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The Last Oz Story

Book and lyrics by
DAVID MEYERS

Music by
SCOTT MICHAL



Dramatic Publishing Company
Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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(THE LAST OZ STORY)

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For Elise—as promised.

The Last Oz Story premiered at the University of Rio Grande, John W. Berry Fine and Performing Arts Center, Rio Grande, Ohio, on April 8, 2011.

CAST:

Elise McKenna..... Ashli Cooper
Felix Jamil Stepney
Dorothy Allyson Johnston
Emma Stannic Lucia Colley
Dr. Chaffey Dion Lloyd Jones
Nurse Harrow Laura Thomas
Glinda..... Elin Wyn Williams
Peloros..... Andrea Rohrer
Tin Woodsman Nathan Woods
Courageous Lion..... Natalie Baxter
Scarecrow Tyler Phillips
Dancers Justine Baker, Jackie Burns,
Stephanie Cartmell, Kenniqua Gerwig,
Tyler Phillips, Laramie Roush,
Mason Traylor, Ally Waddell,
Jeremiah Wayne, Lauren Weddington
Munchkins..... Lilly Colley, Eliza Davies,
Illiana Davies, Jaela Foster,
Matthew Lawrence, Isabella Scully
Chorus Megan Cantrell, Kelly Hively,
Ceri Nia Lewis, Kody Roberts

PRODUCTION STAFF:

Director Greg Miller
Choreographer..... Mason Traylor
Music Director Scott Michal
Lighting Design Terrence Hopkins
Costumes..... Kenni Horton

Visual Effects	Benjy Davies
Assistant Director.....	Ceri Nia Lewis
Stage Managers.....	Julianne Lewis, Kody Roberts
Props Manager	Charlie Crabtree
Vocal Coach	Valerie Tanner
Rehearsal Pianist.....	Sunny Sundquist
Costume Crew.....	Kenni Horton, Rosemary Hanning, Jenn Powell, Becky Sundquist
Sets.....	Megan Cantrell, Terrence Hopkins, Kevin Lyle, Scott Michal, Tyler Phillips, Andrea Rohrer, Sunny Sundquist, Jeremiah Wayne
Costume Crew.....	Kenni Horton, Rosemary Hanning, Jenn Powell, Becky Sundquist
Stage and Tech Crew.....	Devin Lear, Megan Cantrell, Seth Jenkins

A revised version of *The Last Oz Story* premiered at the Shedd Theatre, Columbus Performing Arts Center, Columbus, Ohio, on March 13, 2015.

CAST:

Elise McKenna.....	Tanya McInnis
Dorothy	Amelia Starcher
Emma Tyndol.....	Alyssa Darby Shively
Dr. Strohman.....	Meshach Malley
Nurse Leone	Edith Anna Malley
Glinda.....	Alicia Caple
Peloros.....	Maggy Hamen
Tin Woodsman	Dave Maston
Courageous Lion.....	Daniel Patrick Smal
Scarecrow.....	Joseph Crump

Dancers/Munchkins/Chorus..... Marco Montoto,
Jordan Caple, Jonathan Crump, Libby Baker,
Finnean Malley, Ava Baker, Amelia Wood,
Natalie Vodarick, Liz Wood, Faith Vodarick,
John Heisel, Michelle Kessler, Torrey Allard,
Hayley Allard, Kiara Clevenger, Savannah Horn

PRODUCTION STAFF:

DirectorJohn Heisel
Assistant Director..... Benito Montoto
Music Director John Householder
Choreographer.....Irene Cohen
Stage Manager Melissa Hamen
Assistant Stage Manager..... Stephanie Caple
Lighting Design Joe Waters
Lighting Tech Eric Hamen
Sound John Karlson
Sound Effects Traci Caple
Master of PuppetsPatty Pressly
PuppeteersJohn Heisel, Hannah Allen
Sets/Props/Costumes/Backstage Minions.....Patty Pressly,
Melissa Hamen, Benito Montoto,
Stephanie Caplbe, Julie Starcher, Traci Caple,
Jeremy Allen, Hannah Allen, Carmen Baker,
Liz Wood, Kayleigh Loughridge

