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Dramatic Publishing

Mask of the Unicorn Warrior

A Play in Two Acts

by

Y YORK



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Y YORK

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(MASK OF THE UNICORN WARRIOR)

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for Linda Hartzell

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MASK OF THE UNICORN WARRIOR

A Play in Two Acts
For 3 Men and 2 Women

CHARACTERS

TYCHO the king designate; a young man
POLO the advisor to the king; former general,
an older man
MERCURIAL the mysterious young woman
GOLAN (GoLAN) the prince; a soldier,
Tycho's older brother
NEEDLE the weaver; Mercurial's older sister

Design note: The **WIND** is a character in the play. The sound of wind should only be used when this character is present or approaching. Wind sounds cannot be used for atmosphere.

Warning: Some of these characters lie.

WHEN and **WHERE**
Never ago. A castle.

MASK OF THE UNICORN WARRIOR was produced at the Seattle Children's Theatre January 26 – March 10, 2001.

CAST

Unicorn GEOFFREY ALM
Polo M.L. BERRY
Golan KELLY BOULWARE
Needle DEBRA PRALLE
Mercurial JEN TAYLOR
Tycho JOS VIRAMONTES

Understudies ALEXIS CHAMOW, NICK REMPEL

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director LINDA HARTZELL
Set Designer CAREY WONG
Costume Designer MELANIE TAYLOR BURGESS
Light Designer GREG SULLIVAN
Sound Designer KARL MANSFIELD
Puppet Designer SCOTT R. GRAY
Graphics Designer JEFFREY T. MILLER
Fight Choreographer GEOFFREY ALM
Dramaturg DEBORAH LYNN FROCKT
Puppet Coach CLAY MARTIN
Production Manager PHILIP R. HENDREN
Technical Director MICHAEL K. HASE
Production Stage Manager LINDA-JO BROOKE
Stage Manager JEFFREY K. HANSAN
Production Assistant MICHELLE PERRY

List of the tapestries that are seen in the play.

1. On the loom in Act 1, scene 2. It shows Mercurial with Tycho, Polo looking at them in the background. Characters depicted in tapestry should wear the costumes the characters wear in the play.
2. Unfolded by Needle in Act 1, scene 2. Younger versions of Mercurial and Needle as they were in their father's hut. They are dressed as peasants with their shabby hut in the background.
3. Unfolded by Golan in Act 1, scene 2. Mercurial, attired in splendor, standing atop a tornado. In the background, a palace atop a mountain.
4. Unfolded by Golan in Act 2, scene 2. A soldier dressed in the colors of Golan's uniform, with sword drawn, stabbed in the chest by a unicorn using its horn as a weapon.

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

A room in the castle. TYCHO and POLO. TYCHO with wedding attire. Clothing items strewn about. A crown sits on a pedestal.

TYCHO. Which do you prefer, Polo? The white or the gold?

POLO. I prefer you come to your senses.

TYCHO. The gold, yes? It is stronger—do you agree?

POLO. If there were a mirror left in all the castle, you could decide for yourself.

TYCHO. Come now, Polo, you're supposed to be the advisor. Advise me.

POLO. Postpone this marriage, Tycho—

TYCHO. I want to tell her which color—she will be here directly—

POLO. You give her too much access. She roams the halls as if she were already your wife.

TYCHO. She soon will be—

POLO. Postpone until after you are crowned—

TYCHO. I will not postpone—

POLO. Until your knight returns from her kingdom—

TYCHO. One does not keep a princess waiting.

POLO. That's the point—we have no proof of her royalty.

TYCHO. The proof is in her bearing, in her every gesture.

POLO. I don't deny her vitality—

TYCHO. Her courage, her wisdom, her uncanny insight—I only hope to prove myself worthy of her.

POLO. First prove yourself to the court—

TYCHO. I will, Polo.

POLO. They need to see something of your father's character in you.

TYCHO. They must give me a chance

POLO. Do not ask patience of a court with no king.

TYCHO. Then crown me today.

POLO. If it were up to me alone... (*Brief pause.*) If you should make a youthful blunder it will deepen their uncertainty about you.

TYCHO. I make no blunder.

POLO. You have enemies at court. If Mercurial is not of royal blood, they will use it against you.

(MERCURIAL sweeps in with trays of food. Around TYCHO she is filled with joy, affectionate joking, and care-free emotion.)

MERCURIAL. Tycho! Your morning meal lies untouched. Good day to you, Polo.

TYCHO. I thought it was some feast. I didn't know it was mine alone.

MERCURIAL. Meat for your blood, bread for your muscles, and berries that you might never tire.

TYCHO. Share it with me.

MERCURIAL. I've already eaten twice this.

TYCHO. Twice this?

MERCURIAL. When I skip a meal my stomach can be heard in the next kingdom.

POLO. An attractive thought.

MERCURIAL. Oh no, I've shocked you again. I warned you that the princesses are more coarse where I come from.

