

# Excerpt terms and conditions



This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

*Dramatic Publishing*



# The MAGICIANS Dephew

A Dramatization  
by  
AURAND HARRIS

Adapted from  
the story  
by  
C.S. LEWIS

With optional music  
by  
WILLIAM PENN



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY



\*\*\* NOTICE \*\*\*

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty fees are given in our current catalogue and are subject to change without notice. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed anytime it is acted before an audience. All inquiries concerning amateur and stock rights should be addressed to:

DRAMATIC PUBLISHING

P. O. Box 129, Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

*COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES.* This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including but not limited to the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication, and reading are reserved. *On all programs this notice should appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with  
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois”

©MCMLXXXIV by  
AURAND HARRIS  
Music ©MCMLXXXIV by  
WILLIAM PENN

Printed in the United States of America  
*All Rights Reserved*  
(THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW)

ISBN 0-87129-541-5

***DEDICATED TO:***

***Lynn Murray***

***Jean Miculka***

***Charles and Eleanor Jones***

***Coleman and Lola Jennings***

The premiere performance of *The Magician's Nephew* was given by the Department of Drama, University of Texas, Austin, on May 26, 1984, as part of the Theatre for Youth Series, at the B. Iden Payne Theatre, with the following cast and crew:

Director . . . . . Coleman A. Jennings  
Music composed by . . . . . William Penn  
Scene Designer . . . . . John Rothgeb  
Costume Designer . . . . . Mark Horton  
Lighting Designer . . . . . Bruce Lehnus

*Cast:*

Uncle Andrew . . . . . Mark Franklin  
Digory . . . . . Mike Hartman  
Aunt Letty . . . . . Lisa Corder  
Polly . . . . . Sara Addison  
Queen Jadis . . . . . Esther Pooser  
Aslan (Lion) . . . . . Bart Benne  
Bird . . . . . Marykae Newbrough  
Monkey . . . . . Leonard Cruz  
Rabbit . . . . . Ginny Clegg  
Bear . . . . . Stephen Cummins

*Production Staff:*

Stage Manager . . . . . Vicky Bereswill  
Assistant Director . . . . . Tina Sabucco  
Technical Director . . . . . Rick Stephens  
Master Carpenter . . . . . David Rose  
Master Electrician . . . . . David Gipson  
Properties Master . . . . . James Pringle

THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW

*A Play*

*for Three Men, Three Women, Four Talking Animals, Extras*

CHARACTERS

UNCLE ANDREW

AUNT LETTY

DIGORY

POLLY

QUEEN JADIS

ASLAN

BIRD

MONKEY

RABBIT

BEAR

OTHER ANIMALS

*TIME: 1880*

*PLACE: England and Other Worlds*

*This show may be performed with or without one intermission.*

*There is an excellent musical underscoring composed by William Penn which is available on tape and may be obtained by arrangement with this publisher. The music cues are included in the script but the use of the music is entirely optional.*

*There is a detailed Study Guide available for use with the production of the play at the back of this playbook.*

SCENE: There is magic music before the curtain opens.  
*Tape Cue Number One: Opening Magic Music. Music slowly fades out, after the dialogue begins.*

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: We see the attic study in a London townhouse, in the year 1880. A table, at the side, is spotted with an eerie light. On the table is a skull, books, a pair of spectacles, a large glass container of steaming green liquid, and a box with large yellow and green rings. On the wall is a luminous zodiac and a large framed picture of a lion's head. A chair and a standing gong complete the simple set, which can be changed quickly and easily. UNCLE ANDREW stands by the table, dressed in a magician's robe and hat, wearing white gloves. He is a white-haired, elderly gentleman, comic, cunning and eccentric. At the moment, he is devilishly happy as he sprinkles glitter on the box of rings.

UNCLE ANDREW. Ah . . . ah . . . they are beginning to glow! The magic is beginning to work. Yes . . . yes! (He holds up two rings.) Yellow rings and green rings. Magic rings that can take you into other worlds! (He laughs wickedly as he puts the rings in a box.) Yes. All is ready. (He looks at the glowing zodiac.) The stars are in the right position. (He hovers over the green bottle.) The magic vapor has turned to green. (He holds up the skull.) It is time for me to do . . . the

Great Experiment!

AUNT LETTY (from offstage). And-drew!

UNCLE ANDREW. Yes . . . a voice calls to me . . . a voice from far away.

AUNT LETTY (from offstage). And-drew!

