

Characters

- Norbert (M)** - an elderly and rough looking man.
- Cody (M)** - a younger rough looking man - not too bright
- Mortie (M)** - a young plain looking man. He carries a backpack or saddlebag.

Scene 1 – Desert Land

(The scene is a mostly empty stage meant to depict a desert land. A cactus or two would be a nice touch. Set in the not-too-distant past. At rise, the stage is empty. SFX. The sound of horse hooves are heard. Norbert, Cody, and Mortie enter the stage either pretending to be on horseback or leading their horses. Norbert leads.)

Norbert: Ah! Here we are. The promised land. The land the writings foretold. The place of peace. Land of the future. Our new home!

Cody: Uh, boss. You sure this is right?

Norbert: Rector! Not boss!

Cody: Huh?

Norbert: I am now Rector Norbert Blovius Hardy the third.

Cody: What's a Rector?

Norbert: A holy person. A pastor. A minister.

Cody: When did you become a minister?

Norbert: The moment we stepped onto this holy land. I am now leader and rector to the people of this new venture.

Cody: Ok, Reverend boss-man.

Norbert: Cody, I want you to take care of the horses.

Cody: Right! **(takes the horse reins and walks offstage while muttering)** You know, I don't understand why we didn't just drive out here like everybody else.

Mortie: What happened to number one and two?

Norbert: What are you talking about?

Mortie: You said you was Rector Norbert Blow Hard the third. What happened to one and two?

Norbert: There was no one and two, just me. By the power of God I have been ordained three times: once as the old me, then as the older me, and now the really old new me and now I have brought all my people here.

Cody: **(enters to center and looks toward audience)** Boss, I mean Rev. You sure this is the right place? Looks darn near plain empty to me.

Norbert: **(puts arm around Cody)** Ah, my son. That is because you do not see with the eyes of a prophet. **(lays hand across the horizon)** You see flat dry land, arid horizons, dry riverbeds, parched sand, sparse vegetation, **(starts to lose conviction a little)** cloudless dry skies, barren hillsides, wind racked dunes, relentless burning sunlight, poisonous crawling and slithering creatures of all kinds... **(recalls himself)** But I see the promise of the future. This is the land we have been given to start a new life, to become a new nation of our own. We shall live on *our* terms as decreed to us from God.

Mortie: But, uh, sir, how do you know this is the right place?

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Norbert: Because of the words of the angel who came to me in rays of splendor and whispered to me...

Cody: I had that happen to me once.

Norbert: What?

Mortie: *You* were visited by an angel?

Cody: Oh yeah. She had ways of splendor too and when she whispered to me she said **(whispers)** twenty bucks.

Norbert: **(looks at Cody)** There is so much work yet to be done with you.

Cody: Yes, my rector.

Norbert: Rector!

Cody: Rector!

Mortie: The angel, sir?

Norbert: Yes. The angel of heaven came to me and said that I should lead my people to a new land where we will become the children of God and that we would know the land because the hills shall point directly to heaven.

Mortie: Don't all mountains point upwards?

Norbert: Of course, but the sacred mountain will hold for us a special sign. **(points)** Behold!

(Cody and Mortie look where Norbert points. They squint and blink toward the distance trying to make out something but see nothing.)

Norbert: **(points again)** Behold! **(nothing)** I said behold! **(nothing)** Behold, behold, behold! **(jabs finger)** The thing-eth that reach-eth up-eth to the mighty heavens-eth!

Cody: Oh, wait! You mean that really tall tree there?

Norbert: Yes. That is the thing-eth!

Mortie: **(straining)** I believe that is one of those cell towers that's been made to look like a tree.

Cody: They can do that?

Norbert: Nonsense! I have been given a vision, a sign, a revelation! This is the place. It has been decreed in sacred text. **(reaches into his back pocket and pulls out a piece of paper)** Here.

Mortie: **(takes the paper and looks)** It's a deed with a map. **(to Norbert)** You bought this place?

Norbert: **(spreads hands out)** The new Eden!

Cody: Didn't Eden have a garden or at least a salad bar?

Mortie: And you paid **(looks closer)** how much?

Norbert: There is no price on salvation, my son.

Mortie: For this land? How did you pay for it?

Cody: Yeah! We was all supposed to give up our worldly possessions for the sake of poor-ity!

Norbert: Purity! You gave all your belongings to me so that you would be freed of the burdens of the sins of worldly living. You can now live a life of purity and simplicity so you can be closer to God. **(looks back and beyond Cody and Mortie)** You have been freed. Now we can live off the land and be servants of the Lord. You can live as God meant you to live. You can... You can... Uh, Cody?

