



RAVEN RADIO THEATER PRESENTS!

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A School for Yqbal

A Radio Drama Script for the Classroom



Written by Joe McHugh

Introduction

A moving story of a boy from Pakistan named Iqbal who is sold, at the age of four, into slavery to work in the carpet factories. His bravery brings notice to the inhumane conditions of these children. The Reebok Company offers him their "Youth in Action Award" for speaking out. Iqbal visits a school in Massachusetts as part of this award. The students there are inspired by this small boy and become politically active themselves.

For step-by-step instructions on how to perform a radio play with students, refer to the "Radio Theater Cookbook, Recipes for the Imagination," available from the Raven Radio Theater of the Air! This script is published with the following materials and information to help you prepare your students for their own radio theater presentation.

Mp3 Playlist - With the music / sound effects Mp3 files for "xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx", you will be able to add audio texture and excitement to your radio theater production. The Mp3 playlist includes in sequence the music and sound effects selections listed below as they are numbered in the script.

Character List - tells you which characters are in the play, how many lines each one has, and which pages of the script to duplicate for each character.

Sound Effects Suggestions - ideas for finding or building the mechanical sound effects you will need to perform the play.

"Get-Ready" Cards - a master set of cue cards that you can copy onto card stock and use during the performance to cue sound effects crew.

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The Raven Radio Theater offers a wide variety of scripts and books on radio theater and storytelling. If you would like more information or see our catalog on-line:

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“A School for Iqbal”

Character List

Announcer	11 lines	Radio show announcer
Narrator 1	51 lines	Storyteller for first part
Narrator 2	19 lines	Storyteller for second part
Father	22 lines	Iqbal’s father
Mother	2 lines	Iqbal’s mother
Brother	3 lines	Iqbal’s brother, Ahzar
Worker	2 lines	Worker in the carpet factory
Iqbal	27 lines	Young hero of story
Ashad	18 lines	Factory owner
Salim	8 lines	Young friend of Iqbal’s
Azmat	3 lines	Concerned Pakistani citizen
Kahn	23 lines	Director of BLLF
Woman	3 lines	Concerned Pakistani citizen
Man	2 lines	Concerned Pakistani citizen
Blair	16 lines	Vice-President, Reebok Corporation
Shelia	12 lines	6th grade student
Michael	6 lines	6th grade student
Bobby	4 lines	6th grade student
Martha	20 lines	6th grade student
Store Clerk	9 lines	Clerk in oriental carpet store, Jean
er	26 lines	Owner of an oriental carpet store
Evans	19 lines	Superintendent of school district
Secretary	2 lines	Superintendent’s secretary
Adams	13 lines	Teacher at Broadmeadows Middle School

Casting Notes: There are 24 speaking parts in “A School for Iqbal.” Having an adult read the parts of the Narrators can be very helpful as it helps establish the timing and expression of the young readers. Remember you are casting by voice alone, not by appearance. Become familiar with the script and try and match the reader to the voice of the character. The idea is to inspire the readers to bring as much life to their characters and the action of the story as possible. You will need 8 to 12 students for the sound effects crew.

Duplicating List

Announcer	pp.1,16	Narrator 1	pp. 1-8
Narrator 2	pp. 1,10-16	Father	pp. 1-4
Mother	p. 1-2	Brother	p. 2
Worker	pp. 2-3	Iqbal	pp. 3-9
Ashad	pp. 3-4	Salim	pp. 5-6
Azmat	p. 6	Kahn	pp. 6-10
Woman	pp. 6-7	Man	pp. 7
Blair	p. 8-10	Shelia	pp.10-16
Michael	pp. 10-16	Bobby	pp. 10-16
Martha	pp. 10-16	Store Clerk	pp. 10
Evans	pp. 12-13	Secretary	p. 12
Hatcher	pp. 12-14	Adams	pp. 14-16

Mp3 Playlist

With the music/sound effects Mp3 files for “A School for Iqbal”, you will be able to add audio texture and excitement to your radio theater production. The Mp3 playlist includes in sequence the music and sound effects selections listed below as they are numbered in the script. Some mp3 tracks are duplicated to make your “live” production easier.

1. Old-time radio segments and fanfare
2. Theme music
3. Farm sounds
4. Theme music
5. Factory
6. Theme music
7. Crickets
8. Theme music
9. Theme music
10. Theme music
11. City Street
12. Theme music
13. Theme music
14. School Hallway
15. Theme music

CLIPPITY-CLOP! SPLASH! PLOP! CRASH! BANG! WHOOSH!

Sound Effects

Digging Dirt - This effect is done by using one or more small garden hand trowels and a shoe box-size container of dirt. Put some pebbles in with the dirt to make more sound. With a mic nearby, repeatedly push the trowel slowly into the dirt, lifting some up and pouring it back, to simulate the sound of a large shovel digging in hard ground. Be careful not to hit the sides of the box while you do this.

Footsteps (most types) - Walk in place or hold a pair of shoes with the hands and “walk” on a table. It is important to get a realistic rhythm to the footsteps. If walking in place, a “heel to toe” step is best but takes practice to master.

