

St. Peter's School, Black Tickle

presents

"CATCH YOU LATER.....MAYBE"

CAST

Tom / Young Cod  
Cod / Grandfather  
John  
Cecil  
Bill  
Eli  
Lucy  
Skipper Bob  
Carmen  
Pat

Dermot Morris  
Cynthia Elson  
Laura Keefe  
Corey Elson  
Loretta Keefe  
Alicia Dyson  
Sharon Keefe  
Cheryl Elson  
Ellen Keefe  
Linda Morris

TEACHER ADVISOR

Cindy Hynes

MUSIC

The Black Tickle Fishery (Composed by students)  
Singers for Fishermen (Nfld. Souvenir Records)

The play presents the audience with a history of the fishery in the community of Black Tickle over the last five years. It moves us from the season of the glut, to less fish, to winter work projects because of no fishery, to a season of a moratorium imposed by the government.



Jordan McGrath  
Eric G. Lambert School  
Churchill Falls

( As the play opens, Tom and Cod are on the stage chatting about the state of affairs of the fishery).

Tom: Grandfather, soon all the water will be filled up with nets, boats, and people. It won't be safe to let me go out doors for a good swim.

Cod: I don't know Tom me son, I heard them talking up there that John Crosbie told them on their t.v's that there's a moritorium.

Tom: What's a mor- mori- moritorium, Grandfather Cod.

Cod: This is the first year in all my days, Tom, that you will be able to go outside to play and stay in school and not worry about getting caught by some shark of a fisherman.

Tom: Why?

Cod: The fishery is closed down for two years. The government stopped it. That's what a moritorium is.

Tom: Yipee, no one will catch me this summer. I lough I will swim right clear to Cartwright. We should have a big party tonight, get everyone in and have a fine ol' scoff for ourselves.

Cod: Hold on now, Tom me son. You still got to keep your eye out for those jiggers.

Tom: What do you mean jiggers?

Cod: This Crosbie feller said that people could jig fish for "their own personal use".

Tom: So I still got to watch out where I goes, and play it safe. I knows them jiggers are dangerous rigs. That's what happened to my big brother Rock when he went up above. One of them jiggers took him and went! I'll never forget it, never!

Cod: Yes, there's lot I'll never forget. Sit back and I'll tell you a story. It's not that long ago that them jiggers, nets and draggers, took half of our family, school by school, by school. Son it would break your dear little heart, if you'd seen all them fine lovely fish go up above. To make matters worse they'd fire back half of our brothers and sisters dead and torn up. And we'd have to try to bury them.

Tom: Cruel, really cruel, sick people that's what they are. What did they do that for?

Cod: Seems that they decided the fish wasn't big enough for 'em to make pigs out of themselves on.

Tom: Must have been rough being a fish then.

Cod: Yes, son it was but so few us survived. Them jiggers, nets and boats were bad enough, but it wouldn't nothing compared to them draggers.

Tom: Draggers, what about them?

Cod: Dirt, biggest dirt ever created! They not only cleaned us out but our homes besides. That's why most of us older fish are gone, but whats left are ye youngins.

Tom: That's why thier not goin fishin'. Will they ever go fishin' again?

Cod: After about two tears, they decided that the fish population would have increased and that the fish would be bigger and hardier than ever. Right now, the scientists say that the ocean is a watery desert. They even went and wrote a song, saying that our home is "lifeless like the moon".

Tom: We're certainly having the last laugh at them people from outside, who kept comin' down to catch us. Ha, ha, ha.

Cod: Tom, me son. If you'd had been way back then you would have seen the strife breeding that went on between the Black Ticklers and the Outsiders. What a racket!

( The lights fade from the fish scene, and the lights are on to a group of fishermen on a wharf in Black Tickle. There is an argument in session. Just a few minutes ago an inside boat from Black Tickle pushed a boat from the Straits trying to get through with their days catch. This causes a lot of anger and insults are thrown back and forth between the fishermen from Black Tickle, Newfoundland, and the Straits. Sound effects from the dock are heard).

John: Don't think dat you can push me around and get away with it, my son. Jest because ye're from the Straits you guys tink dat ye can come down 'ere and take right over.

Cecil: Better watch your mouth. We got jest as much right to dis plant as the people from Black Tickle. And ye're soon going to find out dat ye're not going to push us outsiders around.