UNCLE ANDREW. Oh, speak, voice of the unknown. I am listening.

AUNT LETTY (from offstage). Andrew Ketterley! I am calling you.

UNCLE ANDREW (coming back to reality). It is Letty, my sister's voice.

AUNT LETTY (from offstage). Andrew! Answer me, or I am coming up to the attic.

UNCLE ANDREW. Oh, no. No! (He quickly hides the robe and hat in the closet/washroom.) Don't come to the attic. I am busy. Wait! The rings! She must not see the magic rings. (He covers the box with a cloth.)

AUNT LETTY (from offstage). I know you are in the attic, Andrew. I can hear you talking to yourself. (UNCLE ANDREW turns on the lights, a wall bracket, and the room is bright.)

(AUNT LETTY, an English matron, enters. She is prim and proper, full of authority and energy, a bit comic. UNCLE ANDREW greets her wearing his regular jacket. There is nothing out of the ordinary except his white hair which is, indeed, wild.)

UNCLE ANDREW. Yes, Letty, I am here. Please come in.

AUNT LETTY (panting). You know the stairs make me short of breath. (She speaks sternly.) Now! What is all this noise and commotion you are making in the attic?

UNCLE ANDREW (excited, mysteriously). I am doing an important experiment.



AUNT LETTY. You are smelling up the house. (She sniffs at a large, bubbling bottle.) Ooo! Ugh! You must stop this foolishness at once. We must keep the house orderly. Yes . . . and *quiet*. Our sister, bless her soul, is very sick, lying in bed, right in the room below. (She makes up her mind.) I am going to lock up the attic!

UNCLE ANDREW. No! No, Letty.

AUNT LETTY. Yes, I will lock up the attic while she is here.

UNCLE ANDREW. But, Letty, I am on the verge of a great discovery.

AUNT LETTY. We must do all we can to help our sister. I thought when I brought her and Digory here, to my house, that I could nurse her, bring her back to health. But she grows weaker . . . doesn't eat.

UNCLE ANDREW. What about the new pills?

AUNT LETTY. Pills will not help her. She has lost faith.

UNCLE ANDREW. Faith?

AUNT LETTY. She has lost the love of living. If there were something that would give her hope . . . (She sniffs, holding back her tears. She picks up the cloth, uncovering the rings, and dabs her eyes and nose.) Well, I have tried, and tears won't help her. What are these green and yellow rings?

UNCLE ANDREW (shouting). Don't touch them!

AUNT LETTY (stiffly). I have no intention of touching them. I am looking for Digory. Have you seen him?

UNCLE ANDREW. You do not allow the boy to come to the attic.

AUNT LETTY. Poor little lad. Uprooted from his home, watching his mother grow weaker. Last night he said to me, "Aunt Letty, I wish I were a doctor so I could make my mother well again." Bless his little heart.

UNCLE ANDREW. I dare say he is next door, playing with

Polly.

AUNT LETTY. Yes, he said they were going to go . . . exploring. Well, it is time he washed up for dinner. And you, too, Andrew.

UNCLE ANDREW. Yes, Letty.

AUNT LETTY (stopping at the door). Rings? Why are you making green and yellow rings?

UNCLE ANDREW. They are part of my great experiment. Oh, Letty, I shall soon be the talk of London. I shall be knighted by Queen Victoria. I shall —

AUNT LETTY. It is time for dinner. Wash your hands. And please, Andrew, please try to comb your hair. (She exits.)

UNCLE ANDREW. Ah, you think I am a foolish old man, but you will see. I am about to discover the mystery of other worlds! (He turns off the bright lights. Only an eerie light spots the table. He laughs and holds up a ring.) Yes, with these rings, I hold the secrets of the universe! (He listens.) What is that? It sounds like footsteps in the passage under the roof. Someone is opening the little door, coming in, under the rafters. (He quickly hides in the shadows.)

(In the stillness, DIGORY, a charming, energetic young boy, with a great curiosity, enters. His face is lighted by the candle he carries. He looks about cautiously, then beckons to POLLY, a pretty, vivacious young girl, with a mind of her own. She follows DIGORY in, also carrying a lighted candle.)

DIGORY. It's all right, Polly. No one is here.

POLLY. But someone has been here. We've made a mistake. This is not the attic of the *empty* house.

DIGORY (holding up the candle and looking around). Look . . . a zodiac . . . and a picture of a lion . . . and . . . look at the strange things on the table! I wonder what they are for?

POLLY. It's not polite to be so curious.

