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The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe

DRAMATIZED FROM C. S. LEWIS' STORY BY DON QUINN

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Drama. Adapted by Don Quinn. From the story by C.S. Lewis.

Cast: flexible cast of 15, extras if desired. That master of imaginative enchantment, C.S. Lewis, has created a unique world and he invites children to walk into it and enjoy both surprise and adventure. An old house in rural England becomes the home base for four children who wander into an incredible country through an old wardrobe and help the country return to summer. In the incredible Narnia, they make friends with the frightened forest people who have almost given up hope for the return of good King Aslan, their true ruler. When Aslan was there, it was always summer. There is a great battle to see whether this magical country will remain under a wintry spell or will, once again, know freedom and summer under good King Aslan. A charming play about courage and the love of freedom. Area staging. Approximate running time: 40 minute

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(THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE)

ISBN 1-58342-194-7

The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe

A Play in Two Acts

FOR SIX HUMAN CHARACTERS, AND MANY OTHERS

CHARACTERS

THE PROFESSOR a kindly, elderly gentleman
Peter
SUSAN EDMUND
EDMUND \
LUCY
Mr. Tumnus a faun
THE WHITE WITCH "queen" of Narnia
DWARFthe Witch's slave
Mr. Beaver)
MR. BEAVER MRS. BEAVER forest animals
FENRIS ULF a wolf
FATHER CHRISTMASan old man
ASLANKing of Narnia
MRS. MACREADY
EXTRAS:
Stone statues: animals of the forest.
Aslan's army: centaurs, unicorns, deer, fauns, etc.
The White Witch's forces: dwarfs, wolves, giants, were-
, , 8 ,

wolves, etc.
PLACE: The Spare Room, and various other places.

TIME: The present.

SYNOPSIS

ACT ONE (composite set)

Scenes One, Three, and Five: The Spare Room.

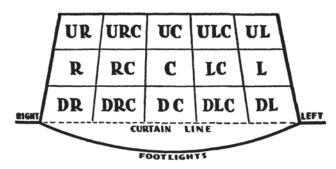
Scenes Two, Four, and Six: At the edge of the Forest.

ACT TWO

Scene One: The Spare Room, and the Beavers' cottage (fragment).

Scene Two: The White Witch's castle (fragment).

CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS



STAGE POSITIONS

Upstage means away from the footlights, downstage means toward the footlights, and right and left are used with reference to the actor as he faces the audience. R means right, L means left, U means up, D means down, C means center, and these abbreviations are used in combination, as: U R for up right, R C for right center, D L C for down left center, etc. One will note that a position designated on the stage refers to a general territory, rather than to a given point.

NOTE: Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage or rehearsal space as indicated above in the *Chart of Stage Positions*. Then teach your actors the meanings and positions of these fundamental terms of stage movement by having them walk from one position to another until they are familiar with them. The use of these abbreviated terms in directing the play saves time, speeds up rehearsals, and reduces the amount of explanation the director has to give to his actors.

PRODUCTION NOTES

STAGING

It is suggested that the stage be roughly divided, R and L, either by a light movable wall, dark curtain, scrim, and/or by lighting effects, whereby one-half the stage would be brightly illuminated as the other half goes dark.

The Spare Room (U L) is a permanent set, and is "home base" for the players. This should be a roughly comfortable room with a sofa, a large table with books, toys and game equipment, bookshelves, and a large wardrobe built against the wall U C. When its ample door is open, coats and furs may be seen hanging inside. The atmosphere of this set should be warm and cheerful, with not so much furniture that the players are restricted in movement.

The Lamp-Post, also upstage, at URC, marks the edge of the forest and is a meeting place for its inhabitants. It is surrounded by small bushes and trees (artificial or potted), a fallen log, and at least one patch of bushes heavy enough for concealment. Everything is tufted with cotton "snow," lightly affixed so as to be easily removed. A painter's white ground-cloth might be used to indicate a covering of snow.

