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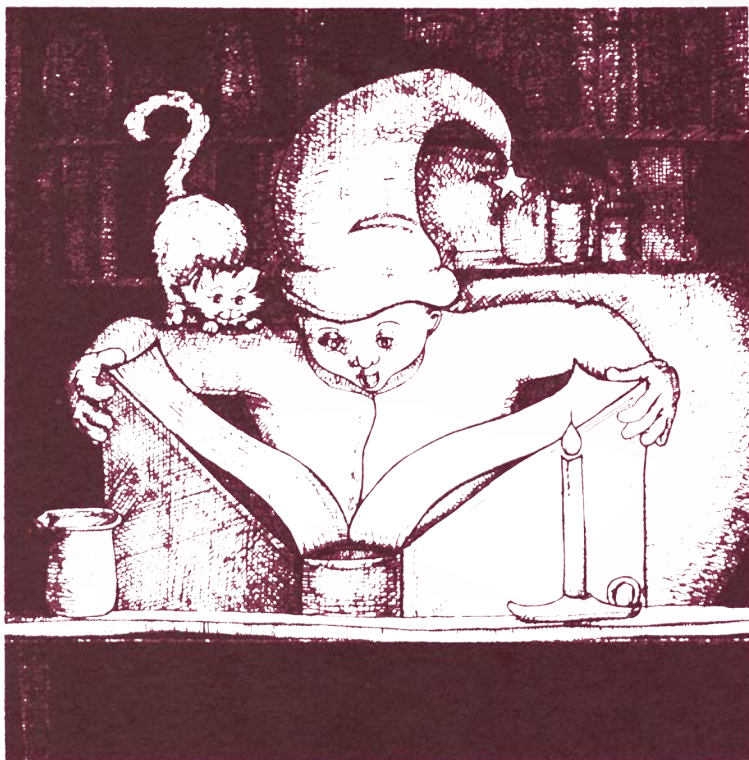
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Dramatic Publishing

The Sorcerer's Apprentice



Carin Mees

By
Mary Hall Surface

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The Sorcerer's Apprentice

Originally commissioned and performed by
the Kennedy Center Theatre for Young Audiences,
followed by Stage One Children's Theatre in Louisville, Ky.

**This is a dream play for every imaginative director,
one that “probes deeply into the original folktale and
the workings of the human spirit.” —Louisville Courier-Journal**

Fantasy. By Mary Hall Surface. Cast: 1m., 5 either gender. Here is a magical look at a timeless tale in a highly theatrical style. Inspired by a bewitching cat, a lazy apprentice, Klaus, tries to use his master's magic to do everyday chores. Soon he unlocks more magic than he imagined possible. Not only Klaus but also the Sorcerer himself must learn to use their magical powers well and struggle with the good and evil at their command. In this spirited escapade, three silent actors and dancers affect the magic of the production, including an overflowing cauldron, a sky-high mountain and a seafaring table. *Production notes are available in the script containing details on set. Single set. Elaborate or simple costumes. Approximate running time: 70 minutes. Code: SV5.*

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THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

by Mary Hall Surface

The Sorcerer's Apprentice was commissioned by the Kennedy Center Theatre for Young People (then the Programs for Children and Youth.) The play premiered on October 31, 1986 at the Kennedy Center's Theatre Lab in Washington, D.C., under the direction of Mary Hall Surface. Music was composed by Roy Barber. Set design was by Michael Layton. Lighting design was by Nancy Schertler. Costume Design was by Jane Schloss Phelan. The stage manager was Janith Melzer. The producer was Carole C. Sullivan.

The Cast

Alan Hawkrige	The Sorcerer
Leonor Chaves	A Magic
David Macdonald	A Magic
John Schertler	A Magic
Reginald Metcalf	The Cat
Kyle Prue	Klaus

The Sorcerers Apprentice was subsequently produced by Stage One: the Louisville Children's Theatre, under the direction of Mary Hall Surface. Music was composed by Roy Barber. Set Design was by Brenda Kiefer. Costume design was by Connie Furr. Properties were designed by Sally Seegmiller. The Stage Manager was Kevin Casey. The producer was Moses Goldberg.