For footsteps inside use hard-soled shoes (leather are best) on a piece of plywood. For footsteps on gravel use a tray with medium to small gravel on it.

Chain/ Lock - Rattle a section of chain near the mic. Try different types and thicknesses of chain to get the sound you want. You can also drop it on a hard surface like cement. Use a combination lock and close it for the “click” sound.

Typewriter - Use an old manual typewriter to make this effective sound. Strike a number of keys and follow this by pulling a piece of paper smartly out of the machine. Practice beforehand to be sure you do not type too fast and jam the keys.

Telephone - Use a windup alarm clock, the kind with the bells on top. Wind the alarm but not the clock itself! Set the alarm and time to the same time and pull out the alarm stem whenever you need the telephone to “ring.” For dialing, simply use an old rotary telephone. Pick-ups and hang-ups can also be done with a real telephone.

Telephone, Voice Box - (This device is used by an actor when indicated on the script.) Cut a silver-dollar size hole in each end of a cardboard box. A cigar box is the best size although a cardboard tube often works well. Place your lips firmly on the hole in one end with hole in the other several inches from a reader’s mic. Speak into the box to create the illusion of someone speaking through a telephone.

Other ways to create this effect is to speak into a small plastic or earthenware cup next to a mic or plug a set of headphones into a microphone input on the mixer and speak into them. If the impedances are reasonably correct, the headphone diaphragm corresponds in performance to the cheap microphone in a telephone.

Door - There was always a framed, half-size door in all the old radio drama studios. It either sat on a table top or, if larger, had castors so it could be easily moved around. The bigger the door and heavier the frame, such as one made of hardwood, the more realistic the sound it made. The handle was just a shade loose, so that it could be rattled a little as the door was opened. A variety of other door fittings were often installed on the door and frame including a lifting-type latch, a bolt, a knocker, etc. Sometimes the door doubled for window sounds with a sash window set in the back of the boxed frame.

If you build your own sound-door, or have a parent or local business donate one, it can be used over and over again in future radio drama productions.

Another solution is simply to use a real door close enough to be picked up by a microphone.

Door/Store - A simple way to identify with sound a small store is to have someone ring a little hand bell as the door is opened or closed.

Opening Envelope & Letter - Take a heavy, unsealed, envelope and noisily remove a folded piece of paper from it close to a mic.

DIGGING

Wait for Cue!

FOOTSTEPS

Approach

Walk Away

Approach

PAPER MONEY

Wait for Cue!

FOOTSTEPS (Two Sets)

SCRAPE OF BENCH

Wait for Cue!

CHAIN/LOCK

FOOTSTEPS

POURING SOUP

EATING OUT OF CAN

FOOTSTEPS (Fade-Away)

p. 8

TYPEWRITER PULL PAPER

4

Wait for Cue!

TELEPHONE RINGS PICK-UP PHONE

p. 9-10

TELEPHONE(Pick-up)

5

Wait for Cue!

2 TELEPHONE (Hang-ups)

p. 10-11

FOOTSTEPS (Two Sets)

6

DOOR (Open & Close) w/ Bell

FOOTSTEPS

Several Sets Approach

One Set Leaves (Fade-Away)

Several Sets (Fade-Away)

Wait for Cue!

TELEPHONE RING

PICK-UP

TELEPHONE (Slams Down)

Wait for Cue!

FOOTSTEPS (Two Sets)

DOOR (Open & Close)

FOOTSTEPS

**BOOKS (Slide on table
place on bookshelf)**

Wait for Cue!

LETTER (Unfold)

“A School for Iqbal”

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1

FADE-IN OLD-TIME RADIO SEGMENTS & FANFARE

Announcer: Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the Raven Radio Theater of the Air and our presentation, “A School for Iqbal.” Today’s radio drama was written by Joe McHugh and is brought to you by (name of school or sponsor).

So now, sit back, listen carefully, and let your imagination be your guide as we present, “A School for Iqbal.”

2

FADE-IN THEME MUSIC

Narrator 1: I am the voice of a dream. The dream of a young boy named Iqbal Misah (ick-ball mish-ah) who fought to save the children of his native land from lives of misery and hopelessness.

Narrator 2: And I am the voice of faith, the faith of a group of young people from Broadmeadows Middle School who, inspired by Iqbal’s courage and determination, found a way to keep his dream alive.

Narrator 1: Our story begins on the other side of the world in the country of Pakistan where a poor family struggles to eke out a living on a small farm. But they are deeply in debt to the money lenders and soon a four year old boy will be forced to leave the only world he has ever known.

3

**FADE-OUT THEME MUSIC
FADE-IN FARM SOUNDS**

shovel digging in dirt

Father: You must dig deeper, my son. The soil here is very dry.

Mother: But why must Iqbal go to the city to work. He is so young. He should live here with us and help with the animals.

Father: I do not want him to leave us, dear wife, but we have no choice. We do not have enough money to pay our debts. The police will come and throw us off our land and then we will starve.

Brother: And do not forget about my marriage, mother. You promised I could wed next month but, if we have no money, then who will pay for the wedding ceremony?

