The Third-floor Bedroom

Dramatis Personæ:

Master Dilgar, a minor wizard who owns a two-story house.
Peter, his apprentice, and the hero of the story.
Bulai, magical birds (singular: Bulang)
including #1-4, chorus, and Brilógus
Angareng, an evil wizard.

Running time: approx. 16 minutes plus scene changes and business.

Scene 1, Master Dilgar’s house

(Master Dilgar seated at a desk on stage.)
Master Dilgar: Peter, come to my study!
(Peter jumps up onto stage from his seat in the audience.)
Peter: What is it, Master Dilgar? Is it time for my lessons already?
Master Dilgar: No, I've cancelled today’s lessons, due to a matter of great import-
ance I must attend to.
Peter: What matter is this?
Master Dilgar: It's none of your business. Now just go play about the house, or
whatever you apprentices do on break.
Peter: Please tell me, Master Dilgar. It might be important for my studies.
Master Dilgar: As I said, it is none of your business, but if you insist, I guess I
will tell you. So what it is is, there’s this extremely powerful evil wizard,
called Angareng, who's been going along city to city in a wave of destruction
and is coming next here, to the City of Bullingame.

Peter: That doesn’t sound very good.
Master Dilgar: Apparently, Angareng can only be defeated by a magical wand,
which divination spells have found is in this very city. However, it has been
lost for centuries, and no one can find it. The Council of Wizards of Bull-
ingame are meeting today, to discuss how to find the wand. (Aside) I hope I
can direct the Council to that wand—it would get me such a large promo-
tion! (To Peter) Run along now, I must be off to the Council.

(Master Dilgar exits. Peter wanders around.)
Peter: (Sarcastically) This is great! A greatly evil wizard is coming here, pre-
sumably to destroy the wand that is the only thing that can kill him. Abso-
lutely excellent! *(Normally)* I even wish that pathetic Master Dilgar were here to protect me.

Peter: Odd, I don’t remember this door here. It’s unlocked. Stairs leading up? But this is the second story, and the house only has two stories. *(bored sounding)* magic. Oh well, let’s see what’s up here.

*(Peter exits, sound of footsteps on stairs)*

Peter's Voice: I wonder if Dilgar knows about this.

**Scene 2, the third floor bedroom.**

*(There is a small bed and dresser, a window that looks out onto the River Bull, and a large tapestry with a pattern of birds on it, filling one wall.)*

Peter: Nice little bedroom, I wonder if Dilgar knows about any of this. *(Opens the window)* Ah! some fresh air! This house is so stuffy. *(Turns around with an exclamation of surprise)* The birds! They're coming off the tapestry! *(Bulai stream out the window.)* Uh-oh! Master Dilgar might get angry with me for this. I know, I'll go outside and try to catch them!

**Scene 3, in front of Dilgar’s house.**

*(Peter enters from Dilgar’s house.)*

Peter: I think I remember Master Dilgar telling me about these bird things some time in my studies. They're called bulai, they're very loyal, and they can speak.

*(A bulang enters.)*

Bulang 1: Come with me, young Peter. We need to hurry if we are to save the city.

Peter: Me? Save Bullingame? I can’t even get a simple levitation spell to work, and you expect me to save the city?

*(A few more Bulai fly in.)*

Bulang 2: *(Brightly)* Oh, you needn't worry about levitation—we can fly!

Bulang 3: Oh shut up! No one asked your opinion!

Bulang 4: So what it is is, we can help you find the wand Yngor, with which you can defeat … I forget the wizard’s name.

Bulang 1: His name is Angareng.

Bulang 2: I thought his name was Peter.

Bulang 3: *(Impatiently)* The evil wizard’s name is Angareng—the person we’re talking to is Peter.

Peter: OK, we can try to find Yngor, but I’m afraid I won’t be much help.
Bulang 4: With our help you should be able to cast a locator spell that will reveal the location of the wand.

Peter: Look! I practically can’t cast spells! The mightiest wizards in the city have tried to locate it and can’t. How am I supposed to?

Bulang 1: You are the mightiest wizard in the city ...

Bulang 2: Me?

Bulang 3: No. Peter is.

Bulang 4: For some reason, you are simply unable to use your power.

Bulang 1: You're forgetting that he hasn't been trained yet.

Bulang 2: But what about Dilgar, didn't he ... ?

Bulang 3: Dilgar is an incompetent blunderer—he could not provide adequate training for Peter.

Peter: So who is going to train me?

Bulang 4: The chief Bulang, whose name is ... (pause)

Bulang 1: Brilógus. I can’t believe you forgot the chief Bulang’s name.

Bulang 2: How could Brilógus train him? It isn’t even here.

Bulang 3: Which is why, Peter, you need to come with us now.

(All exit, Bulang 2 flying off in the wrong direction.)

Scene 4, Bullingame

(On stage are Bulai 1, 3, and 4, and Peter. Generic city backdrop, as before.)