The Cast

David Lively	The Sorcerer
Timothy Gregory	A Magic
Debra Macut	A Magic
Jill Susan Meyers	A Magic
Michael Torrey	The Cat
Elizabeth Rothan	Klaus

“An upstart apprentice usurps the power of his master, and gets his wrists slapped for the trying.” Folk literature is filled with stories that illustrate this teacher-student (parent-child) relationship. In these stories, the child is most often punished for pushing beyond the boundaries set by the Master -- the keeper of the keys of knowledge and power. The Master, therefore, must know what is good and right. Right?

In such a world, there is little room for inquisitiveness -- for curiosity. Power is absolute and unquestionable. Such a world I find profoundly disturbing and alarmingly familiar.

Klaus challenges the absolutes and questions the unquestionable. To be sure, Klaus is an unlikely hero at best! But perhaps it takes a mischievous, playful dreamer to change the world. May every child discover the power -- even the magic -- of their own questions.

Mary Hall Surface

**This play is dedicated
to my brother
and to all our magic
Halloweens**

THE CHARACTERS:

The Sorcerer

Klaus, his young apprentice

The Cat

Three Magics

THE SET:

The original production featured an elaborate set, complete with full fireplace, winding stairs and a huge bookshelf. The second production was produced much more simply - - in the round with small open structures in two corners for the bookshelf and the Sorcerer's workbench.

The central key to a successful production of this script is the MAGICS. These three actors, ever-present on the stage, are the embodiment of magic - - a kind of pure energy that is there to be harnessed by either the Sorcerer or the Apprentice. They are "neutral" in that they perform the tasks which they are evoked to perform, preferring neither good nor evil. They should not initiate action themselves - - rather they respond to the magical gestures and spells of the Sorcerer and the Apprentice.

In the Stage One production, the Magics each had a corner of the playing space where he/she remained until evoked. Each magic kept his/her visual focus the center point of the stage until bidden to perform a task. The Magics were costumed identically, in shimmering, flowing costumes allowing for movement.

The Magics are visible to all characters throughout the action.

THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

By Mary Hall Surface

SCENE ONE

(Magical, shimmering music. Lights up on the Sorcerer's workshop. The sorcerer enters and evokes each "Magic" to come to him. He begins his spell. His cat watches from the corner.)

SORCERER: Awake night! On all the powers of the night I call. On the wind that howls. The thunder that tumbles across the sky. The lightning that cracks the still darkness. Awake my magic, my secret magic! Give power to this potion! Quickly, Apprentice. Bring me the wisp of a cloud . . . the final ingredient for my spell. Quickly, Klaus. *(No reply)* Klaus! *(Still no reply)* Klaus! !

(Music out and full lights up as the spell is broken. Klaus, the Sorcerer's young Apprentice, is discovered snoring loudly in the corner.)

That useless, lazy boy. Awake!

(The Sorcerer commands his three Magics, who race to Klaus, and quite physically raise him to his feet and direct his attention to the Sorcerer.)

KLAUS: Whoaw! Good morning, Master.

SORCERER: It is afternoon. LATE afternoon.

KLAUS: Good afternoon, then, Master. Do you need my assistance?

SORCERER: Why no. I keep you here as my apprentice because I enjoy watching you sleep! OF COURSE I need your assistance. But it is too late now.

KLAUS: Sorry.

SORCERER: *(Zapping the Magics to bring Klaus closer to him.)* How many times must I tell you! You MUST give me the magic ingredient at the exact moment I ask for it! Magic is a beautiful, delicate art! The slightest mistake can break the spell, or WORSE!

KLAUS: Worse?

SORCERER: The spell that was wished for might go wrong! *(Gestures the Magics to return Klaus to a more dignified position.)*

KLAUS: That would be terrible, Master.

SORCERER: Honestly, Klaus, sometimes I wonder why I bother keeping you on as my Apprentice.

CAT: He usually gets his chores done, Master.

KLAUS: That's right! I sweep. I mop.

CAT: He gathers all the ingredients for your magical spells.

KLAUS: And you promised my father. . .

SORCERER: . . . That I would TRY to teach you to become a good apprentice.

KLAUS: And you should never break a promise!

SORCERER: *(Exasperated)* Then let us try AGAIN! !

KLAUS: *(Faking a limp)* Oh, Master. I can't learn another thing today. I stubbed my toe this morning! *(Hopping)* Ouch!

SORCERER: Klaus.

KLAUS: When I've got a stubbed toe, my brain just (*Snaps his fingers*) clicks off. Can we play a game or something instead?