Father: Ahzar is right. It is the duty of the groom's parents to pay for the wedding. I could not live with the shame if we do not.

Brother: But to sell little Iqbal to a carpet factory, it makes my heart ache for him.

Father: (in a reassuring tone) It will only be for a year or two, just until we're back on our feet again. And Iqbal will learn a valuable trade, you will see. He will come back to us all grown up and with money in his pocket. Now, go and pack his things. We must leave first thing in the morning.

fade-out digging

4

FADE-OUT FARM SOUNDS
FADE-IN THEME MUSIC

Narrator 1: All the next day the father and his young son walk the dusty road which lead to the city of Lahore. There among the crowded streets they find a carpet factory. It is not a modern, efficient factory equipped with up-to-date machinery but a dirty, noisy place lacking adequate lighting and little, if any, ventilation in the stifling heat. Here poorly clad workers hunch over their looms fourteen hours a day tying small knots of colored wool, often as many as 200 knots per square inch, to create some of the most highly prized rugs in the world. It is a hard life and one that offers little hope for the future.

5

FADE-OUT THEME MUSIC
FADE-IN FACTORY

steps approach and stop

Father: (calls out over factory din) You there. Who is the owner of this factory?

Worker: His name is Mr. Arshad.

Father: I wish to talk to him.

Worker: I will get him for you.

steps walk away

Iqbal: Why have we come to this place, father? I do not like it here.

Father: I have already told you. You are to work here. You will learn to make carpets. It is a useful trade. Now, be quiet and let me do the talking.

steps approach and stop

Arshad: (irritated) What is it you want? I am a busy man and have much to do!

Father: (nervous, stuttering slightly) This is my son. His name is Iqbal. Mr. Bushir in our village said you were looking for children to work in your factory.

Arshad: He is too young.

Father: He is four years old. Look at his fingers. They are very small and clever. He can tie the little knots to make the expensive carpets.

Arshad: Let me see your fingers, boy. (pause) Hmmm, all right. How much do you want for him?

Father: \$50. I need the money to pay for my son's wedding and to pay off my debts.

Arshad: \$50!? Don't be ridiculous. You are not the only father who comes here to sell his child. All day long they come, just like you, poor and desperate. But do any of you realize what it costs me to feed and put clothes on each child's back. It is very expensive. No, all you think about is how much money you can wring out of me. (pauses) But, (sighs with resignation) I am a generous man. No doubt it will bring me to ruin someday. I will give you \$12, and not a rupee more.

Father: (pleading) But \$12 is. . .is not enough money.

Arshad: That is not my problem.

paper money taken from wallet

Arshad: Here, take your money.

Iqbal: Do not leave me here, father. Please. I will be a good boy

Father: Mr. Arshad will treat you well, my son. When I make more money, I will come and buy you back.

Arshad: Come with me, boy, and stop your snivelling.

begin two sets of steps for some time and then stop

Arshad: Here, you will work at this loom.

scrape of bench

Arshad: Get up on the bench.

Iqbal: But, sir, I do not know how to make carpets.

Arshad: I will send someone to show you. It will not take you long to learn. But first, I must put this chain on your leg. You must wear it during the day to make sure you do not run away.

handling of chain and click of lock

6

**FADE-OUT FACTORY
FADE-IN THEME MUSIC**

Narrator 1: And so it was young Iqbal came to live and work in a carpet factory. Every morning at 4 o'clock, well before it was light, he was forced to get up and begin working at his loom. All day long, he tied the little knots to make the carpets that would adorn the offices and homes of the wealthy around the world. At night, he would be unchained from his loom and would sleep on a thin mat on the hard, damp floor of a crowded room with the other children from the factory. Often he was unfairly beaten for not working fast enough. And he regularly saw the other children punished when they had angered Arshad by being hung upside down by their feet from the ceiling of the factory.

Narrator 1: For eight years little Iqbal worked and suffered. His spine became permanently curved from hunching over his work at the loom. Fed very little, his growth was severely stunted and he was often sick. Then one night, he made a fateful decision.

7

FADE-OUT THEME MUSIC

FADE-IN CRICKETS

steps approach and stop

Salim: Iqbal, hand me your can for your soup.

pouring soup into can

Iqbal: Thank you, Salim.

begin eating with spoon hitting side of can, stopping while Iqbal speaks

Salim: Why do you eat so fast, my friend. There is so little, you should make it last.

Iqbal: (while eating) Not tonight. I have somewhere to go. I must hurry.

Salim: Somewhere to go? But where? If Arshad catches you sneaking out, he will beat you. He is terrible when he is angry!

Iqbal: I must take the risk. You will not tell will you?

Salim: No, you are my friend. You treat me with kindness. Not like the others.

Iqbal: Have you heard of an organization called the Bonded Labor Liberation Front?

Salim: No.

Iqbal: They help kids who work in the factories. They are having a meeting tonight and I've decided to go.

Salim: Will you take me with you?

Iqbal: But what about Arshad? Are you not afraid?

Salim: Where you go, I will follow. Wait for me to finish serving the soup to everyone.

Iqbal: All right, but hurry.