The Last Oz Story

CHARACTERS

Elise McKenna (reporter): Soprano
Glinda (the good witch): Lyric soprano
Courageous Lion: Alto or tenor
Nurse Leone/Peloros (the bad witch): Alto
Dorothy Gale: Soprano
Dr. Strohman/Scarecrow: Baritone
Emma Tyndol (social worker)/Tin Woodman: Soprano or tenor
Scrawl (stenographer)/Dauber (painter)/Rosemary/Dancer
Dash (stenographer)/Stroke (painter)/Hollyhock/Dancer
Jot (stenographer)/Woody (carpenter)/Marigold/Dancer
Call (messenger)/Imperialist/Munchkin of Ceremonies/Dancer
Beck (messenger)/Royalist/Librata (the scale)/Dancer
Fetch (messenger)/Tote (roadie)/Ozmopolitan/Dancer
Tiniest Munchkin (child)

PLACE: An imaginary country known as “Kansas.”

TIME: The present—more than a century after L. Frank Baum first wrote about a little girl named Dorothy Gale and her visit to the marvelous Land of Oz.

SETTING: Since any attempts to re-create the wonder and magnificence of the Land of Oz are apt to fail, it may be best to leave it to the imagination of the audience, aided by the

reactions of the players, an occasional prop and, perhaps, an impressionistic (painted or projected) backdrop. The scenes set in Kansas should be bare bones as well because, after all, it's Kansas.

COSTUMES: The dancers must be able to change costumes quickly. For the tornado sequences, they should wear dark leotards with silk-like streamers hanging from them that swirl around when they move. When they are in the emergency room, they become hospital personnel by wearing scrubs or white lab coats. The searchers should wear normal street clothes. As the stalking trees, they should don headdresses of branches and dark, heavy robes that drag the ground, mimicking tree bark and roots. As the signposts, they can wear their leotards and hold directional signs. Finally, when portraying munchkins, they might wear a colorful blouse or tunic over their leotards.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Although this is an original work, many of the characters and some of the situations are, obviously, borrowed from L. Frank Baum's novel, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Legally, we can do this because Baum's work falls in the public domain (much to his family's dismay, I am sure). However, it would be wrong to think of our little musical as a sequel to the classic MGM film because: 1) the movie still enjoys copyright protection, 2) there are significant differences between the book and the movie (e.g. silver, not ruby, slippers) and 3) we don't want to give anyone reason to sue the pants off us (not that they would, of course). Now, if there are points in this story that call to mind scenes from the movie, consider it parody or satire, both of which are covered by the first amendment, but certainly not conscious or unconscious emulation of that much-loved motion picture.

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The Last Oz Story

ACT I

Prologue

AT RISE: *There is no curtain. A lonely wheat field in Kansas. A skeletal windmill stands starkly against a backdrop of amber waves of grain. As the audience is seated, a gentle breeze can be heard and the blades of the windmill begin to slowly turn, squeaking on each revolution. Gradually, the house lights dim. For an uncomfortably long time, the stage is dark, silent and expectant, until the voice of GLINDA is heard (offstage) slowly calling, "Dorothy ... Dorothy ... Dorothy, Dorothy ... Dorothy!"*

(#1: "Tornado Prologue")

(The prologue begins. As the wind picks up and the windmill spins faster, the storm grows in intensity. TORNADO DANCERS gradually converge from all corners of the theatre. They move in circles, always turning counterclockwise. Accented by the flash of strobe lights mimicking lightning and accompanied by claps of thunder, the DANCERS join hands to form a vortex that turns faster and faster before sweeping off L. The rumble of thunder, crackle of lightning and roar of the storm reach a crescendo of white noise. A few last flashes of lightning reveal DOROTHY upstage in tableaux being pulled back and forth between TIN WOODMAN and COURAGEOUS LION. She breaks free of them, stumbles DC and falls. She attempts to rise, but falls again and lies still. Lights down as the storm quickly dies away.)