Bulang 4: We’re lost. I don’t remember being here.

Bulang 1: Actually, we’ve arrived.

Bulang 3: Of course you don’t remember being here—you don’t remember anything.

Peter: If we’re here, where are Brilógus and the other Bulai? Also, weren’t there four of you when we left?

(Brilógus reveals itself from where it was hiding in the backdrop.)

Brilógus: Yes, one of you is missing. Do not worry, I will send it out a homing signal. (intones in loud voice) Here ... come here ... here ... (normal voice) It should be here shortly.

Peter: Are you the chief Bulang, Brilógus?

Chorus: (revealing themselves) Yes, it is Brilógus.
Peter: Your Highness, are you going to teach me the spells necessary to locate the wand Yngor?

Brilógus: Yes, I am.

Chorus: (astonished) Brilógus itself teach a human?!

Brilógus: Indeed, I would not usually teach a Bulang, much less a human, but the need is dire. We too would be destroyed if Angareng triumphs, and Peter is the only one with the power to save us.

(Bulang 2 enters)

Peter: Thank you, Your Highness!

Bulang 2: You're welcome! (dreamily) Highness is such a nice title for birds.

Bulang 3: Peter was not talking to you. He was talking to His Highness, the Chief Bulang, Brilógus.

Brilógus: First of all, thank you for the new title. Highness is indeed a good title. Second, I wish for Peter to meet me in the third floor bedroom for lessons, this evening at sunset.

(Brilógus hides itself back in the backdrop.)

Bulang 2: You're welcome!

Scene 5, the third floor bedroom.

(Brilógus is on stage, resting on the bed. Peter enters through the window, being lifted up by the chorus)

Brilógus: Welcome, Peter, to your first magic lesson with me as your teacher.

Peter: (hesitantly) How do I begin?

Brilógus: (slowly and softly) Clear your mind ... clear your mind ...

Peter: I just have so many worries and thoughts—I can't clear them.

Chorus: Try to forget.

Brilógus: (slowly and softly) Clear your mind ... clear your mind ...

Peter: My mind is clear. What next?

Brilógus: Next, you have to think about the essence of what you want to do with the magic. For example, try to burn this piece of paper.

(Brilógus removes a piece of paper form the dresser drawer.)

Chorus: Think of fire, burn the paper!

Peter: Fire ... fire ... fire ...
(The dresser catches fire. Brilógus quickly waves a wing and the fire extinguishes itself.)

Brilógus: You have to remember to direct the fire. You must focus not just on what you want to do, but on what you to do it on.

Chorus: Think “fire on paper,” not just “fire”.

Peter: Paper fire ... paper fire ...

(The piece of paper in Brilógus’s talons catches on fire.)

Brilógus: Good, now try to put it out.

Chorus: Try “no paper fire”.

Peter: No paper fire ...

Brilógus: Stop! You want “paper no fire.” Otherwise the paper would stop existing and the fire would continue. Have you learned no gramarye?

Peter: Dilgar didn’t teach me any. He did show me a spell for fire—I’m forgetting just how many pages long it was—seven at least. Let me try again. Paper no fire ... paper no fire ...

(The piece of paper becomes normal again. Brilógus replaces it and takes out a small rubber ball.)

Brilógus: What I want you to do is to make this rubber ball disappear.

Peter: How do you want it to disappear? Do you want it to become invisible?

Brilógus: No, if you could get it to do that, that would be excellent. It is easiest, however, to get it to simply stop existing. It requires more effort, but simpler gramarye.

Chorus: Just say “no ball”.

Peter: No ball ... no ball ...

(The ball disappears. Lights start to fade out and are black by the end of Brilógus’s next line.)

Brilógus: Now we need to work on locator spells. I’ll hide another ball somewhere in the room, while you close your eyes, and I want you to locate it.

Scene 6, Bullingame.

(Generic city backdrop. All bulai and Peter onstage.)

Peter: You’re sure I can do this?

Bulai: Yes! Yes!

Brilógus: Believe in the magic, Peter. You can cast the spell.

Bulang 1: Come on, Peter. We need you to.
Bulang 2: Peter, cast the spell.
Bulang 3: You can do it.
Bulang 4: For the sake of whatever this city’s name is, please.
Peter: It’s Bullingame. All right, I’ll try. *(Long pause.)* Find ... the wand ... Yngor ... find ... the wand ... Yngor.
*(Peter’s arm suddenly jerks up, index finger pointing. He spins around in circles, eventually stopping to point in a direction (offstage right).*

Brilógus: Very good, Peter. *(To Number 1.)* Could you please go in the direction Peter’s finger is pointing, and attempt to identify the location of the wand?

*(Peter faints. Number 1 exits. All remaining bulai rush over. Brilógus mutters something, and a jug of water appears in his claw, which he then splashes over Peter’s face.)*

Brilógus: He used too much power up in that locator spell. I should have foreseen this.