SORCERER: We are in the middle of doing a spell!

CAT: Listen to your master, Klaus.

KLAUS: Just one game! It will make my toe feel so much better! (*To Cat*) You're it. Go!

(Klaus begins to race around the workshop. The Cat meows. The Magics' energy is jolted.)

SORCERER: Such foolishness!

KLAUS: (*Facing to the bookcase, he jumps up and "tags" a book.*) Red book's the base. I'm safe!

SORCERER: My books! (*Zaps the Magics so that two are protecting the books, one is reinforcing his threatening gesture to Klaus.*) You must never touch them.

KLAUS: It was just part of the game.

SORCERER: (*Sorcerer zaps the Magics closer to Klaus.*) You must **never** take a single book from the shelf! **Never** even open their covers.

KLAUS: You made me promise that the very first day I came to work for you. I haven't forgotten.

SORCERER: Good. (*He releases the Magics.*)

CAT: Don't be angry, Master. Klaus serves your purposes well enough. And you have nothing to fear. He will never be clever enough to learn the secrets of your magic.

- SORCERER: Unlike my clever cat. But you have learned YOUR lesson, have you not? *(Cat recoils.)*
- KLAUS: Not clever. That's me. All my life. *(He yawns and stretches loudly.)*
- SORCERER: *(Fake sweet)* Might I possibly convince you to postpone your nap-time so we can FINISH THIS SPELL?
- KLAUS: Well . . . all right. But why do we have to do it THIS MINUTE?
- SORCERER: No questions, Klaus. Never! Now, come. *(He picks up the last potion bottle.)* Since your carelessness ruined this last precious vial of mystery, I need you to go on a journey. *(He draws the Magics to him.)*
- KLAUS: Where?
- SORCERER: To the top of the mountain at the edge of the forest.
- KLAUS: Not Black Mountain! You said you'd never send me there. That's a very evil place!
- SORCERER: Of course not, boy. You must go only to the mountain that rises just to the edge of the clouds. There, as you stand upon the most slippery of rocks, you must capture the wisp of a cloud.
- KLAUS: You always do the cloud-catching. I don't know how! !
- SORCERER: Don't you want to learn?
- KLAUS: It sounds dangerous!
- SORCERER: Take this feather of a bird and place it near your heart. Its power will protect you.
- KLAUS: But how do I get to the top?

SORCERER: Leave that to me!

(A crash of thunder. Music in and swells. The apprentice is zapped by the Sorcerer to the "Mountain" [a single ladder which the Magics support at the base]. Klaus climbs slowly.)

Reach, boy! Feel the powers of the night around you.

KLAUS: All I feel is scared.

SORCERER: I won't let you fall. The spell is too important.

KLAUS: THAT'S good.

SORCERER: Can you reach the cloud?

KLAUS: Almost!

SORCERER: Reach!

KLAUS: I have it! I have it!

(A short movement sequence during which Klaus captures the cloud [a ribbon suspended from the mobile, or a mimed gesture only], comes down from the ladder and the Magics return the ladder to normal.)

(Then lights back to workshop lights. Music concludes. Klaus appears somewhat shaken.)

SORCERER: Well done, boy.

KLAUS: That was amazing.

CAT: It was magic.

SORCERER: Wondrous magic! *(He gathers his Magics to him.)*

KLAUS: I wish I could work magic!

SORCERER: *(Protecting the Magics.)* What?

KLAUS: So I could command my brooms and mops to do MY work.

CAT: You're not clever enough. You said so yourself.

KLAUS: I know. But I SURE would have an easy life if I could get the broom and the mop to push themselves.

SORCERER: You couldn't possibly have an easier life, given the foolishness I let you get away with! But you have PLEASED me by journeying to the top of the mountain.

KLAUS: Thank you, Sorcerer.

SORCERER: So I will give you twice the usual time to clean the workshop.

KLAUS: *(Disappointed)* Great.

SORCERER: But do it well. I will return very soon to perform my spell AGAIN. Next time, please try to stay awake!

KLAUS: You bet, Master. *(Sorcerer disappears.)*

(The Apprentice slowly gets up to get his broom while the cat watches him.)

Come on, broom. We get a whole ten minutes instead of five to do cleaning-magic on this dirty ole workshop. That means we can take the first two minutes for a nap.

(Klaus stands, leaning up against his broom, begins to snooze. The Cat slinks over to Klaus mysteriously.)

