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# THE FALLING MOON

by

DAVID KOREN



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia

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(THE FALLING MOON)

*Cover design by Susan Carle*

ISBN 0-87129-621-7

*Cover photo: Scott Goessling. Central Missouri State University Production.*

# **THE FALLING MOON**

A forty-five minute version of *THE FALLING MOON* was originally presented by the Lab Company of the Hangar Theatre in Ithaca, New York, on August 3, 1991, with the following cast:

Siegfried ..... *Adam Chapnick*  
Hummus ..... *David Heymann*  
Simon ..... *David Mendelsohn*  
Officer / Messenger / Colonel ..... *Stanton Wood*  
King / Old Scotty ..... *David Brooks*  
Frannie ..... *Katie Bales*  
Prophetess ..... *Rachel Schroeder*  
Moon Minion / Miranda / Princess Thea ..... *Ilise Weiner*  
Soul / Old Woman / Queen Marie ..... *Rachel Weinstein*  
Peasant / Queen's Guard ..... *Emma Bowers*  
Peasant / Queen's Guard ..... *Dylan Schwartz*

Directed by ..... *Laura Downing*  
Stage Manager ..... *Tim Hanna*  
Dramaturg ..... *Cassandra Medley*

This version of *THE FALLING MOON* was originally presented by Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, Missouri, on November 9, 1994, with the following cast:

Soldier / Captain / Hans / Colonel ..... *Michael Scott*  
Siegfried ..... *Keith Padgett*  
Hummus ..... *Michael Vertlieb*  
Simon ..... *Casey Renfrow*  
King / Old Scotty ..... *Jeremy Engelbrecht*  
Frannie ..... *Chariese Hudson*  
Prophetess ..... *Marcy Whipkins*  
Moon Minion / Hilda / Queen Marie ..... *Vicki Stracener*  
Peasant 1 / Soul 1 / Miranda / Thea ..... *Carol Fitterling*  
Peasant 2 / Soul 2 / Bea / Guard 2 ..... *Mamaka Pettiford*  
Moon / Helen / Guard 1 ..... *Jackie Ransom*

Set design ..... *David Bennett*  
Props design ..... *Eddie Ocheskey*  
Sound design ..... *Suzanne Thomas*  
Lighting design ..... *Catherine Nipper*  
Costume design ..... *Brendon Sean McNeely*  
Makeup design ..... *Eric Calvert*

Directed by ..... *Laura Downing*  
Assistant Director/Stage Manager ..... *Camilla Sisemore*  
Technical Director ..... *David R. Peerbolte*

## Acknowledgment

The author would like to acknowledge the immense contribution of Laura Downing to *THE FALLING MOON*. Laura directed both formative productions (Ithaca, New York, and Warrensburg, Missouri) and shared David's vision for the play. Without Laura this book, and very possibly this play, might never have happened.

# THE FALLING MOON

A Full Length Play

For 5m, 6w (can expand to include up to 14 other actors)

## CHARACTERS

KING (M)	.....	a powerful ruler
SIEGFRIED (M)	.....	the king's oldest son, a warrior prince
HUMMUS (M)	.....	the king's middle son, a poetic prince
SIMON (M)	.....	the king's youngest son, a smart prince
SOLDIER (M)	.....	a member of king's army
FRANNIE (F)	.....	a young peasant woman from Theblot
PROPHETESS (F)	.....	a witch and seer
CAPTAIN (M)	.....	an officer in the king's army
MOON MINION (F)	..	a witch, communicates with the moon
PEASANT 1 (M/F)	.....	poor person
PEASANT 2 (M/F)	.....	poor person
MOON (F)	.....	Luna, the earth's largest natural satellite
SOUL 1 (M/F)	.....	dead spirit visiting the moon
SOUL 2 (M/F)	.....	dead spirit visiting the moon
HANS (M)	.....	a forester
COLONEL (M)	....	a high-ranking officer in the king's army
MIRANDA (F)	.....	.Frannie's mother, a peasant
BEA (F)	.....	an old woman in Theblot
HILDA (F)	.....	a young feisty woman
HELEN (F)	.....	a middle-aged woman
OLD SCOTTY (M)	.....	an old man in Theblot
THEA (F)	.....	Queen Marie's daughter, a warrior
QUEEN MARIE (F)	.....	the king's enemy, a powerful ruler
GUARD 1 (F)	.....	guard of Queen Marie
GUARD 2 (F)	.....	guard of Queen Marie

Suggested Doubling:

(from the Warrensburg, Missouri, production, 11/94)

SOLDIER / CAPTAIN / HANS / COLONEL (M)

KING / OLD SCOTTY (M)

SIEGFRIED (M)

SIMON (M)

HUMMUS (M)

FRANNIE (F)

PROPHETESS (F)

MOON MINION / HILDA / QUEEN MARIE (F)

PEASANT 1 / SOUL 1 / MIRANDA / THEA (F)

PEASANT 2 / SOUL 2 / BEA / GUARD 2 (F)

MOON / HELEN / GUARD 1 (F)

(This arrangement requires a total of 11 actors. Other configurations are possible and encouraged. Additional peasants can be added, if desired, to fill out the Moon Minion scenes.)

## THE FALLING MOON

SCENE: *The throne room.*

AT RISE: *A full moon hangs overhead. KING sits in his throne, facing D. He jitters expectantly. A SOLDIER enters, carrying a map.*

SOLDIER. Your Majesty, Prince Siegfried, Prince Hummus, and Prince Simon have returned home from the war!