The Beavers' Cottage (D L) should have a cave-like appearance. Furniture is simple and undersized; a table with a red-checkered cloth, a few stools, and pots and pans hanging on rough walls. The entrance should be a simulated hole, barely large enough for our children to squeeze through. As reference is made to cooking a meal, a small screen could be used, presumably concealing a stove; or a black box with a wire grill on top, under which are four red Christmas tree lights which may be turned on or off, may be used.

CHARACTERS

Natural animals and mythical creatures should be talked about freely, but their actual appearances held to a minimum.

Much good use might be made of the many clever masks offered for sale in magic shops and novelty stores, but ingenuity can effect a considerable economy. A black mask could suggest a raccoon; coat-hanger antlers, a deer; sidewhiskers and a long, flat tail, a beaver; a paper horn, a unicorn, etc.

THE PROFESSOR: The Professor is an elderly man—kindly, studious, rather absent-minded. He is bearded, wears horn-rimmed glasses, and carries an unlit pipe. He may be a trifle shabby.

THE CHILDREN: Lucy is the youngest. She is a sweet child, forgiving and generous. Edmund, the next oldest, is inclined to be greedy, snide and generally untrustworthy—but not hopelessly so. Susan, next to the oldest, is bright, sensible and not easily panicked. Peter, the oldest, is a decent, honest boy, thoughtful and protective with his sisters and brother. All wear summer clothes suitable to their ages. In Act Two, they appear in heavy old winter coats, all of which are too large for them.

MR. TUMNUS: The faun has two little horns and long pointed ears.

THE WHITE WITCH: Jadis, who calls herself the queen of Narnia, is dressed all in white—a very simple Empirestyle gown. She carries a wand or scepter with a jeweled knob and wears a glittering crown.

DWARF: The dwarf is the White Witch's slave. He drives her sleigh and performs various other tasks at her bidding.

MR. and MRS. BEAVER: They are gentle forest creatures awaiting the return of Aslan. Mr. Beaver is a trusted friend of the faun. Mrs. Beaver is of a practical turn of mind.

FENRIS ULF: Fenris Ulf is a large, fierce wolf. He is the chief of the White Witch's Secret Police.

FATHER CHRISTMAS: Father Christmas is a large man with a large, flowing white beard. He wears a red suit trimmed with white, and a red and white cap. He carries a large, bulging sack over his shoulder.

ASLAN: Aslan, the lion, is the rightful King of Narnia.

PROPERTIES

GENERAL: Spare Room: Sofa, large table, books, toys and game equipment, bookshelves, large wardrobe containing furs and coats. Edge of the Forest: Lamp-post, small bushes and trees, log, "snow," white ground cloth. Beaver Cottage: Table and chairs; dishes and silverware, pots and pans, etc.; food in bowls; various supplies on a shelf, curtained doorway, other furnishings as desired. Witch's Castle: Throne, candle, stool.

PROFESSOR: Papers, unlit pipe (optional), book, watch.

PETER: Book, sword and shield (given him by Father Christmas).

SUSAN: Ball.

LUCY: Toys, white handkerchief, dagger (given her by Father Christmas).

FAUN: Muffler, folded umbrella, several packages.

WHITE WITCH: Wand or scepter, crown; mantle containing small bottle and goblet, small box of candy; knife, stone.

DWARF: Whip, plate with piece of bread on it, mug of water.

MR. BEAVER: Lucy's white handkerchief.

FATHER CHRISTMAS: Large sack containing sword and shield, bow and arrows, small horn, bottle and small dagger.

2ND DWARF: Rope.

SOUND EFFECTS

Tape recordings might be very useful in the hands of tape experts, professional or amateur, of whom there are many in every community. These, on cue, could provide animal noises, battle effects, jingle bells, lion roars and other sounds which would lend verisimilitude to the production.

The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe

BEFORE RISE: House lights go out. Spotlight picks up PRO-FESSOR, standing against wall or proscenium, D R. He should look studious, with horn-rimmed glasses (maybe a trifle shabby), with papers and perhaps an unlit pipe in hand.]