Scene 1

(After a pause, a siren is heard in the darkness. NURSE LEONE [lee-oh-nee] is standing at a computer-on-wheels [COW] or a podium. As a pin spot slowly illuminates her, she begins to sing.)

(#2: “Weather the Storm”)

LEONE *(stares at her hand)*.

LOOK HOW MY POOR HANDS SHAKE.
IT’S ALMOST MORE THAN I CAN TAKE.
I THINK MY NERVES ARE SHOT.
THIS STORM HAS GOT ME OVERWROUGHT.

(Lights come up to reveal a hospital emergency room as the orchestra abruptly switches to urgent, rhythmic chords. DANCERS dressed as hospital staff crisscross the stage, moving with intent and intensity.)

STROHMAN *(walking quickly up to LEONE)*. Is the surgery ready?

LEONE. They’re prepping it now.

AIDE. We’re out of swabs.

ORDERLY. I’ll get some.

STROHMAN. Look sharp, everyone. You know the drill. We have to be prepared for ... anything.

I HOPE I’M READY FOR THIS TEST
THERE’S NO ROOM FOR SECOND BEST.
NO TIME TO STOP AND THINK THINGS THROUGH.
MY BRAIN’S A SPINNING WHEEL.

LEONE.

MY NERVES AREN’T MADE OF STEEL

CHORUS.

WE ALL HAVE JOBS TO DO.
THINGS THAT NEED ATTENDING TO
AND DUTIES TO PERFORM
IF WE'RE TO WEATHER THE STORM.

STROHMAN.

MY MIND IS RACING

AND TIME IS FLEETING

LEONE.

THOUGHT I WAS A GONER FOR
SUREMINUTES PASSING BY IN A
BLUR

STROHMAN.

MY BRAIN IS THROBBING
FEELING LIKE IT JUST MIGHT EXPLODE.

ALL/CHORUS.

WE ARE ALL ON OVERLOAD!

(The DANCERS resume their movement.)

TECHNICIAN *(as DOROTHY is wheeled in on a gurney).*

Out of the way, please! Female adolescent, fainted but responsive. BP: 120 over 80. Strong steady heart rhythm, 96 bpm. Breathing comfortably, temperature 98.7.

(Looking puzzled, STROHMAN checks her over.)

LEONE. How many more are there?

ATTENDANT. None. Just her.

LEONE. But it was such a horrible storm.

STROHMAN *(to TECHNICIAN)*. Seems stable. Any ID?

TECHNICIAN. No, but she might be a little confused. She says her name is ...

DOROTHY GALE.

(Music stops. All look at DOROTHY.)

STROHMAN. Could be a concussion ... Order an X-ray. *(To LEONE.)* And call Ms. Tyndol. We need to find out who she is.

(Once again, the DANCERS sing the chorus.)

CHORUS.

WE ALL HAVE JOBS TO DO.

LEONE *(on phone)*.

IT SCARED ME HALF TO DEATH.

CHORUS.

THINGS THAT NEED ATTENDING TO.

LEONE.

I COULD HARDLY CATCH MY BREATH.

STROHMAN.

THINGS THAT NEED ATTENDING TO.

(As DOROTHY is wheeled out of the emergency room, one of her silver slippers drops from the gurney to the floor unnoticed except by the audience. ELISE MCKENNA, a reporter, tries to follow the gurney carrying DOROTHY. She is wearing a rain jacket.)

LEONE *(to ELISE without looking up at her)*. Hey, you can't go in, young lady.

(The lights brighten and the music changes to a more upbeat "Is This the Last Oz Story?" ELISE stops, shrugs and turns around. LEONE wiggles her forefingers above her head, mimicking antenna).