John: Yeah, well dis year ye're gonna find out dat da Black Ticklers aren't gonna sit back and wait for ye outsiders to take over. We're gonna stand up for our right, and if ye try to stop us ye'd better be ready for a big fight, because we're sick and tired of being pushed around by ye guys who tinks dey know everything and owns all the fishing grounds.

Cecil: But at least we got a bit of educatin', not like some of the ones in Black Tickle. So we knows what we're talking about. Ye guys will find out soon enough who takes priority over da fish plant. As far as the fishermen from da Straits is concerned ye can take Black Tickle and shove it. We're not interested in dis borin' community. We're only interested in da fish plant and the money we gets from it.

John: No trouble to know you're not interested in Black Tickle. Ye only comes in the summer to see what you can rob from us. At least we fellers works for what we gets, not like ye guys. Ye gets everything handed to ye on a silver platter straight from the government.

Cecil: No need to get all riled up about the Government cause we wusn't even talkin' about dem fellers. Anyway none of dis would ever 'ave started if ye didn't ram yer boat through da side of mine.

John: Well if yer ol' boat is that nash, it shouldn't even be in da water. One of dese days we'll 'ear about 'da bottom fallin' outta yer boat, and ye fellers half drownin'. Will the Government buy ye a new boat den?

Bill: Well boys dat's enough. We never came over to have no rackets or have any strife breeding with ya. We jest came over to sell our little bit of fish before it gets rotten.

Eli: Now Cecil stop that arguin' and go and sell your fish before it spoils. Then you'll have something else to bawl about.

Bill: As if it wasn't bad enough, here comes Lucy next.

Lucy: You, you leave my Johnny alone before I calls da cops. No one picks on my ol' man and gets away with it.

John: Oh Lucy, mind yer own business. Dis never had nothing to do with you in da first place. So go on back to the fish plant where ya belongs. All ye women is alike, stickin' yer noses in where der not wanted.

Lucy: Well, John me son, someone got to do somethin' about dem smart alecks dat come from da Straits. Dey come to Black Tickle in da summer and tries to take right over. Did you ever see da likes of em'.

John: Dat's enough Lucy. Go on to da plant.

Lucy: Ok I'll go but I wants to say one ting before I leaves. If it wasn't for dis little place, alot of ye hot shots would be mighty cold in da winter with no heat, and ye would be pretty hungry with no grub on da table fer yer families. So don't go smart mouthim' me if ye knows whats good fer yer. We're only used to seeing two or three hundred people in the winter, now there's two thousand crawlin' around and dey got no one controllin' 'em for God's sake.

( Lucy exits as Eli returns).

Eli: (Grumbling) Humph! Dey call dat a fish plant. Went up to sell me fish and dey threw half of it away. Dey said it was spoiled. Well what do dey expect, with da sun beatin' down on it fer four or five hours.

John: Stop bitchin' and bawlin' fer God's sake will ya. Anyway it serves ya right, cause if it wasn't fer ye guys dis wouldn't have happened in da first place. So ye had better put up with it. Take us Black Tickle people for example, we don't go 'round shoutin' our mouths off like ye do.

Cecil: Dat's because yer to scared to do anything about it. We're not afraid to stand up fer our rights. We don't come down here in the summer time to slave our guts out in boat all day long jest to get our fish thrown away. If we wanted that we would have stayed home and walked the rocks all summer.

John: Well why didn't ye stay home den. Dat would have given us folks a bit of peace and quiet. We wouldn't have to listen to ye folks shoutin' off yer big mouths all day long.

( Cecil pushes John and Bill tries to stop him, but they push Bill out of the way).

Bill: Ok fellars break it up. Dat's enough of dat arguin'. Nothin's gettin' solved dis way. Anyway dere's anotter meetin' tonight in da hall. So hopefully we'll get tings straightened out den. So let's leave it alone fer now.

John: Damn da meetin's anyway. Dere was already three or four of dem and dis is where dey got us. All dem fellars is talk, no action at all.

Bill: Well if ye tinks dat dis is a waste of time ye don't have to come, but us fellars would like to get all dis over with. Well, I gotta go now, see ye all later, da ones dat's goin' dat is.

(Everybody says good-bye to Bill and to each other. They all exit. A meeting has been called to deal with the disturbance outside of the fish plant. Other people of the fishery are there. People are talking as they approach the meeting hall, a few people are already in the hall. Sound effects from the crowd at the meeting hall, people grumbling etc).

