dinner table – George, MUM and Dad are eating dinner.

MUM: George, you're getting older. You eat too many chips. It's time you started eating vegetables.

GEORGE: *(aside)* I HATE vegetables!

DAD: *(Putting big spoonful onto George's plate.)* Try them!

GEORGE: *(Mouth shut tight. Shakes head.)*

MUM: Vegetables are very good for you, and very tasty!

GEORGE: They don't look good. And I'm sure they don't taste good either. *(Shut mouth tight.)*

Knock at the back door. Enter Lance.

LANCE: Hello Everyone!

MUM: Hello Lance.

DAD: Hello Lance.

GEORGE: *(Not opening lips.)* Mmmmmm-o mmmmmnce.

Lance gives George a funny look.

LANCE: Is George ready to go to the movies?

GEORGE: Yes!

DAD: *(Crossly)* No, he is not.

MUM: He refuses to eat his vegetables.

DAD: And he is not going anywhere until he eats them.

GEORGE: Vegetables are yucky. *(Shuts mouth tight.)*

Everyone looks at the clock. Ticking noise. Five minutes pass ... everyone sighs. Ten minutes pass.

DAD stands up and goes to the telephone.

DAD: You leave me no choice. *(Starts to punch in numbers. Talking on the phone.)* Hello! I would like to speak to the Prime Minister, please.

Mum, George, and Lance all turn and look in surprise at the audience.

LANCE: *(to George)* Why is your dad calling the Prime Minister?

GEORGE: I don't know.

DAD: *(Covering mouthpiece of phone.)* If George won't eat his vegetables when we ask him, maybe he will when the Prime Minister asks him.

LANCE: Wow!

GEORGE: *(aside)* Oh no!

DAD: *(talking on phone)* I see ... Yes, of course ... Well, that would be wonderful Goodbye. *(Hangs up phone.)*

The Prime Minister is a very busy man. But he is coming here on Thursday night.

Scene 2: In the street. George meets up with Lance and they are walking to the school bus stop. Mrs Crabapple is in her front garden watering her flowers.

MRS CRABAPPLE: *(waving to George and Lance)* Good morning, George. Good morning, Lance.

GEORGE: *(mumbles)* Hi.

LANCE: Hello, Mrs Crabapple.

MRS CRABAPPLE: *(Stops watering her flowers.)* What's the matter, George? You look like you lost a dollar and picked up five cents.

LANCE: The Prime Minister is coming to visit George on Thursday night.

GEORGE: *(Pointing down the road.)* There's the school bus, Lance.

LANCE: We had better hurry or we'll miss it and be late for school.

George and Lance start to run.

MRS CRABAPPLE: *(Calls after the boys.)* Why is the Prime Minister coming to see George?

GEORGE: *(Yells over his shoulder.)* Because of my vegetables.

MRS CRABAPPLE: *(Stroking her wrinkly chin, speaking aside.)* Well! A visit from the Prime Minister to honour vegetables grown by George! My friends at the Garden Club would love to hear this news!

Scene3: The Garden Club meeting. Ladies are sitting around drinking cups of tea.

MRS A: Aahhh! That's a lovely cup of tea. And these pumpkin biscuits are nice. Did you make them Mrs B?

MRS B: Yes, I did. My parsley and mint have grown so big already. And my other vegetables will win a prize for sure at the garden show.

MRS CRABAPPLE: George's vegetables are so good that the Prime Minister is coming here on Thursday to give him an award.

MRS B: No! Really?

The MAYOR'S WIFE: My husband hasn't said anything about a visit, and he is the Mayor!

MRS CRABAPPLE: George told me himself The Prime Minister will be here Thursday night.

Scene 4: A series of Phone calls.

The Mayor's wife on the phone to her husband, the Mayor.

The MAYOR'S WIFE: The Prime Minister will be visiting town on Thursday. Young George's vegetables are the best in town. He is going to receive an award.

The MAYOR: I didn't know about that! I am going to call the State Premier's office.

The Mayor on the phone to the State Premier.

The MAYOR: The Prime Minister will be visiting our town on Thursday. Young George's vegetables are the best in the state. He is going to receive a big award.

The STATE PREMIER: The Prime Minister has not told me about this award. I will check with the Parliament.

The State Premier on the phone to the Prime Minister's Assistant.

The STATE PREMIER: The Prime Minister will be visiting our town in our state on Thursday. Young George's vegetables are the best in the country. He is going to receive a huge award.

