

## The King of Foods

### Characters:

*Herald*  
*Fruit*  
*Cereal*  
*Egg*  
*Vegetables*  
*Meat*  
*Sugar*  
*Attendant*  
*Meat*  
*Sugar*  
*Brown Bread*  
*Butter*  
*Milk*  
*Coffee*  
*Judge*  
*Singers and Dancers*

*(Tarn o'shanter, tabard, ruffles and trumpet pennant are made of crepe paper, as are most of the costumes in this play. A funnel forms the end of the trumpet. Fruit's hat is a huge red apple. The dress has a painted fruit border. Cereal wears a poppy wreath and a dress of wheat-colored strips of paper. Egg is in a white with yellow bodice. Vegetables has green stockings and a suit of long paper leaves wired—head in a tall orange crepe "dunce cap" gathered about a cleaver. Sugar is daintily dressed in white. Attendant is in white. Brown Bread—a loaf is a large paper carton, padded and covered with brown crepe paper. The bottom is open but there are holes for arms and legs. Butter is all in yellow, with a large buttercup hat. Milk—a cream-colored cardboard cylinder with arm-holes, forms a huge milk glass. Judge wears a college gown and a white cut-paper wig. Coffee is all in brown, with turkey feathers in her cap.)*

### HERALD:

I know something that I am going to tell,  
Do as we advise you and you'll all be well;  
Listen very carefully, keep as still as mice,  
We are going to give you some excellent advice.  
*(Calls following foods.)*

### FRUIT:

Everybody must eat some fruit,  
Father and mother and baby cute;  
For daily fruit, all children pine,

Because it makes them well and fine.

CEREAL:

All must remember to eat,  
Because they give the body heat.  
Remember what I say, use me every day;  
You will find that I pay, pay, pay.

VEGETABLES:

Vegetables help keep the body right,  
Use me daily or your health you'll blight.  
Eat me for supper, and also for dinner;  
In the food world, the vegetable's a winner.

EGG:

I am the excellent but costly egg,  
Listen to me a minute, I beg.

ATTENDANT: (*Leading Meat, a small boy.*)

This little boy is to represent meat,  
I want you all to see him, he looks so very neat.  
We gave this part to one who isn't tall,  
To remind you to make your meat portions small.

(*Leading Sugar*)

And here's a little girl, she's also very little,  
To almost everybody she is a favorite victual.  
I know her name is Sugar, because she looks so sweet.  
Make your portions of sugar just as small as meat.

BROWN BREAD:

I am a brown loaf, I am made of whole wheat,  
For feeding the children I am quite hard to beat;  
My sister, the white loaf, is not so good for health,  
And health, my dear people, is better than wealth.

BUTTER:

I am golden butter, my price is very high;  
People, when they buy me, are often heard to sigh.  
But I have something in me, that makes the children grow,  
Let them spread me on their bread, 'twill on them health bestow.

MILK:

I am beautiful milk, I'm a wonderful king.  
The dear little children my praises all sing;  
Without me the babies would sicken and die,  
And e'en though my prices go up to the sky,

No person on earth should e'er pass me by.  
I am sure you all know that my food value's high,  
And so I appeal to you all, my dear people,  
Use me, my value's as high as a steeple.

HERALD:

Dear Milk, we all love and honor you, too,  
The words you have spoken are every one true.  
Come, friends, let us gather around him and sing  
Praises and honor, we owe to our king.

*(All begin to move towards Milk—Coffee appears.)*

HERALD: *(Seeing Coffee.)* Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh! What's that? What's that? What's that?  
At my first glimpse of it, I thought it was a bat!

*(Foods repeat, "Oh! Oh!" etc.)*

HERALD: *(To Coffee.)*

Who are you, sir, and what's your name?  
We do not want you slighted,  
But it seems to me 'twas impolite  
To come here uninvited.

COFFEE:

My name is Coffee. I am a great king,  
When you call him a monarch, you say a false thing.  
I shall take out my sword and drive him away:  
Go at once! Go at once! You cannot here stay!

