

Near at hand we suddenly hear a loud ferocious roar. THE THREE FRIENDS stop dead in their tracks. There is another roar and the LION (ZEKE) bounds on stage by way of the trampolines and lands on the road blocking their way. General screaming as the LION leaps on. Music Out.

DOROTHY. Oh look!

SCARECROW. Oh!

The TINMAN and the SCARECROW collide and collapse to the ground as the LION assumes a threatening pose.

LION. Hah! Put 'em up! Put 'em up! Which one of you first? I'll fight you both together if you want. I'll fight ya' with one paw tied behind my back! I'll fight ya' standin' on one foot! I'll fight ya' with my eyes closed!
(Turns suddenly on the TINMAN who holds up his axe in front of the LION.)
 Oh, pullin' an axe on me, eh? Sneakin' up on me, eh? Why!

TINMAN. Here — here. Go way and let us alone.

LION. Oh, scared, huh! Afraid, huh? Hah! How long can you stay fresh in that can?
(Chortles at his own wit.) Come on, get up and fight, you shivering junk yard!
(Turns to the SCARECROW) Put your hands up, you lop-sided bag of hay!

SCARECROW. That's getting personal, Lion.

TINMAN. Yes, get up and teach him a lesson.

SCARECROW. Well — what's wrong — with you teachin' him?

TINMAN. I — well — well, I hardly know him.

TOTO in DOROTHY'S arms suddenly barks, causing the LION to spin round in alarm.

LION. Well, I'll get you anyway, Pee-Wee.

The LION leaps towards DOROTHY with a roar. DOROTHY slaps him on the nose and he bursts into tears. The TINMAN and SCARECROW get to their feet.

DOROTHY. Oh, shame on you!

LION. What did you do that for? I didn't bite him.

DOROTHY. No, but you tried to. It's bad enough picking on a straw man, but when you go around picking on poor little dogs ...

LION. Well, you didn't have to go and hit me, did you? Is my nose bleedin'?

DOROTHY. Well, of course not. My goodness, what a fuss you're making. Naturally when you go around picking on things weaker than you are — why you're nothing but a great big coward!

LION. You're right, I am a coward! I haven't got any courage at all. I even scare myself. Look at the circles under my eyes. I haven't slept in weeks.

TINMAN. Why don't you try counting sheep?

LION. That doesn't do any good — I'm afraid of 'em.

SCARECROW. Oh, that's too bad. Why don't you come along with us? Stop
We're on our way to see the Wizard now. To get him a heart.

TINMAN. And him a brain.

DOROTHY. I'm sure he could give you some courage.

LION. Well, wouldn't you feel degraded to be seen in the company of a cowardly lion? I would.

DOROTHY. No, of course not.

LION. Gee, that — that's awfully nice of you. My life has been simply unbearable. Even my family's disowned me. When I was just a little cub, my father took me to the top of a high mountain and waved his paw around and said "One day, son, all this will be yours." Oh, I was terrified.

SCARECROW. Why's that?

LION. I'm scared of heights. (*Cries again.*)

DOROTHY. Oh, well, it's all right now. The Wizard'll fix everything.

LION. At least you'll be safe if I come with you.

TINMAN. How's that?

LION. No self-respecting wild animal will come anywhere near me.

No. 23

"If I Only Had the Nerve"

See p. 121

(Lion with Dorothy, Scarecrow & Tinman)

LION. (*Spoken in rhythm*)

Said a lion, poor neurotic lion,
To a Miss who listened to him rave,
Oh! The lord made me a lion,
But the Lord forgot to make me brave.

(*Sung*) Then his tail began to curl and wave.

Life is sad, believe me, missy
When you're born to be a sissy,
Without the vim and verve
But I could change my habits,
Never more be scared of rabbits
If I only had the nerve.

I'm afraid there's no denyin'
I'm just a dandy-lion,
A fate I don't deserve