PRIME MINISTER'S ASSISTANT: *(Looks at the Prime Minister's list of places to visit and people to see. Shakes his head because George is not on the list. Scratches his head.)* I will talk to the Prime Minister.

Scene 5: The dinner table. George and Mum and Dad having dinner.

MUM: You had better eat your vegetables, George. Don't forget who is coming on Thursday.

George closes his mouth tight and shakes his head.

DAD: Something strange happened today. The Mayor came up to me and shook my hand.

MUM: Why?

DAD: I haven't a clue. He said we must be very proud.

MUM: Of what?

DAD: I haven't a clue.

MUM: Very strange.

DAD: Yes, very strange.

George keeps his mouth shut tight.

Scene 6: The dinner table. It's Thursday. George and Mum and Dad are having dinner.

[Someone walks across stage holding a sign "Thursday".]

George has his mouth closed tight. He is still refusing to eat the vegetables on his plate.

GEORGE: *(Looking up from his plate, laughing.)* I thought the Prime Minister was coming to speak to me!

DAD: Go to your room! Right now!

George leaves the table.

GEORGE: *(Aside)* I'm so hungry! But no matter how hungry I feel, I will never eat vegetables. Never!

There is a lot of shouting and cheering outside. George looks through the window.

GEORGE: The street outside is jam-packed!

DAD: *(Looks out the window.)* There are rows of reporters and TV cameras, and they are all pointed at our house!

MUM: *(Looking out the window.)* Oh! A big black car has stopped, and a man has climbed out of the car.

GEORGE: I've seen him on TV and I know who he is! It's the Prime Minister!

Scene 7: The dining room. The Prime Minister and his wife are sitting at the table with Mum and Dad.

MUM: *(Quietly, to Dad.)* I can't believe it, the Prime Minister and his wife sitting in our living room!

PRIME MINISTER: I am here to present an award to George.

MUM: What is the award for?

PRIME MINISTER: The award is for growing the finest vegetables in the country.

Mum and Dad look at each other.

DAD: But George doesn't grow vegetables.

PRIME MINISTER: Very strange.

MUM: How did you find out about George and the vegetables?

PRIME MINISTER: My assistant told me.

The Premier told him.

The Mayor told the Premier.

The Mayor's wife told the Mayor.

And, I believe, a lady from town, Mrs Crabapple, told the Mayor's wife.

DAD: *(Looking puzzled.)* Who told Mrs Crabapple?

George walks into the room. George shakes Prime Minister's hand.

GEORGE: I did. Are you here to make me eat my vegetables?

DAD: I pretended to phone you, and I told George that you would be coming here today. I thought it might make George eat his vegetables.

PRIME MINISTER: *(to George.)* And did you?

GEORGE: No way! (*Shuts his mouth tight.*)

PRIME MINISTER: Good for you! I don't like vegetables either.

Mum places a plate of vegetables in front of George, and one in front of the Prime Minister.

MUM: Are you both going to eat your vegetables?

GEORGE: No way! (*Shuts his mouth tight.*)

PRIME MINISTER: No way! (*Shuts his mouth tight.*)

PRIME MINISTER'S WIFE: You are a very bad Prime Minister!

MUM and Dad and Prime Minister's Wife go into the kitchen.

GEORGE: (*Taps Prime Minister in the arm.*) Are you going to eat your vegetables?

PRIME MINISTER: (*Shakes his head.*) I am the leader of the country. I don't have to eat vegetables if I don't want to. (*Towards kitchen, shouting.*) And I don't want to!

GEORGE: (Softly.) Maybe vegetables **are** good for us. Maybe they **are** tasty.

I think we should try the vegetables.

PRIME MINISTER: What? Never!

GEORGE: But if **you** don't eat your vegetables, no-one will.

PRIME MINISTER: What do you mean?

GEORGE: (*Pointing out the window.*) The whole country must be watching. If all the kids find out you don't eat your vegetables, they might not eat their vegetables either.

PRIME MINISTER: Well, good for them!

GEORGE: But what about the people who grow the vegetables? And the people who sell them? They won't have any jobs.

And Mum and Dad said vegetables are good for you – tasty and healthy.

PRIME MINISTER: (*Strokes his chin, nods.*) So we have to eat our vegetables for the good of the country.

GEORGE: Yes, we must.

PRIME MINISTER: Very well. (*Towards the kitchen, loudly.*) We'll eat our vegetables.

Mum and Dad and the Prime Minister's wife hurry out of the kitchen and cheer.

PRIME MINISTER: George has taught me a valuable lesson today. Don't be afraid to try something new.