Cody: Yeah, Rec?

Norbert: Where are all my people? Where is my flock?

Cody: Oh yeah, well, the Johnsons decided not to come after all since they don't really like horses. The Nowaks do like riding horses but they said it was just too long of a ride for them and how would they get Becky to her ballet class, and the Zegers decided they liked their stuff after all and didn't want to give it all up – especially the pool – I mean it *is* a nice pool, and the Taylors stopped off at a Denny's for lunch and well, I guess, they've decided to stay for dinner as well, and the Bates family saw a sign a while back for a Six Flags Amusement Park and decided to take a little vacation detour and, well, I think most of the rest of the folks thought that might be more fun too.

Norbert: They are weak! They do not hear the call of God and their servant who calls them to a new life, a better life. They would rather chase after sinful trinkets. Well... no matter. The weak are not meant for the holy land.

(SFX. Epic music plays in the background)

Norbert: What remains are the faithful and the true. We are the ones who have been called to change the world and to serve! We are the ones who will build upon this sacred ground! We have been called to a higher purpose! We have put away the temptations of the world and will begin a *new* way with *new* hopes and *new* dreams. We will build a new Eden from this barren land and we will make it a place of salvation where the light of heaven will shine and the truth of the gospel will be told. And we will populate this land with new disciples who will...

(SFX. music ends)

Mortie: Rector Hardie? Uh, we ain't got no women here.

Cody: Yeah, we can't be doin' any of that copulatin' of the land.

Mortie: **(to CODY)** I think you mean populate.

Cody: Yeah, whatever. I don't think we'll be doin' any of that.

Norbert: No matter. We have been sent here to begin this mission. We have a sacred duty to fulfill.

Cody: **(claps hands and rubs them together)** OK, then. How do we get started?

Norbert: Go get the building supplies and we will start building.

Mortie: Rector Hardie...

Cody: (**ignoring Mortie**) Oh, this is exciting. It's like starting our own Holy Disney Land. What could we name it? Norbert World or Hardie Land or Nor's Place or Norrrrr... way. What about that? We could call it Norway. Kind of catchy, huh?

Mortie: Rector Hardie...

Norbert: That's enough thinking for you today. You're going to hurt yourself. Now do as I ask and go get the building supplies.

Cody: You got it oh great King of Norrr-way. (**exits with a bow then rides off**)

Mortie: Rector Hardie!

Norbert: Yes, yes. What is it?

Mortie: We don't have any building supplies.

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Norbert: What are you talking about?

Mortie: All the building supplies were in Travis Bates' truck which is probably still in some amusement parking lot right now.

Norbert: I said no vehicles. This was to be a righteous pilgrimage without machines. We were to come as poor pilgrims upon the backs of beasts of burden.

Mortie: We didn't have enough horses to pull a wagon and we didn't have a wagon either. We thought maybe if he stayed far enough behind you might not notice the truck following us.

Norbert: No matter. God will provide. He will not let us fail in this holy endeavor.

Mortie: Sir, I'm not sure that this...

Norbert: Mortie, Mortie. Of all my followers, I thought you were my most faithful. Don't tell me that now you have lost your faith too!

Mortie: But sir...

Norbert: Mortie! Have you lost sight of the vision? Have you lost your way?

(SFX. epic music plays)

Norbert: This is why I was put on this earth: to lead people like you out of the land of despair and into *this* land – this land of salvation. The world is filled with hatred, anger, and sin, my friend. We may try to make it better but the evil persists – the evil that lives in the hearts of men like a worm that works its way into the apple. That little worm destroys the fruit until it is no longer the fruit of knowledge but a rotted core of ignorance and foolishness. It was while I was contemplating an apple at the grocery store – the same piece of food that changed the entire world in the Garden of Eden – that I had my vision. I knew I had been called to do a greater thing. I knew I needed to lead good people into a new land where the world could begin again. It would be a land of love and peace and it would be blessed by God who would speak through me and only me because I knew I was the chosen one. I was the ripe fruit in the bin, the one who would shine above the others because I was the messenger and I would bring forth the message of everlasting peace and righteousness for all the people of this new land. I knew that in this new land never again would there be hatred. Never again would there be a need for anger. There would be lasting peace and love.

(SFX. Music fades)

Norbert: How could we possibly give up on such a revelation just because we don't have a hammer?

Mortie: But sir...

(SFX. There is the sound of horse hooves as Cody returns. Cody enters.)

Norbert: Well?

Cody: Well, I couldn't... the, uh...

Mortie: **(to Cody)** He knows about the pickup truck.