DIGORY (holding up the skull). What is this?

POLLY. A skull! Of a dead man!

DIGORY. Here's a book. (He reads the title.) "Old Magic and New Magic." (He picks up the glasses.) And a pair of spectacles. (He suddenly realizes where he is.) Polly?

POLLY. Yes, Digory?

DIGORY. We did make a mistake. Do you know where we are?

POLLY. No.

DIGORY. This is Aunt Letty's house.

POLLY. Your Aunt Letty's house?

DIGORY. Yes, where I am staying. (He speaks mysteriously.) We . . . are in . . . Uncle Andrew's . . . secret attic.

POLLY. Are you sure?

DIGORY. Yes. These are his reading glasses.

POLLY. Papa says your uncle is a bit crazy.

DIGORY. Magic books. (He is amazed by the discovery.) My Uncle Andrew is a magician!

POLLY. Let's go before he catches us.

DIGORY. Listen. Do you hear a funny sound? And . . . a humming sound. It's coming from this box of yellow and green rings. (He listens at the open box. The audience can't hear the humming.)

POLLY (in a stage whisper). Digory . . . look.

DIGORY. Where?

POLLY. In the corner. (She points to UNCLE ANDREW, standing in the shadows.) It's a ghost. I see its white head.

DIGORY. It's a demon. I see its eyes. (He shouts.) *Run!* Run to the passage.

UNCLE ANDREW (turning on the bright lights and stepping forward as POLLY and DIGORY start off). Don't shout. And don't run. Your mother is resting in the room below.

DIGORY. Uncle Andrew!

UNCLE ANDREW. Good afternoon, Miss Polly . . . and Digory. What a pleasant surprise. (He smiles with an idea.)

I am glad . . . yes, very glad you both are here . . . (He speaks mysteriously.) . . . in the attic.

POLLY. Glad?

UNCLE ANDREW (thinking aloud, his voice quivering with excitement). Two children . . . delivered to me . . . on the eve of my Great Experiment. Yes! You have been sent to me.

DIGORY (nervously). No. We were exploring the passage that connects the houses under the roof.

POLLY. And we thought this was the empty house . . .

DIGORY. And we came to explore.

UNCLE ANDREW. But . . . you are here. (He laughs.) Here with me. (He speaks in a stage whisper.) You were sent . . . by magic.

DIGORY. I don't believe in magic. Come on, Polly.

UNCLE ANDREW (slyly). Wait. If you stay, I can help you . . . to explore.

DIGORY (always curious). Explore? What?

UNCLE ANDREW. Other worlds . . . places far away.

POLLY (frightened). Goodbye, Mr. Ketterley.

UNCLE ANDREW (slyly). Miss Polly, before you leave, I would like to give you a present.

POLLY. Me?

UNCLE ANDREW (with the gloves on, motioning to the box). Would you like a ring, my dear?

POLLY. Do you mean a yellow or green one?

UNCLE ANDREW. Not a green one! But, yes, a yellow one.

POLLY. Listen. There is a strange sound . . . like murmuring music. It's coming from them.

UNCLE ANDREW. Choose any shape. A round ring or a square one. Any yellow ring you like.

POLLY (delighted). Well . . . I choose . . . this round one.

DIGORY. Don't touch it, Polly!

POLLY (drawing back in fear). Why?

DIGORY. It may be . . . magic!

UNCLE ANDREW. But you, Digory, you said you did not believe in magic. Come, hold out your hand, my dear. I will put the ring on your finger. (POLLY holds out her finger. Uncle Andrew's excitement grows with expectation.) Now . . . is the moment I have waited for!

POLLY. What moment?

UNCLE ANDREW. The magic moment!

DIGORY (fearfully). Polly?

POLLY. Shh!

UNCLE ANDREW. Now I will say the words. One . . . two . . . three . . . Go! (He puts the ring on Polly's finger. There is a loud "swishing" sound as flight music begins. *Tape Cue Number Two: Flight Music*. Immediately, the stage lights dim out as, at the same time, a strobe light comes up. POLLY, in whirling and rhythmic movements, "dance/swims" slowly across the front of the stage and exits. The stage lights come up at once as the strobe light and music dim out. DIGORY and UNCLE ANDREW stand exactly where they were.)

DIGORY. What happened? Where is Polly? She's disappeared. Polly! Where is she?

UNCLE ANDREW (shouting in triumph). Polly is gone!

DIGORY. Gone?

UNCLE ANDREW. Vanished!

