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SCRIPTS FOR SCHOOLS

The Fair Trade

By Rita Hestand

**A Traditional
Play Script**

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Cast of Characters: The Narrator, James, Joey, Pete, The Hobo

Narrator: The 10:15 Silver Streak soared through the piney woods of Casper Mountain zooming through the edge of Strawberry Patch, belching it's smoke, and rattling the ground like a roller coaster gone loco. It's mighty horn bellowed, as James stood transfixed, nonetheless, knowing Joey and Pete were probably scouring the woods for him by now.

Pete: Where's James? We gotta finish picking these berries before it gets too late. We got a long walk to the bus stop.

Joey: He's probably watching the train. You know how he likes trains.

Pete: Yeah...I know...but I don't know why. It's just a train.

Narrator: A man suddenly bolted from the train, and James forgot all about picking strawberries. James' mouth went suddenly dry. There he stood, (James stands staring with his mouth open) what his grandpa called a "real hobo", tall, skinny, and mean looking. And he was headed right for the strawberry patch.

Joey: What are you doin'?" (Sneaking up behind James)

James: I was watchin' the train."

Pete: Better stop watching and get to picking. I've already picked fifty cents worth."

(The three boys sit under a shade tree to eat their lunch)

James: There's a hobo over by that tall pine, and he looks might hungry.

Joey: (His eyes a little bigger) A hobo, like Grandpa used to talk about?

James: Yeah, only Reverend Web called them homeless people.

Pete: (Pete is looking over at the hobo) So?

James: Well, he looks hungry, like he hadn't eaten in a long time.

Pete: (snickering at James) You gonna give him part of your lunch, James?

James: I dunno know. Maybe.

Narrator: It was a known fact that Pete thought James was a coward and never passed the opportunity to say so, in front of Joey.

James: (Looking at his brother) Will you go with me, Joey?

Pete: (Snickering louder) Baby, baby, suck your thumb.

Joey: Naw, not me, and you better stay away from him James. He's probably a robber or something worse. We're not suppose to talk to stangers.

James: (James is glancing again at the hobo) I know. But--he doesn't look like a robber, he just looks hungry, Joey.

Pete: (winking at Joey) Yeah, he's probably a robber, alright. He's probably hungry too. In fact, he probably robbed the train and hasn't eaten in weeks. Maybe he eats kids like you for supper, James. I dare you to go over there.

James: I'm not afraid of him. I mean, he's just a hungry ole man, riding trains.

Narrator: James slowly walked over to the man. His knees were shaking, his hands were sweating, he was scared to death, but for nothing would he back down now. The man had dull gray eyes that sunk into his head, and his bones stuck out hard against his skin. He looked like a live skeleton.

James: Uh, m-mistser, you-you look kinda hungry, and well--I've got a sandwich. Do you want it?

(James sticks the sandwich out to the man)

The hobo: thank you young sir, but I thought I'd pick me some berries, directly."

Narrator: His manners shocked James. A man dressed like that, talking the way he did. It just didn't fit.

James: Ms. Sayers don't like people eating his strawberries, he hires us kids to pick them and won't let us eat hardly any. B-but you can have my sandwich if you like.

(James sticks the sandwich out again to the man)

The hobo: You'd give me your sandwich? Isn't that your lunch?

James: Yes, but you can have it, if you want it.

The Hobo: But...why?

James: 'Cause you're hungry, I guess.

The hobo: I don't take charity. (the man stands up, and frowns a little)

Narrator: James is shaking . He wants to run, but his feet won't budge. He'd tried to do a good deed and the man seemed insulted. Weren't you supposed to feed the hungry, isn't that what the bible said?

James: Oh, I didn't mean anything, mister...