PROFESSOR. Good evening (or afternoon). Allow me to introduce myself. I am the Professor. An M.P. Not a Member of Parliament, but a Professor of Mythology. I am also the owner of a very, very old house at the edge of a large forest in a remote part of England. Long before it came into my possession, it was a tourist attraction, because of its great age and a belief that it was . . . er . . . haunted. [Glances at paper in hand.] A few days ago, by persuasion of a charitable group in London which provides country vacations for city children, I took in four children as house guests. They appear to be nice youngsters, except maybe for-oh, well. I mustn't prejudge them. [Checks paper.] Their names are Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy, in descending order of ages. . . . Oh, yes . . . about this ancient and rambling house. It was, I believe, once listed among the "Stately Homes of England," which is in quotes. It does have some peculiarities, and I will say this: If I should meet a living, breathing dryad or nymph while working in my garden, I would be more pleased than astonished. Now . . . I'd like you to meet my young guests. . . . [He turns toward stage as curtain rises.]

ACT ONE

Scene 1

SCENE: The stage is roughly divided R and L. The Spare Room, U L, is a permanent set and is "home base" for the players. It is a roughly comfortable room with a sofa, a large table with books, toys and game equipment, bookshelves, and a large wardrobe built against the U C wall. When the door of the wardrobe is open, coats may be seen hanging inside.]

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: As the PROFESSOR walks from the apron into the Spare Room, PETER is on the sofa, absorbed in a book; EDMUND and SUSAN are tossing a ball back and forth, and LUCY is playing with some toys. At the Professor's entrance, PETER lays his book aside and rises to his feet. EDMUND and SUSAN cease their game of catch, and LUCY turns to face him. It is obvious from their attitudes and smiles that they like the PROFESSOR.]

PETER, SUSAN and LUCY. Hello, Professor!

PROFESSOR. Good afternoon, my friends. Is everything all right? [There is a chorus of cheerful "Yes, sir" and "Fine, thank you," except for EDMUND.]

EDMUND. Is there any table tennis equipment . . . sir? So much better than playing catch.

SUSAN. Oh, Edmund . . . stop complaining!

PETER. We don't have table tennis at home, either. We can make do with what we have.

PROFESSOR. I'm sorry. But we weren't given much notice of your visit and we had little chance to stock up. [The PROFESSOR looks them all over, and around the room.] But . . . I think you'll find other interesting things here.

LUCY. Oh, I'm sure we will, Professor. It's a wonderful house!

SUSAN. Is it really haunted?

EDMUND. Haunted! Pooh.

PETER [sharply]. That was a legitimate question, Ed! There are legends . . . and rumors about all these old mansions. Right, sir?

PROFESSOR. Right, Peter. [Turns to SUSAN.] It's a difficult question to answer, Susan. I don't think so . . . in the accepted meaning of the word "haunted." [He pauses.] However—[The children edge closer.]—any house of great age, such as this one, with secret passages, full of nooks and crannies, with a somewhat violent history—the Roundheads, you know—well, it's bound to acquire a certain flavor of mystery. Frankly, I have an open mind about it. [The children are entranced, craning forward to avoid missing a word. Even EDMUND, the cynic, looks around the room apprehensively. The PROFESSOR looks closely at them.] May I ask what prompted the question? Have you seen or heard anything . . . ah . . . unusual?

PETER [promptly]. No, sir.

EDMUND. Nope.

susan. N-n-n-o . . . but----

LUCY. But the house has kind of a . . . well, a funny feeling.

PROFESSOR [pulling himself together and starting to leave]. Well, please let me know if you meet any ghosts. Also, please remember that Mrs. Macready often shows people through the house and though she's a dear and cares for me well, she isn't too fond of children, so if she does come your way leading a party of guests, could you please . . . uh . . .

PETER. Scram?

PROFESSOR. I guess that's about right.

PETER. We will, sir.

LUCY. There are lots of places to hide.

PROFESSOR. Oh, no, you needn't hide.

PETER. We understand.

EDMUND. Does she charge a fee for showing people about? PROFESSOR. Oh, a little.

EDMUND. I bet she keeps some of the money.

PETER. Oh, Edmund, lay off!