DIGORY. Vanished?

UNCLE ANDREW. She has gone out of this world!

DIGORY. What have you done to her?

UNCLE ANDREW (elatedly). My experiment has succeeded! I will be the master of time! The master of other worlds!

DIGORY. What have you done? Where is Polly?

UNCLE ANDREW. She has gone to another place.

DIGORY. Where? How?

UNCLE ANDREW (with mad excitement). It all began with old Mrs. LeFay. Some people called her a witch.

DIGORY. A witch?

UNCLE ANDREW (laughing). Yes. (In a stage whisper, sinisterly.) A witch.

DIGORY. But what about Polly?

UNCLE ANDREW (with pointed emphasis, mysteriously). Just before the old lady died, she gave me a little box and made me promise I would burn the box . . . unopened.

DIGORY. Did you?

UNCLE ANDREW. Certainly not.

DIGORY. But you promised her. You should keep a promise.

UNCLE ANDREW. Little boys should keep a promise, yes. But great magicians like me, we are free from common rules.

DIGORY. Where is Polly?

UNCLE ANDREW (continuing dramatically). The box contained something precious . . . something that had been brought from other worlds.

DIGORY. Other worlds?

UNCLE ANDREW. And when I opened the lid, I found —

DIGORY. What?

UNCLE ANDREW. Little packages of dust. Fine, dry dust.

DIGORY. That's not much.

UNCLE ANDREW. But think of its power! Each packet of dust was from a different world . . . which, in the right form, could draw you back into that world. I have made rings from the dust. Round rings from one world and square rings from another.

DIGORY. And you gave Polly a round yellow ring.

UNCLE ANDREW. Yes! And the magic worked! Now, we will see if we can get her back into this world.

DIGORY. But how?

UNCLE ANDREW. A green ring . . . should . . . draw her back.

DIGORY. Good. (He realizes something.) But Polly doesn't have a green ring. How can she get one?

UNCLE ANDREW. There is only one way. Someone must go after her. Someone who wears a yellow ring and who takes *two* green rings to bring them both back.

DIGORY. Then do it! Put the ring on and bring her back.

UNCLE ANDREW. No, no, no. I am too old to be whirling through space.

DIGORY. You sent her away. You bring her back.

UNCLE ANDREW. My boy, a great general never fights at the front in a battle. He is too important. He might be killed. No. He sends . . . a soldier.

DIGORY. If you won't go, who will? (UNCLE ANDREW chuckles and offers the box to DIGORY.) You mean . . . me?

UNCLE ANDREW. I hope a nephew of mine will help a lady in distress.

DIGORY. What if I won't go?

UNCLE ANDREW. You will. You believe in keeping a promise. You believe in being . . . a good boy.

DIGORY (turning away, undecided). Yes. But —

UNCLE ANDREW. Polly is waiting.

DIGORY. What about mother? Suppose she takes a turn for the worse? And I won't be here.

UNCLE ANDREW. The sooner you go, the sooner you will be back.

DIGORY. But . . . but you don't know for sure if I will get back.

UNCLE ANDREW. Oh, very well, stay! Let Polly be lost forever. Because you . . . you are afraid to put on a ring!

DIGORY. I am not afraid.

UNCLE ANDREW. Then . . . (He holds out the box.)

DIGORY. All right. *All right!* I'll go. But you . . . beware. In all the stories I've read, the bad magician, at the end, is always punished.

UNCLE ANDREW. Don't worry about me. Worry about Polly. Are you ready?

DIGORY. Yes. What do I have to do?

UNCLE ANDREW (doing business as he talks). Wearing gloves, I can pick them up, like this. I will drop two green rings into your side pockets, a green one for you and a green one for Polly so you both will return. Be careful! Because the minute your skin touches a ring, the magic works *at once!* Now hold out your finger for a round yellow ring like Polly's so you can go to her. (He is pleased.) Are you ready?

DIGORY (hesitating, then holding out his finger). Yes.

UNCLE ANDREW (his voice building with anticipation). Ready to explore . . . another world?

DIGORY. Yes.

UNCLE ANDREW. Then count with me. One . . .

DIGORY. One . . .

UNCLE ANDREW and DIGORY. Two . . . three . . . Go! (ANDREW puts the ring on Digory's finger. Flight music begins. *Tape Cue Number Three: Flight Music to the World of the Dead.* The stage lights go down as the strobe light comes up. DIGORY, down front, slowly whirls and circles across the stage while the attic set is removed and the World of the Dead set is put in place. The music and strobe light dim out. The stage lights come up.)