LEONE (*cont'd*).

NO ONE SLIPS PAST MY ANTENNA.

(*Glances at ELISE.*)

SEEMS I KNOW YOUR FACE FROM SOMEWHERE ...

ELISE MCKENNA? THAT NEWS REPORTER.

*WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, ELISE? IT'S NOT YOUR
TERRITORY.*

ELISE.

I THOUGHT THAT I MIGHT FIND

A HUMAN INTEREST STORY.

(*EMMA TYNDOL enters in her wheelchair from R. She spots the silver slipper and directs a passing staff member to hand it to her. After examining it, she tucks the slipper into her bag or purse.*)

LEONE.

I DOUBT WE HAVE ANYTHING IN THAT CATEGORY.

(*To TYNDOL.*) Oh, Ms. Tyndol, Dr. Strohman has a case for you to consult on.

TYNDOL. Who is it?

LEONE (*handing her a slip of paper*).

SHE THINKS HER NAME IS DOR'THY GALE.

ELISE.

WHAT?

LEONE.

YOU KNOW,

THE GIRL WHO'S IN THAT FAIRY TALE.

TYNDOL (*wads up the slip of paper*). I wouldn't put much stock in what she said. She got a bump on the head.

ELISE (*turns and sings to various people in the ER while occasionally taking notes on a notepad.*)

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY?

PLEASE TELL ME WHAT YOU'VE SEEN AND HEARD.

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY?

I NEED TO GET DOWN EVERY WORD.

(*There is constant motion as the staff crisscross the stage, performing their duties.*)

CHORUS.

WE ALL HAVE JOBS TO DO.

THINGS THAT NEED

ATTENDING TO.

AND DUTIES TO PERFORM.

IF WE'RE TO WEATHER THE
STORM.

ELISE.

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE,
WHY?

NOT JUST THE FACTS, BUT
FEELINGS, TOO.

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE,
WHY?

I WANT YOUR POINT OF VIEW.

(*The rhythmic chords resume. STROHMAN enters from R, carrying a chart.*)

ELISE.

EXCUSE ME, DOC, I'D LIKE TO KNOW.

STROHMAN.

I'M SORRY, MISS, BUT I MUST GO

(*Stops at LEONE's station.*)

ELISE.

IF I COULD ASK JUST ONE ...

LEONE (*shows him*).

THESE ORDERS NEED REVIEWING

STROHMAN (*signs the paperwork*).

IS THAT IT? AM I DONE?

ELISE.	STROHMAN.	LEONE.	TYNDOL.
		THESE SCRIPS ALL NEED RENEWING.	
ABOUT THIS GIRL NAMED DOR'THY GALE?			LET'S JUST DROP THIS FAIRY TALE.
CAN YOU GIVE ME SOME DETAILS?		THERE'S SOME PATIENT SUING.	
	I'M SORRY, THERE'S JUST NOT MUCH I CAN SAY.		THERE IS NO ONE NAMED DOR'THY GALE. IT JUST CREATES CONFUSION.
		UNLESS YOU GET THE GIRL'S OK.	WE MUST END THIS DANG'ROUS DELUSION. THERE IS NOTHING TO THIS CASE.
WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY?	MY BRAIN HAS TURNED TO MUSH.		
CHORUS. THREE HOURS WITHOUT A BREAK.			SOMEONE IS SURE TO KNOW THE GIRL'S FACE.
		AT LAST I THINK WE'RE PAST THE RUSH.	
ELISE. I WANT YOUR POINT, YOUR POINT OF VIEW.	I'VE GOT A BAD HEADACHE A BAD HEADACHE.		TIME TO DISPENSE WITH CHARADES.
CHORUS. JOBS TO DO.		SCARED ME HALF TO DEATH.	I ALWAYS KNOW WHEN I'VE BEEN PLAYED.