PROFESSOR. I'll hope to see you all at dinner. It's at seven, you know. [The PROFESSOR starts toward the door, then turns.] It's good to have you all with me. It brightens things up. I do hope you'll be happy here. Good night. [There is an answering chorus of "good nights." PETER then goes back to his reading. EDMUND and SUSAN resume their game of catch. LUCY, unnoticed by the other three, opens the door of the wardrobe and peers in, then as the lights dim down with only a spot on LUCY, she climbs into the wardrobe and slowly closes the door behind her.]

[The lights on the stage L dim and go out. The lights on the stage R come on bright.]

Scene 2

SCENE: The edge of the Forest. This is indicated URC perhaps with a painted backdrop, or a few trees and bushes—maybe a white dropcloth to indicate snowy ground. There should be one clump of bushes large enough to conceal an actor and, if possible, to provide an entrance and exit.

AS LIGHTS COME UP: We discover LUCY, walking slowly, looking around curiously. She is moving toward a not-too-tall lamp-post U R C, with "snow" on its top and ornaments. LUCY hugs herself and shivers.]

LUCY. How did I get out here? I only stepped into the closet!

Maybe I'd better go back. It's so cold! [She looks back,
but curiosity wins.] This is a queer place for a lamp-post

—on the edge of a forest. And is the forest in the closet? Or am I somewhere else entirely?

[A FAUN, with two little horns growing out of his head, long pointed ears, a red muffler and a folded umbrella, steps out from behind a large bush. He is carrying several packages. As he is looking behind him, he doesn't see LUCY.]

LUCY. Good evening.

Act I

FAUN [startled]. Ooooooh! [He drops his packages and, trying to pick them up, gets entangled in his umbrella, and drops them again. LUCY helps him.] Thank you very much! LUCY. You're quite welcome, I'm sure.

FAUN. Excuse me . . . I don't want to seem inquisitive, but aren't you a Daughter of Eve?

LUCY. I don't think so. My mother's name is Lucy and my name is Lucy, too.

FAUN. But you're . . . er . . . forgive me, you're what they call a girl?

LUCY [a little puzzled]. Of course I'm a girl. And you're a . . .

FAUN. I'm a faun. With a "u." A faun with a "w" is a little deer. Of course, if I might be so bold, you seem to be a little dear, too, so—— [Seeing LUCY baffled, he breaks off.] I'm sorry . . . I was just joking. Fauns can't help being merry. My name is Tumnus.

LUCY. How do you do, Mr. Tumnus. [She holds out her hand politely, and the FAUN, reaching for it, almost drops his packages again. LUCY helps him steady them.]

FAUN. Clumsy of me. But I've never met a Daughter of Eve before. Or a Son of Adam. May I ask how you have come into the land of Namia?

LUCY. Narnia? What's Narnia?

FAUN. This is the land of Narnia. Where we are. All that lies between the lamp-post—[Gestures widely.]—and the great castle of Cair Paravel on the eastern sea. And you
... you have come from the wild woods of the west?

- LUCY. No, I . . . I got in through the wardrobe in the spare room.
- phy when I was a little faun . . . I should no doubt know about those strange countries. [Sighs.] It's too late now.
- LUCY. But they're not strange countries at all! [Pointing back.] It's just back there . . . I think . . . I'm not sure . . . but, anyway, it's warm back there. It's summer.
- FAUN. And it's winter in Narnia. It's always winter in Narnia. Ever since—— [Pauses.] And always will be, unless—— [Looks around nervously.] Unless maybe . . .
- LUCY. Unless what? [The FAUN is really nervous now. . . . He keeps looking around and makes an obvious effort to change the subject.]
- FAUN. Look, Daughter of Eve, from the city of War Drobe in the Land of Spare Oom, how about coming home with me for a nice hot cup of tea. [With a final nervous look about.] We'd best not stand here too long.
- LUCY. It sounds very nice, but I think I'd better be getting back, thank you. [The FAUN takes her gently by the arm.]
- FAUN. Oh, please come! It's just around the corner. We have so much to talk about.
- [Stops and looks closely into his face.] But you're crying . . . what on earth is the matter? Did I say something . . .
- FAUN. Oh, no, no, no . . . it's just that . . . that I'm such a bad faun. [LUCY takes out a handkerchief and gently dries his tears.]
- LUCY. You're not a bad faun at all. I think you're the nicest faun I ever met.
- FAUN. You wouldn't say that . . . if you knew . . .
- LUCY. Knew what, Mr. Tumnus? [The FAUN looks cautiously around for a moment, then in a loud whisper:]
- FAUN. I'm a spy. I'm in the pay of the White Witch. [Sobs.] Oh, I'm so wicked!