## SCENE TWO

The World of the Dead. An ancient throne room. UNCLE ANDREW has exited. QUEEN JADIS is seated on one side of the throne room. She is beautiful and majestically gowned. At the moment, she is like a wax statue. On the other side of the room is a low stone pillar on which is a golden bell, suspended from an arched frame, and a golden hammer. DIGORY, who has never been out of sight, stands in the set, awed and a bit frightened.

DIGORY. Polly . . . Polly . . . Polly!

POLLY (from offstage). Digory?

DIGORY. Polly! Where are you?

(POLLY enters and runs to DIGORY.)

POLLY. Oh, Digory! Digory! What happened?

DIGORY. Uncle Andrew gave you a *magic* ring. (POLLY holds up her finger and looks at it.) It brought you here . . . to another world. And I . . . (He holds up his finger.) . . . have another yellow ring, like yours, which brought *me* here. I've come to take you home.

POLLY. Oh, thank you, Digory. But how can we go back?

DIGORY. I have two *green* rings. One for you and one for me . . . in each of my pockets. All we have to do is touch them and they will take us back to London.

POLLY. Let's touch them now and go home.

DIGORY. All right.

POLLY. This is a frightening place.

DIGORY. It's not like our world.

POLLY. It's as still as death. There is not a sound. Nothing moves.

DIGORY. We must be in a world that's very old . . . back in some ancient time.

POLLY. It's cold . . . like the sun had gone out.

DIGORY. Like the sun had died, thousands of years ago. I think this must be a world of the dead.

POLLY. The dead! Let's go back.

DIGORY (half-afraid). Wait. In the attic, we wanted to explore, didn't we?

POLLY. Yes.

DIGORY. Well . . . here we can explore another world.

POLLY. It gives me the shivers!

DIGORY (speaking in a stage whisper, pointing). Look. There's someone on a throne.

POLLY. Where?

DIGORY. There. She looks like a queen.

POLLY. Like a stone statue.

DIGORY. Maybe she was enchanted by a magic spell.

POLLY. She has an evil look.

DIGORY. I wonder who she was. (He speaks impatiently.) Oh, I wish I knew who she was and what had happened.

POLLY. I wish I was back home.

DIGORY. Don't be afraid.

POLLY. Let's change the rings.

DIGORY. All right. Take off your yellow ring and put it in your pocket. (POLLY does so. He puts his yellow ring in his back pocket.) Now, all you have to do is take the green ring out of my *left* pocket while I take the other one out of my *right* pocket and we're gone. Feel better?

POLLY. Yes.

DIGORY. So do I. (He points.) Look. There's a golden bell . . . and a golden hammer. I wonder what it was for?

POLLY. There's some words carved on the side of the stand.

DIGORY. Yes! But they are written in a strange language.

POLLY. Look . . . look! The letters are changing shape!

DIGORY. Yes, they are changing, like magic.

POLLY. Can you read what it says?

DIGORY (reading). "Make your choice, adventurous stranger,  
Strike the bell and bide the danger." Adventurous stranger?  
That's us!

POLLY. Strike the bell . . . and there'll be *danger!*

DIGORY (reading). "Or . . . wonder, till it drives you mad,  
What would have followed if you had." (He is tempted.) I  
wonder what *would* happen now if I strike the bell?

POLLY. Don't touch it!

DIGORY. But, Polly, aren't you curious? Don't you want to  
know what will happen?

POLLY. It tells you . . . something *dangerous!*

DIGORY. Polly, the words are coming true. It's beginning to  
drive me mad. I have to know what will happen! I'm going  
mad! Mad!

POLLY. Digory, stop acting silly!

DIGORY (his excitement building). I'm going to pick up the  
hammer.

POLLY. If you do . . .

DIGORY (picking up the hammer). I'm going to hit the bell!

POLLY. If you do, I'll touch the green ring and go!

DIGORY. No! Wait! Polly! (He grabs Polly's hand with his  
left hand.) I have to see what will happen! (He strikes the  
bell with his right hand, using the golden mallet. The ringing  
of a single bell is heard, then more bells and more bells. *Tape  
Cue Number Four: Bells.* The clanging grows louder and  
louder. QUEEN JADIS slowly comes to life and rises. Her  
enchantment is broken. DIGORY and POLLY watch in  
amazement. She stands, drawing herself up to her regal height,  
and gives a commanding gesture. The bells stop.)