POLO. And this land of yours—?

MERCURIAL. Please. If you want to question me, let it be in private. I believe it upsets Tycho—what is all this clothing?

TYCHO. Polo is helping me select our wedding garments.

MERCURIAL (*joking earnestness*). But we are to marry on a hillside wearing nothing but dandelions.

POLO (*to TYCHO*). Is this the wisdom of which you speak?

TYCHO. No, this is humor.

MERCURIAL. I can wear mud and paint as long as the wedding is soon.

POLO. I will take my leave.

MERCURIAL. Oh no—I jest. I do not mean to offend.

POLO. I will leave you to your private matters, Miss. Tycho, we will confer again. (*He exits.*)

TYCHO. Of course.

MERCURIAL (*brief pause*). I swear he brings out a darker nature in me. I don't mean to scandalize him, but as soon as I sense his disapproval I can't help it.

TYCHO. It would be good if you would *try*.

MERCURIAL. I will try—I will succeed. Should I call him back to apologize?

TYCHO. He is not so sensitive. Your amends can wait.

MERCURIAL. Which of these am I to wear?

TYCHO. Whichever you like. My mother wore the white.

MERCURIAL. You choose.

TYCHO. The red. For courage, for boldness. (*Picks up a necklace.*) My mother was a gentle soul. It is said I resemble her in character.

MERCURIAL. Why look you so glum at that?

TYCHO. Hers were not kingly traits. I fear I will be but half a king.

MERCURIAL. Then be not a king. Let us run away. You can be my complete husband and no one's half king.

TYCHO. I can't. Everyone is counting on me to become like my father. He was a great leader.

MERCURIAL. At nineteen?!

TYCHO. No, at nineteen he was a silly boy.

MERCURIAL. Well, there you have it. You're starting out exactly like your father. (*Placing the crown on his head. TYCHO is made happy by her musings. She rhapsodizes.*) Yes! And like your father before you, you shall assemble yourself one step at a time. You shall become a judge, a philosopher, a great leader of men. (*Bows.*) A great king.

TYCHO. With a great queen. Here, wear this. (*The necklace.*) My father gave it to my mother on their wedding day.

MERCURIAL. I will wear it day and night.

TYCHO (*joking*). I will come by and check that you do.

MERCURIAL (*joking*). Then I'd best tell you that we have moved our rooms.

TYCHO. Again?

MERCURIAL. Needle wants to be deeper within the castle.

TYCHO. You had the most inner rooms.

MERCURIAL. She found accommodation in the lower halls.

TYCHO. She will turn the two of you into moles.

MERCURIAL. Such is her fear.

TYCHO. Was she always thus, or only since the shipwreck?

MERCURIAL. ...I would not speak of my sister's fear in front of Polo.

TYCHO. In front of Polo—?

(MERCURIAL gestures toward the entering POLO, who carries a mirror.)

TYCHO *(con't., to MERCURIAL)*. How did you know—

POLO. With this you can select your garments yourself—

MERCURIAL. No, Polo—

POLO *(insistent)*. Tycho will choose his garments!

MERCURIAL. Do not turn it around. A mirror is all vanity. You will corrupt the entire palace.

POLO. We are hardly corrupted by a reflection.

MERCURIAL. I will *tell* Tycho how each color is reflected in his eye so that he may choose.

TYCHO. ... You were supposed to destroy every mirror.

POLO. I thought it prudent to keep one in case of emergency.

TYCHO *(to MERCURIAL)*. How can *one* hurt? One hidden away in a closet.

MERCURIAL. What emergency? There is no mirror emergency.

POLO. If someone were to fall, appearing to be dead—only his breath on a mirror would tell that life remained.

MERCURIAL. I can tell when life remains. If it's ever a question, ask me. Smash it, and save us from ourselves, Polo.

POLO *(to TYCHO)*. Must I?

TYCHO *(torn, but relents)*. Do as Mercurial asks.

POLO. I don't believe she *did* ask. I believe she commanded. (*Exiting.*) You should wait until you are king to wear the crown.

TYCHO. I—(*Returns crown to pedestal.*)

MERCURIAL. He should show more respect.

TYCHO. I am still a boy to him, Mercurial. He means me no ill will—please don't persist in this hostility. Compromise is surely possible—one mirror—it is some matter of pride with him.

MERCURIAL. ...But pride is the issue.

TYCHO. Leave him some. A man without pride is dangerous.

MERCURIAL. It is *my* pride that I speak of. My corrupting vanity. My father charged me to rid this evil from myself. Please don't ask me to break the promise to my dead father.

TYCHO. I concede. But you must reconcile with Polo. He was advisor to my father. He is my oldest friend.

MERCURIAL. I will try...but he must also try.

TYCHO. Fair enough. How did you know he was coming?
I heard nothing.

MERCURIAL. ...I have keen senses. It is common in my land.