Chorus: Is he all right?
Bulang 2: *(sadly)* Is Peter dead?
Bulang 3: No. He fainted.
Bulang 4: Peter, wake up!
Brilógus: Let him sleep. He needs the rest.

*(Fade out lights. All exit.)*

**Scene 7, Bullingame**

*(Bulang 1, onstage left.)*

Bulang 1: Still haven’t found that wand. I mean, he did point in this direction.

*(Dilgar enters, right.)*

Dilgar: Where is that accursed wand? I promised the Council I’d find it. Think of what would happen to my status if I didn’t ...


Dilgar: I think I see the wand! *(Picks up a stick from the stage.)* Yyyngorrrr!

Bulang 1: *(Aside.)* Really, Dilgar. You think that stick is the great wand Yngor. *(Sighs.* I will never understand hedge-wizards.
(Dilgar exits, still celebrating.)

Bulang 1: The magic is coming from over there.

(Points towards the backdrop. Starts to fly over there, passing behind the backdrop at one point. At that point, gets so excited that turns back into bulang.)

Bulang 1: Here it is! Yngor!

(Is holding a long, polished mahogany wand that has an enormous sapphire set in silver at both ends. Exits, stage left.)

Scene 8, Bullingame

(On stage are Chorus, Peter, Brilógus, and Bulai 2–4. Peter is now awake.)

Chorus: Good job, Peter!

Peter: That locator spell was exhausting. I really hope it worked.

Brilógus: (to itself) When is the bulang I sent coming back?

(Bulang 1 enters holding wand.)

Bulang 1: (exhausted) Here, Peter, take the wand!

(Peter takes the wand.)

Peter: Thank you.

Brilógus: Take care! Angareng is approaching!

(All bulai hide in scenery. Dilgar enters right, carrying the stick.)

Dilgar: Stand back, Peter! I have the wand! I will defeat Angareng! For doing this I will get a big promotion!

(Peter, unnerved by Dilgar's actions, steps back. Angareng leaps up from the audience, shedding his disguise as an audience member. SFX: Thunderclap.)

Dilgar: Angareng! I hold Yngor! Prepare to meet your doom!

Angareng: Foolish mortal! Thou canst not kill me! (pointing at Dilgar and Peter behind him) Forsooth, Yngor is there! But thou dost not possess the grama-rye to wield it.

(Dilgar begins to cast a spell, waving the stick about.)

Dilgar: Yngor! Yngor! Cast this spell for me! Upon the names of Poka, Neuto, Bornd, and Cennan! With the might of Gradole, Tyben, and Hahl ...

Angareng: I grow bored of your pointless mumblings, hedge wizard! (Reaches forward and plucks the stick from Dilgar's grasp, snapping it over his knee.) I have triumphed! Yngor is no more!

Dilgar: Nooo! (runs off stage right)
All bulai: Peter, now you must act!

Angareng: Yngor lies broken in my hands, yet I feel its power still.

Peter: Yngor, help me now! *(Yngor transforms into a sword.)*

Brilógus: Peter! Strike Angareng down!

Angareng: *(sarcastically)* An apprentice with a sword! Oh, no! *(To Peter, pointing one of the sticks)* En garde! *(aside)* I love doing this! After all, no mere sword can penetrate my defenses!

Peter: *(saluting with the sword)* Your days have come to an end, Angareng!

Angereng: *(aside)* A duel! This is going to be so fun! *(To Peter)* I accept your challenge, apprentice!

*(Angereng drops one of the sticks and draws a dagger with his left hand, as if to do sword-and-dagger fencing. They fight. After a while Angareng tires of the fight and steps back.)*

Angareng: Enough of this! You will die now.

*(Angareng sheathes his dagger, discards the stick, then holds out his right hand palm forward, fingers spread, activating a squirter with the other hand to make it look as if his hand were shooting water. Peter holds up Yngor in front of himself and the water falls short.)*

Angareng: *(extremely startled)* My spell was blocked! Only one thing can do that ...

Peter: *(charging at Angareng)* Yngor!

*(Peter runs Angareng through. Angareng crumples to the floor, a look of amazement on his face. Lights fade to black.)*

**Scene 9, third floor bedroom.**

*(Peter is asleep on the bed. Dilgar enters.)*

Dilgar: Wake up, Peter! It is time for the award ceremony.

Peter: Award ceremony?

Dilgar: Yes, the Council of Wizards of Bullingame wants to thank you for your help rendered in killing Angareng.

Peter: You seem very happy about this. To what rank did they promote you?

Dilgar: I am to be Head of the National School of Magick! It's because I trained you so well.

Peter: You didn't teach me anything.

Dilgar: *(ignoring Peter's comment)* Go get into your formal robes and meet me downstairs!
(Dilgar exits. All bulai enter, via window. After each one says its line, it exits through the tapestry.)

Brilógus: Peter, our time in this world is up.
Bulai 1-4: We must return to the tapestry.
Chorus: Goodbye, Peter.
Peter: (sniffles) Goodbye.

CURTAIN