ELISE, STROHMAN & CHORUS.

SHE ALWAYS KNOWS WHEN SHE'S BEEN PLAYED.

LEONE.

MY NERVES AREN'T MADE OF STEEL.

CHORUS.

WE ALL HAVE JOBS TO DO.
THINGS THAT NEED ATTENDING TO.

STROHMAN.

MY BRAIN'S A SPINNING WHEEL.

CHORUS.

AND DUTIES TO PERFORM.
IF WE'RE TO WEATHER THE STORM.

TYNDOL.

MY HEART'S NOT MADE OF STONE.

ELISE.

I GUESS I'M ON MY OWN.

CHORUS (*STROHMAN, LEONE, TYNDOL and ELISE echo*).

WE ALL HAVE JOBS TO DO.
THINGS THAT NEED ATTENDING TO.
AND DUTIES TO PERFORM

ALL.

IF WE'RE TO WEATHER THE STORM.

(Lights go down.)

Scene 2

(The lights come up DL in a corridor. It is later that day and things have quieted down. TYNDOL is being pushed in her wheelchair by STROHMAN from R to L.)

TYNDOL. I'm glad this day is over.

STROHMAN. We did all right, don't you think?

TYNDOL. We got lucky.

STROHMAN (*good naturedly*). Maybe a little. You know, if you were my patient, I'd advise you to stop and smell the roses sometime.

TYNDOL. Well, if you were my doctor, I would hope you'd know I'm allergic to roses. (*To LEONE.*) Nurse, let me know as soon as those reports come in.

LEONE. Yes, Ms. Tyndol.

(They are intercepted midstage by ELISE, who has been loitering L. She no longer wears a jacket and is carrying a beverage in her hand.)

ELISE (*stepping forward*). Dr. Strohman?

STROHMAN. Yes.

ELISE. Elise McKenna. I'm with the *Bugle*. I was hoping you can tell me something about Dorothy Gale—the young woman they brought it.

STROHMAN. Dorothy? Yes, well, I think ... I think ... I think she'll be fine. A few scratches is all.

ELISE. Is Dorothy Gale her real name?

STROHMAN. Why wouldn't it be?

TYNDOL (*interrupting*). What Dr. Strohman is trying to say is that we haven't established who she is. There is a chance she's suffering from amnesia.

STROHMAN (*caught off guard*). Amnesia? I didn't say—

TYNDOL. So we'll be keeping her a while longer ... for observation.

STROHMAN. I'm not sure that's ...

TYNDOL. That's about all we can tell you, Ms. McKenna. Goodbye.

(As TYNDOL begins to wheel herself, STROHMAN gives ELISE a shrug and then resumes pushing TYNDOL.)

ELISE *(looking after them)*. Maybe later then.

(Finishing her beverage, ELISE strolls off L. Lights go down.)

Scene 3

(#3: “Just Remember, Dorothy”)

(Lights come up on DOROTHY's room late that night. She is lying in bed, eyes closed, when she hears a dreamy six-note theme—GLINDA's fanfare. Rising from her bed, she peers out into the audience. GLINDA joins her L, but there is no indication they can see one another. It's as if they are in separate dimensions.)

DOROTHY *(overjoyed)*. Glinda! Is it really you? Oh, Glinda, I'm so glad you're here.

GLINDA *(otherworldly)*. Dorothy, where are you?

(They move around each other like mirror images but never touch.)

DOROTHY. I'm right here, Glinda—in Kansas.

GLINDA. Your friends need you, Dorothy. Come back to us.

(They have their backs to each other.)

DOROTHY. I want to, but I don't know how. I need your help, Glinda.

GLINDA. I can't see you very well, Dorothy. Have you returned home—home to Kansas?

DOROTHY. Yes, yes. Can't you hear me? Glinda, Glinda?

GLINDA (*begins to sing while DOROTHY continues to try to locate her*).