Cody: Yeah. I imagine there's a monkey wrench flying down a roller coaster about now. **(pause)** But I did find some wood supplies and tools.

Mortie: In the desert? You found wood and tools in the desert?

Cody: Back a few miles out on the highway.

Mortie: You found a hardware store?

Cody: No. I found a truck that just happened to have a little accident and there was tools and wood all over the side of the road so I grabbed what I could and hid it away so we could go back and get it all. Sure would be nice if we had Travis' pick-up so we could...

Mortie: And just how did this accident happen?

Cody: One shouldn't ask such things, brother! The Lord works in mysterious ways. Ain't that right, preacher?

Norbert: That's right. The Lord provides what is needed to the faithful. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Cody: So, rector man? What are we going to build first?

Norbert: Why, a church, of course.

Mortie: Should build the church last. We're going to need places for housing and storage for food and water...

Norbert: We are doing the Lord's work here. We must start by honoring him with a place of worship. We can put it there (**points**) on that small hill where it can be seen for miles around. It will be a beacon of hope and a reminder of our covenant of peace and love.

Mortie: A covenant?

Norbert: Yeah. I have about 237 rules of communal living – give or take a few – that we will agree upon so that we can live in spiritual peace.

Cody: Where's the bar gonna be?

Norbert: Bar? There's not going to be any bar. This will be a land of strong morals and proper living.

Cody: But where we going to get a cold drink after working so hard on making all these buildings?

Norbert: We shall drink only the cool water of righteousness from the stream of purity.

Mortie: And where is this stream of purity?

Norbert: It has not yet been revealed to us but it shall be in good time.

Cody: And what about all the games?

Norbert: What games?

Cody: You know, the games they have at bars like darts and dice and blackjack, some healthy entertainment for after a long day of doing all that Lord work.

Norbert: There will be no games of sin and transgression here. You can be sure of that!

Cody: What about the women?

Norbert: Women?

Mortie: We are going to need women if we hope to make this community multiply and grow.

Cody: Yeah, women, you know. Those beautiful creatures who can hold you close and kiss you and touch you and...

Mortie: Cody!

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Cody: Sorry. Got carried away.

Norbert: We will have women here but, rest assured, they will be women of piety and purity. I will personally make sure that each one is physically and spiritually fit myself.

Mortie: **(under breath)** I bet you will.

Norbert: What was that, Brother Mortimer?

Cody: Are we really not going to have a bar in this town?

Norbert: It is not a town. It is a sacred utopian settlement.

Cody: A what?

Mortie: Rector Hardy. I understand your desire to build a church for this new holy land but it is imperative that we construct a secure building to hold all our newly found supplies as well as any food we may find. There are plenty of insects and animals out here as well as harsh, hot, and dry conditions that can destroy our stock in no time.

Cody: Well I, for one, ain't buildin' no church or warehouse until we get ourselves a bar cause right now I am plumb thirsty and after that ridin' around on them horses all day I would like to just sit me right down and play a friendly game of cards.

Norbert: This is the land of God and we are God's people who shall listen to me, the mouthpiece of God, and we shall build a church to glorify me, I mean, God. And there is nothing more to be said of it.

Mortie: And what good is all this praisin' and church buildin' if we're dead because we have no food and no water because all that is gone because there ain't no building to put it in?

Norbert: The Lord will provide!

Mortie: Well he better do it soon!

Norbert: You doubt me? Have you lost your faith in me? In God?

Mortie: If we don't get to work stowin away our supplies and getting more food and water we ain't gonna need no faith cause we're going to be dead!

Norbert: Then we will join God in heaven.

Mortie: I'd like to spend a little more time here on earth before going up to heaven.

Norbert: You must believe. You must have faith. He will provide what we need when we need it!

Cody: Is he gonna give us a bar?

Norbert: There will be no bar! Now go and round up those supplies.

Cody: I ain't doing nothing. I am tired and I am thirsty. If we ain't gonna have no bar here then I'm gonna just go and find me one. **(gets on his horse and rides off)**

Norbert: **(to Cody)** Wait, no! **(to Mortie)** Now all I have left is the one true faithful servant of...

Mortie: Forget it. I ain't listenin to you anymore. You dragged us all out here and for what? Nothin! We ain't servin' God. We're serving the great Rector Norbert Hardy *the third!* **(toward offstage)** Cody, wait up. **(back to Norbert)** Maybe the Lord will provide for you now. **(rides off)**

(Norbert looks around then walks upstage in disbelief. He looks up at the sky then drops his head and walks offstage.)

Curtain