LUCY. Who is the White Witch?

FAUN. Shhhhh! Not so loud, Daughter of Eve. She has spies everywhere. You see, Jadis—that's her name—the White Witch has all Narnia in her spell. It's she who makes it always winter. [Shakes his head, sadly.] Always winter but never Christmas.

LUCY. I see. But why do you think you're so bad?

FAUN. I'm one of her kidnapers, that's why. Look at me, Daughter of Eve. Do I look like the kind of faun who'd meet a little child in the woods, pretend to be friendly . . . and then lure it to my house for tea? . . .

LUCY. . . . and when it falls asleep you turn the child over to the White Witch? I simply don't believe it!

FAUN. But it's true! It's true! Of course I've never done it before, but you're the first human I've ever met.

LUCY. Are you going to kidnap me?

FAUN [looking around]. Shhhhh! No! But let's keep our voices down . . . even some of the trees are her spies. . . . If only Aslan . . . [He claps his hand over his mouth, with a gasp.]

LUCY. Aslan? What's . . .

FAUN. Oh, please! . . . Not here . . . not anywhere! It just slipped out. . . . Promise me you'll forget I ever said it.

LUCY. All right. It's an easy promise because Aslan is such a peculiar . . .

FAUN. No! Please . . . don't you have to go home?

LUCY. Yes, I believe I must. [Primly.] I'm very glad I met you, Mr. Tumnus.

FAUN. And I you, Daughter of Eve. Can you find your way from here?

LUCY. I think so, thank you.

FAUN. And can I keep the handkerchief?

LUCY. Of course you may!

FAUN. Did I say "can"? I meant "may." And thank you.

LUCY. You're quite welcome. [LUCY turns and starts walk-

ing. The FAUN looks after her for a moment, then tucks the handkerchief in his jacket and jumps behind a bush.]

[Stage R goes dark. Stage L lights up.]

Scene 3

IN THE SPARE ROOM: PETER, SUSAN and EDMUND are in exactly the same positions as when we left them: EDMUND and SUSAN playing catch, PETER reading.]

[The wardrobe door opens and LUCY steps out, blinking in the light. She turns and shuts the wardrobe door. The others do not even notice her.]

LUCY. Well . . . I'm back!

PETER [looking over his book]. Back?

SUSAN. What do you mean—"back"?

EDMUND. You haven't been anywhere. [Sniffs.] Unless you've been in the wardrobe. [Moves closer to her and sniffs again.] Phew! Oh, boy! Lucy, the Human Mothball! [LUCY, mouth open, stares from one to the other. It has seemed hours since she entered the wardrobe. She can't believe she wasn't missed, and is a little hurt. Then she stiffens; on her dignity:]

LUCY. Well, I certainly have been away. And furthermore—
[LUCY points dramatically at the wardrobe.]—did you know that you can go through that wardrobe, through all the coats and furs, and be in Narnia, the Land of the White Witch? [EDMUND, SUSAN and PETER stare at her: PETER sympathetically; SUSAN, a little perplexed; and EDMUND in raucous disbelief.]

EDMUND. Wow! . . . What a whopper!

susan [putting her arm around LUCY]. Honey, are you sure you didn't go into the wardrobe and fall asleep? [LUCY shakes off Susan's arm, and stamps her foot defiantly.]

LUCY. Of course I'm sure! As sure as can be. And in Narnia it's always winter and never Christmas, and the White Witch has a curse on it and Mr. Tumnus says—he's one of her spies, you know—he says . . . [She stops and stares at each of them in turn. In a small voice:] Doesn't anyone believe me?

EDMUND [with customary rudeness]. Frankly, no!