MILK:

I think you're the one to be driven away,  
But I have a plan to decide which shall stay;  
To try our case let us get a magistrate,  
I think that's the best way to ascertain our fate.  
*(To Herald)*  
Go get the judge! Look for him low! Look for him high!  
Don't come back without him.

HERALD: I fly! I fly!

MILK:

When the judge comes in, we can each state our case  
And tell our powers truly, and with an honest face.

JUDGE:

What's all the trouble? Who wants me in such haste?  
Let the seekers after justice before me here be placed.

HERALD:

Your honor, both of these foods claim to be king:  
This is Milk, this is Coffee.  
(*To Coffee*) You bold, bad thing!

JUDGE: You, sir, King Coffee, may tell your story first;  
(*Aside*) In a case of this kind, it is best to know the worst.

COFFEE:

Your honor, 'twill surprise you—listen to my story:  
Everybody loves me, my life is filled with glory,  
Grown-up people drink me, morning, noon and night;  
I take away their color, I make some thin and pale,  
I make some cross and nervous, and I do it without fail.  
Don't you think this power great enough to make me king?

HERALD:

Oh, Dear Milk, your case looks bad,  
I feel very, very sad—very sad.

JUDGE:

Well, sir, King Milk, this fellow has great power,  
Have you any words to say to make him shrink and cower?

MILK:

Your honor, those that know me, know that I've done well.  
All the babies I've rescued, I really couldn't tell.  
People when they know me, learn to love me truly;  
Grown-up men and women, and children so unruly.  
Every day more people find me in delight,  
Because I build their bodies and their lives make bright.

This creature here has told you of how he causes woe,  
Pales the face of children, he surely is their foe,  
How he makes them nervous, how he breaks them down,  
Children in the country, children in the town.  
If I caused such trouble, I should be ashamed,  
I would not call myself a king, I'd feel myself defamed.

Listen to the things I do, hear what I've to say,  
And if you do not say I'm king, I'll take myself away.  
I make the children rosy, I make the children tall,

I make them glad and happy, and health I give to all.  
A drink of milk will give them a sound and quiet sleep;  
No nerves rise up to tease them, their slumber is too deep.  
I always leave behind me a merry little throng  
With sunshine on their faces and on their lips a song.  
It is a wondrous power, to gladden childhood so,  
If you consult the mothers, they'll say it's true, I know.  
To build up children's bodies, the ones that he breaks down,  
To give them warmth and action, this is enough renown.

JUDGE: (*Interrupting.*)

Dear friend, you need no longer speak, I understand my duty;  
I clearly see you as you are, your works of wondrous beauty;  
Of all the foods I've ever judged, you surely are the king.  
(*To Coffee*)  
And as for you, bad Coffee, you are a horrid thing.  
You cannot stay here longer, you must prepare to go,  
To all your abject pleading, my answer must be "NO."  
You'd better go at once, sir, these foods are good and stout,  
And you'll get rough treatment from them, I haven't any doubt.

(*Exit Coffee hastily.*)

ALL:

He's gone, he's gone, Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha.  
He's gone! He's gone! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!  
To celebrate our victory, let us dance and sing;  
Come, let us gather round dear Milk, and hail him as our king.  
Around our hero, we dance and sing,  
For Milk in the children's world is king!

HERALD: I see some strangers coming in, singers they seem to be.  
Let's ask them for a song and dance, do you not all agree?

(*Enter Singers.*)

HERALD: Will you oblige us with a dance, and also with a song?

SINGERS: We'll sing you one of bread and milk, 'twill not be very long.

(*Song*)

When your children are pale and anemic

I am sure they need milk and brown bread;  
Oh, give them these and excellent green vegetables,  
Do not wait till they're sick and in bed!

Do you know what's a very good supper?

It's quite easy, just milk and brown bread;  
They will give pleasant dreams in the night time,

In the morning, they'll give a clear head.

*(Dancing strangers enter and dance by.)*

HERALD: That's a pretty song, to sing it we all yearn  
Won't you teach it to us? We'll try so hard to learn.

SINGER: I am very glad to do so—now listen carefully,  
The words are very easy, just repeat them after me.  
*(Stranger speaks words of song, chorus repeats, all sing song and dance.)*

**The End**