CAT: *(Startling Klaus)* Don't be foolish.

KLAUS: I was just resting!

CAT: You have no time to lose. Get to it.

KLAUS: It doesn't matter. The Sorcerer expects the workshop to be so clean that it sparkles! I can't even get it to glimmer a little!

CAT: Magic could make the workshop sparkle like jewels.

KLAUS: But I don't KNOW any magic!

CAT: You could learn. Such a simple spell- -to get the broom to sweep the room by itself would be easy to learn!

KLAUS: Really? Could you teach me a simple spell- -nothing fancy- -for my broom?

CAT: I cannot. But you can learn for yourself by looking in the Sorcerer's book.

KLAUS: Oh, no. You may think I'm LAZY, but I'm not stupid. The Sorcerer would punish me if he saw me reading his books.

CAT: He doesn't have to see you. Look quickly at them before he comes back.

KLAUS: He might catch me.

CAT: Are you scared as well as lazy?

KLAUS: No! It's just . . . Are you sure it's an easy spell?

CAT: The very simplest.

KLAUS: But which book? I bet you don't know which book it's in.

CAT: His biggest and most secret one. There, in the middle.

- KLAUS: Oh.
- CAT: Climb on my back. I'll help you get it down. We can learn the spell together.
- KLAUS: All right. But hurry.
- CAT: Step here, quickly! *(Klaus climbs onto the back of the Cat to attempt to reach the bookshelf. The Magics react to having their source disturbed.)* Can you reach the book?
- KLAUS: Almost.
- SORCERER: *(Preparing to enter.)* Klaus!
(Cat and Klaus scramble down from the bookshelf.)
- KLAUS: He's coming.
- CAT: There isn't time. Watch him, then. Memorize every movement. Learn every word of his spell.
- KLAUS: But will THIS spell work on a broom?
- CAT: You must learn!
- SORCERER: *(Entering)* Is everything ready? *(Ironically)* What a surprise! The workshop has not been cleaned. Never mind. The spell is the most important thing to me now. Prepare the vial for the potion!
- KLAUS: Yes, master.
- CAT: *(To Klaus)* Watch and you'll never have to push the broom again.
- KLAUS: But what if . . .

SORCERER: And Klaus!

KLAUS: Yes, Master?

SORCERER: Please try to do everything right this time!

(Spell music begins as the Sorcerer pours one vial of liquid into another. He combines the potions into a large bubbling pot. A twist of smoke comes from the mixture as he chants.)

KLAUS: Powers of the night. Awake and power this potion.

(With the wave of his arm, one Magic works the thunder sheet to create a burst of thunder.)

Wind, blow your power to my secret spell.

(With a gesture of his hand, another Magic works a wind machine, while the other creates smoke with a bellows and powder. [The wind and smoke can also be created through movement by the Magics.])

CAT: *(To Klaus)* Watch! Every moment is important.

SORCERER: Water, air, earth and fire.
Give me all that I desire.
Born of earth, or made by man.
Work my will at my command.

CAT: *(To Klaus)* Have you got it?

KLAUS: I don't think so.

CAT: Klaus! !

KLAUS: I can't remember what he said after the desire part.

SORCERER: Now, Klaus. The wisp of a cloud.

- CAT: Do something!
- SORCERER: Quickly! This is the most delicate part of the spell.
- KLAUS: Umm . . . I can't.
- SORCERER: What? !
- KLAUS: I mean . . . I can't FIND it. I must have set the bottle down somewhere.
- SORCERER: Open your eyes! It is there before you on the workbench.
- KLAUS: So it is.
- SORCERER: I am trying to be patient with you, boy. Now . . .
- KLAUS: Doesn't look like enough, though. Maybe I should go back up the mountain and get some more.
- SORCERER: It is the perfect amount. Give it to me quickly or I will have to start the spell from the beginning again.
- KLAUS: Great! I mean . . . gracious. That would be terrible, your having to do all those words and motions again.
- CAT: *(Aside)* Perfect!
- SORCERER: Quickly!
- KLAUS: *(Languishing on the bench, enjoying the stall for time.)* Sure would be a shame, even though you look so great and powerful when you do your magic. How'd you get to be such a good sorcerer?
- SORCERER: *(Desperate to keep the pot bubbling)* The Potion! Before it is too late! *(The Magics work furiously to keep the spell going.)*