Pat: (Pat raises his hand to get the mens attention, fade out sound effects, then he says..)  
Dis meetin' is called so dat we can discuss da disturbance outside da fish plant. Now, lets get dis meetin' under way.

Cecil: Well, everyting wus all right until a week ago. I went over to da plant meself and dey told me dat dey couldn't take much fish from da outside fishermen. So what do you expect---a couple of da outsiders got together and blocked off da dock. We figgered dat if we couldn't sell our fish dey wouldn't either. (Cecil crosses over his arms in front of him) and dat's how da rukus got started, and da same ting happened again today.

John: It wus jus' annoder day fer me until I went over to dat darn ol' plant. Dere wus dis bunch of boats lined up by da dock. No matter how much ya bawled at 'em dey wouldn't crawl outta da way, no sir.

Bill: (Interrupts) Dey wouldn't let us sell our fish. So I went back to me own business while waitin' fer 'em to move, and nearly got knocked off me feet. Dis wus one of dem long liners' den bumpin' into me, by da lard dyin'.

Skipper: Well Mr. Cabot yer gonna gave to make up yer mind soon  
Bob cause I'm not puttin' up with no more of it. (Eli shows an expression of being fed up with what is going on). We feels dis has gone on long enough, ye should be able to make a decision by now.

( Lights fade from the meeting back to Tom and Cod)

Tom: Well, Grandfather Cod, seeing how there was so much going on, what did they finally decide?

Cod: The Fishermen's Committee decided to accept one thousand pounds per person. Since the people of Black Tickle owned the fish plant, they got the priority. However much was left over, would be taken from the outsiders. And you know Son, the funniest thing about it was the fussing and strife breeding was all for nothing. No more than two years later, all hands came down to fish and went home empty handed.

Tom: I heard some thought they'd even have to leave the island. But some of the crowd tou wouldn't get them to leave with a peice of two by four.

Cod: Yes, and Skipper Bob always comes to my mind. He always figured that the fish would come in and there'd be no need to resettle.

( Lights fade )

Skipper: Ah, boy don't worry we'll get our fish yet.  
Bob

Eli: Yes bye, we've been hearing that for a couple of weeks.

John: That's for sure, the old woman got up this morning and right off the bat started in complaining. She said she'd go right clean off the earth if she don't get some food. All the same she sure got far to go yet.

Lucy: Yes bye, I heard ya. You won't be so pridy over here back biting when there's no supper on the table fer ya. All the same I never thought I'd see the day come to Black Tickle when there wouldn't be enough fish to make a living or cook a meal. I can't stay and chat I got to go to the shop and see can I get a bill to get something for supper. All the same, I believe I'm going right off the earth.  
(Lucy exits)

Eli: Well now Skipper Bob. How's ya managing with your bills? Your light , phone, cable bills and all the grub you can eat, while your waitin' for the fish to come.

Skipper: I'll manage the best I can. The cable is gonna have  
Bob to go though. That will save on power and the ol'  
woman's eyes from watching them soaps, besides we're  
not finished yet. Is that Bill coming in the harbour?  
I allows he got a bit of fish; he's gone all day.

John: Let's go down boys and give him a hand to haul it all  
up.  
( Bill throws up one frozen fish)

Eli: Stop that carrin' on now Bill, and pull up that tarp an  
show us the rest of 'em.

Bill: What ya sees is what ya gets! Up five o'clock I was;  
just to get this one fish, guts already frozen.  
Wouldn't know but I just took it out of the freezer.  
This is my last day out, dem draggers got us ruined.

John: That's it, Skipper Bob you get on dat phone and call  
dat Danny Dumaresque fella because we can't put up with  
anymore of this.

Eli: School is openin', Christmas is comin', not to mention  
that by next spring all of us will be off the face of  
the earth.

(The men go into the house where Skipper Bob makes  
the phone call).

Skipper: Yes, Sir, my name is Bob Morris and I'm callin' from  
Bob Black Tickle. I would like to inform you of what's  
goin' on here in the fishery. The situation is  
unbearable. Yes, Sir unbearable is what I said.  
There's just enough money to live, no extra for sure  
and ya got to try and charge a bit of grub. Some  
people can't do that.  
Yes, I know your doin your best, but there's people  
here who just can't afford to wait on the best to  
happen. Some of the families in Black Tickle had their  
heat and light cut off 'cause they never had the money  
to pay the bills. The groceries that people got to buy  
is what they really needs, I spose thats the next to  
go. Pause. Let me finish what I got to say now Danny.  
Well it's gettin' late in the year, don't ya think its  
time to get us poor fellers some work? We're depending  
on ya, you knows ya got all our votes last year.  
Alright then Danny I spect I'll be talking to you soon.  
I've taken up enough of your time for one day. If work  
don't start soon you'll be hearing from me again.