TYCHO. Tell Polo. He is eager to know everything about your kingdom.

MERCURIAL. And he shall.

TYCHO. This strife will pass when my knight returns. When Polo has his proof, he will see you as I already do.

MERCURIAL. ...I wish it could be sooner, but the voyage is long—and my ability to draw a map was far from ex-

pert. I fear we will be husband and wife before Polo can be satisfied—who enters now without announcement?

(Enter GOLAN.)

GOLAN. Are you Tycho, son of Near?

TYCHO. ... I am.

GOLAN. Then prepare to meet your doom. *(Raises his sword.)*

TYCHO. I am unarmed.

GOLAN. May I suggest you remedy that?

(TYCHO retrieves his sword from his clothes heap.)

TYCHO. I will punish this arrogance. *(MERCURIAL starts to exit.)* Stay, Mercurial.

MERCURIAL. I will get help.

TYCHO. It isn't necessary. En garde.

(They fight.)

GOLAN. It appears His Majesty is in need of some instruction.

TYCHO. Not from you.

(They fight. MERCURIAL tries to intervene.)

GOLAN. Your filly would fight your battle.

TYCHO. Keep away, Mercurial.

(She does. GOLAN and TYCHO fight.)

GOLAN. Perhaps a nice border war would tighten these flabby muscles.

TYCHO. I have muscle enough to defeat you.

(GOLAN disarms him.)

GOLAN *(with his sword at TYCHO's heart)*. Any final words, my lord?

(MERCURIAL retrieves TYCHO's sword and attacks GOLAN.)

MERCURIAL. Here's some final words for you!

TYCHO. What—?

MERCURIAL. Criminal, murderer, traitor, fiend—

(MERCURIAL and GOLAN fight. She is good, if somewhat clumsy.)

GOLAN *(playing)*. I should have brought reinforcements:

MERCURIAL. Here's some lesson, some instruction for you.

TYCHO. Golan, enough! Mercurial, put down the sword.

MERCURIAL. I can defeat this viper.

TYCHO *(to MERCURIAL)*. I will not have you fight my fight! Put up your sword, Golan. *(GOLAN retreats.)*
Mercurial, my brother.

MERCURIAL. Your—

TYCHO. My brother. My rash and foolish brother.

MERCURIAL. He attacked you!

TYCHO *(taking the sword from her)*. It is our game.
Brother.

(The brothers embrace.)

GOLAN. You are much improved, Tycho. *(Flirtatious.)*

And you, miss, are quite adept.

MERCURIAL. What kind of game threatens murder?

TYCHO. Golan would keep me sharp.

GOLAN. Who is this sweet mouse who wears my mother's necklace?

TYCHO. Mind yourself, Golan. This is my wife.

GOLAN. Wife? I'm sorry I missed the wedding.

TYCHO. My wife-*to-be*. Lady Mercurial, your future brother, Golan.

GOLAN. Are you from a land where women war?

MERCURIAL. My father had no son. I have not fought in many years.

GOLAN. The knowledge glistens from your every pore.

MERCURIAL. ...I will take my leave, Tycho. I am flushed from the fight.

TYCHO. As you wish.

(MERCURIAL exits.)

GOLAN. What a little minx, your future wife.

TYCHO. She is life itself, Golan.

GOLAN. A large responsibility for so small a lady.

TYCHO. Do not be fooled by her stature. I am mighty with her by my side.

GOLAN. ...What are you doing with the royal fru-fru?

TYCHO. Choosing wedding clothes—I tried to involve Polo—you know how he must have an opinion about everything—but he remains detached.

GOLAN. You waste no time in giving away our mother's jewels.

TYCHO. They are mine to give...but if there is something you want, take it, take what you will.

GOLAN. I would not deprive your queen. Tell me how you met.

TYCHO. I was night hunting when I found her.

GOLAN. Found her? Like a seashell?

TYCHO (*excited to be telling somebody about it*). She appeared like an apparition standing in the dunes, then approached me with a boldness you can't even imagine.

GOLAN. Lucky for her you are a gentleman.

TYCHO. Yes, from that first moment she has seen into my soul. It was near midnight—I had just seen the unicorn when the clouds swallowed the moon and plunged me into darkness—

GOLAN (*disbelief*). You had the beast in sight?

TYCHO. And lost it.

GOLAN. Why didn't you give chase?

TYCHO. I told you—Mercurial appeared—

GOLAN. You let a unicorn escape?

TYCHO. What would you have done, Golan?

GOLAN. I would have followed it until one of us perished.

TYCHO. And left a woman alone in the dunes?

GOLAN. To have a chance at a unicorn, yes! I would have left my men to protect the woman.

TYCHO. I was alone.

GOLAN (*impressed*). Well. Alone. ...My lieutenant faced a unicorn alone. He ended up pierced through the heart.

TYCHO. I'm sorry for him. And for you.

GOLAN. He was a good man. ...What about her ship?