SUSAN [gently]. It's been only a minute since you said good night to the Professor. [At this information, LUCY becomes a little unsure of herself.]

LUCY. Is . . . is that all the time it's been?

EDMUND. That's all, little dreamer. You and Peter—[Jerking a contemptuous thumb at PETER.]—read too many books. [LUCY is broken-hearted and starts to cry softly. The others look embarrassed. Then PETER lays aside his book and walks to LUCY. He puts his arm around her and leads her to the sofa, and sits her down beside him.]

PETER. Tell us all about it, Lucy. All about the White Witch and Mr. Tumnus—whoever he is——

LUCY [eagerly]. He's a faun!

PETER. —and how it's always winter and never Christmas. . . . Everything.

You mean you believe all that stuff, Pete? [PETER bends down and slips off one of Lucy's slippers. He holds it up for the others to see. Then he points to the wardrobe.]

PETER. That's a wardrobe . . . not a refrigerator.

EDMUND. So?

PETER [quietly]. So how did she get snow on her slippers? [There is a dumfounded silence. Then LUCY throws her arms around her brother gratefully.]

LUCY [hugging PETER]. Oh, Peter . . . you believe me!

[Stage L goes dark. Stage R lights up.]

Scene 4

AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST: The scene around the lamp-post is as before, except that there is no Mr. Tumnus. Instead, there is a DWARF wearing a sort of uniform or livery, and the WHITE WITCH. She is all in white (a very simple, Empire-style gown), carrying a wand or scepter with a jeweled knob, and she wears a glittering crown.]

DWARF. We're too late.

WITCH [sharply]. Too late what?

DWARF. Too late to find Tumnus and the Daughter of— [Looks up at the WITCH and winces.] Oh. I'm sorry. I meant we're too late, your Majesty.

WITCH. Don't forget again, unless you wish to join the statuary.

DWARF. No, your Majesty! I mean yes, your Majesty! I'll remember. [Then as the WITCH takes a look around, the DWARF, behind her back, makes a horrible face at her.]

WITCH. We must do something about our spies. That rabbitspy swore they'd still be here.

DWARF. I know where Tumnus lives.

WITCH. Bring him to me tomorrow. He'll make a clever little statue for the garden. Perhaps with a bowl in his hands, for a birdbath.

DWARF. But there aren't any birds, your Majesty.

[The Forest lights go dark. The Spare Room lights come up bright.]

Scene 5

IN THE SPARE ROOM: The four children again are about as we left them, LUCY next to PETER on the sofa, SUSAN sitting on the floor at their feet and EDMUND lounging

about, swinging his foot, not very interested in Lucy's story.]

Lucy. —and it's been winter since anybody can remember, and I guess it will be until Aslan . . . [She stops abruptly.]

susan. Who?

Act I

LUCY. I promised I wouldn't say the name. I suppose he's some kind of an enemy of the White Witch, and it's dangerous to talk about him.

PETER. But what is what's-his-name, that you're not supposed to mention?

LUCY. I don't know. Mr. Tumnus was too frightened to tell me.

EDMUND. Isn't that sort of suspicious?

PETER. Oh, knock it off, Edmund! Lucy wouldn't tell lies. [To LUCY.] Tell us again how you went through the wardrobe, Lucy.

LUCY [acting it out]. Well, I just stuck my head in at first . . . and then I climbed all the way in . . . past all the furs and coats and things . . .

THE OTHERS. Yes . . . yes . . . what then?

LUCY. It seems like there were a thousand coats and furs in there, and finally I came to a door ... [She pauses, dramatically.] . . . and I opened it, and there I was on a path through the forest.

PETER. No sign of life?

LUCY. No, but there was a sign. It said,

CAREFUL!

NYMPHS, DRYADS AND UNICORNS CROSSING.

SUSAN. —and then you came to a lamp-post and Mr. Tummy. LUCY. Mr. Tumnus. He was very nice. And very, very frightened. And it was cold . . . awfully cold! [PETER, SUSAN and EDMUND exchange glances. EDMUND shrugs contemptuously. SUSAN looks at LUCY and then at PETER. (She hasn't made up her mind.) PETER walks over and examines the