Eli: Tell us what he had to say.



Skipper: Well that was a waste of time. Danny said that they  
Bob already got make-work programs on the go. We should be  
startin' next Monday.

John: Work out, ya I spose. But I guess you needs an armful  
of clothes to keep you from freezing to death. This  
winter 50 below, I can imagine it, tryin' to get our  
stamps.

Eli: Don't go depending on that ol' social worker until ya  
gets ya first checks. The last time she was in she  
gave me \$50.00 measly dollars, and I got a family a  
family to feed. Me poor ol' buddy only got \$3.50.

(Lucy comes in from the store)

Carmen: Mom, did you get me a bar up at the store?

Lucy: Bar, bar, you're lucky you got something fer ya dinner  
and supper let alone that ol' junk. There will  
probably come a time yet you won't even have that much.

Carmen: I only asked, you don't have to jump down my throat.  
( Carmen moves over near the stove )

Lucy: Oh, my God, John, when's it all gonna end? Youngsters  
needin' books and clothes. Not much food to even put  
on the table, how are we gonna make it through the  
winter.

(Carmen walks back near her parents)

Carmen: That's okay Mom. I don't need a bar. After listening to  
you and dad, I realize how selfish I was. I know times  
are rough. Remember how Grampie used to sing about them  
days. Dad, how about singing Grampie's song for us?

John: (Lip sync)

Well in the year of hardship  
some men they came around  
Government officials  
who had come to close us down  
I guess everytime we went  
to haul our gear on the shore  
and when we didn't catch no fish  
we knew what was in store.

For many years we've taken  
the fish right from the sea  
and now it has decided  
to take it back from me.  
For everything you win  
you loose out in the end.  
The gamble's when your waiting  
for the fish to come again.

Well we were left with no smiles  
on our faces to be seen  
We thought that the government  
to us was being mean  
for taking all we ever had  
and waited for so long  
It goes to show the power  
of the government so strong.

( Lights fade from the family scene and focus on Tom  
and Cod-the fish. )

Cod: Yes, Tom, me boy! That government crowd must be some  
powerful group of fellers. Got the power to shut all  
them fishermen down.

Tom: What are they doin' now to make a livin'?

Cod: I overheard a few of 'em out in the boat the other day.  
They were talking about the Compensation Package- Who's  
gettin' it, and who's not gettin' it, and is the money  
gonna be enough? Tom, me boy, it must be some hard for  
Skipper Bob's pride. He was used to hard work and  
feeling proud of his paycheck knowing that he earned  
it. Imagine sittin' around all day long watching sun  
up and sun down. Skipper Bob was never one for  
mopin' around the house gettin' in his ol' woman's way.

Tom: Yes, and that young Carmen can sure get on yer nerves-  
talking about boys, make-up, and clothes.

Cod: Tom, me boy, you might get a chance to grow up to be  
big and strong and as old as I am. Needin' think that  
we can recover in two measly years when they nearly  
wiped us off the bottom of the ocean. Two years'll be  
turnin' into five. All that crowd'll know will be  
empty nets, winter works, and loss of pride. And all  
the mainlanders will be able to write more songs about  
us. Listen to the one they got on the go now.

( Song - "Singing for Fishermen")

#### Singing For Fishermen

We are singing for fishermen  
We're from Newfoundland  
The ocean is our way of life  
An island, our homeland

We are singing for fishermen  
They're family and friends  
May tomorrow bring plenty my son  
May the catch be yours again...

The ocean is a desert now  
Lifeless like the moon  
The boats are tied up at the wharf  
They won't be out this June  
Where the plants have closed down one by one  
There's nothing left to do  
We're so far away but we think of home  
And our prayers go out for you...

Was it over fishing or oversight  
The ocean can be cruel  
Was it faith that caused this tragedy  
Mother nature is no fool  
Well better days I hope and pray  
Will come again real soon  
And the fishermen will sail again  
When the boats go out in June...