*(SIEGFRIED, HUMMUS, and SIMON enter, triumphant.)*

SIEGFRIED, HUMMUS, SIMON, SOLDIER. We're number one! We're number one! We're number one! *(SIEGFRIED, HUMMUS, SIMON stop. SOLDIER continues, alone:)*

SOLDIER. We're number one! *(Puts down the map.)*

SIMON. Dismissed. *(SOLDIER exits.)*

HUMMUS *(excited)*. Father, you should have seen it.

SIEGFRIED. Today, we defeated the last of the Urganami Militia. Here. *(He points at the map.)* It was a real slaughter! I killed thirty men with my own hands.

HUMMUS. It was beautiful. I killed sixteen men myself.

SIMON. I killed ten. *(General shock: SIEGFRIED, SIMON, KING gasp.)* But I was carrying the map.

KING. And the village?

SIEGFRIED. Burned to the ground.

HUMMUS. The flames went all the way up to the sky. It was like a big cookout.

KING. Any survivors? Prisoners?

SIMON. No.

KING. And the crops?

SIMON. Burned.

KING. The forest?

SIMON. All burned.

KING. I've taught you well, Sons. (*Pause.*) How close are we to Queen Marie's castle?

SIEGFRIED. We attack tomorrow.

KING. Excellent!

SIEGFRIED (*very excited*). We're going to kill Queen Marie. With her daughter. In the castle, here. (*Points.*)

KING. What's our plan, Simon?

SIMON. Our men are ready to strike at dawn. Grappling hooks over the wall first, then battering ram, followed by flaming arrows. We have a floor plan of Queen Marie's castle. They don't stand a chance.

HUMMUS. It's going to be wonderful. I can see it. The arrows overhead. The steel clanging.

SIMON. Siegfried, you take the battering ram. It's stationed here. (*Points.*)

SIEGFRIED. Good. First in the gates. My hands around the Queen's neck. How many men do I get?

SIMON. Forty.

SIEGFRIED. Good.

SIMON. Hummus, you take the grappling hooks. And sixty men. Start on the west wall. It's the most weakly defended. (*Points.*)

HUMMUS. Oh, scaling the wall. The wind behind me. Wonderful!

SIMON. Now, we have to remember to expect surprises. Our spies inform us that Queen Marie has a large supply of explosives. We think hidden here. *(Points.)*

SIEGFRIED. A challenge!

SIMON. So we'll try to capture the explosives first. Tonight.

KING. Be careful, Sons. Queen Marie's an evil witch. She has green skin. She drinks blood and eats babies.

PRINCES. Eeew.

KING. And she can kill you with a nasty look.

HUMMUS. And is that how she...?

KING. Yes. That's how she killed your mother. At one of her evil little garden parties. Queen Marie gave your mother a nasty look. And one of those big...wooden...plants, one of those, you know...

HUMMUS *(quietly)*. Trees? *(SIMON and SIEGFRIED look nervously at HUMMUS.)*

KING. Yes. It fell and crushed her flat.

SIEGFRIED. We'll get Queen Marie, Father.

HUMMUS. Yeah.

*(FRANNIE enters, disguised as a soldier.)*

SIMON. But how, if she can kill you just by looking at you?

KING. Use extreme force. Show no mercy. Burn everything. *(Pause.)* And don't let her look at you. *(The PRINCES are satisfied with this answer. They study the map.)* And when you kill Queen Marie, make it by some especially horrible method. As horrible as being crushed under a large... wooden...plant.

FRANNIE. Excuse me, Your Majesty.

SIEGFRIED. We're busy, Soldier.

KING. Maybe you could burn her alive. Or chop her into little pieces. Or fire her out of a cannon onto the field of battle.

FRANNIE. Could I have a word with you? It's urgent!

KING (*angry*). Who dares to interrupt me?

HUMMUS. Yeah. You've got a strange voice for a soldier. Who are you? (*FRANNIE removes her hat.*)

PRINCES and KING (*gasp*). A woman! (*PRINCES draw weapons.*)

FRANNIE. My name is Frannie.

SIMON. Women are not allowed here! (*To KING.*) She could be one of Queen Marie's spies!

SIEGFRIED (*to KING*). Can I kill her?

FRANNIE. Your Majesty, I come from the town of Theblot—

KING. Theblot? Never heard of it. Where is it? (*To SIMON.*) Is it on that map?

SIMON (*finding it on the map*). It's a peasant village. We captured it from Queen Marie a few weeks ago. We burned it.

HUMMUS. Peasants aren't allowed here, either.

SIEGFRIED (*to KING*). Can I kill her?

FRANNIE. Your Majesty, the war has nearly ruined Theblot. That's why I'm here. We want you to stop the war. (*Confusion follows.*)

KING. What?

SIMON. She's insane.

SIEGFRIED (*to KING*). Can I kill her now? (*KING gestures to HUMMUS. HUMMUS frisks FRANNIE for weapons.*)

KING. Why would anyone want to stop the war? War is good for people. War gives people a sense of purpose, of duty, of honor. War makes people feel good. People like war. I'm sure the people of Theblot don't really want to stop the war.

HUMMUS. Yeah.

FRANNIE. Your Majesty, the people of Theblot are dying from the war. Do you know what we're eating? (*Reaches into her pocket and pulls out a brown gob of goo.*) After your army conquered Theblot, they set our crops on fire. Then took all our food from us. All we have left to eat is mud, dried leaves, and bugs. Have you ever tried eating mud, dried leaves, and bugs? (*She holds it up to KING.*)

KING. The king does not eat that. (*FRANNIE offers the gob of brown goo to SIEGFRIED.*)

SIEGFRIED. Can I kill her now?

SIMON. There's actually a lot of nutrition in mud, dried leaves, and bugs. A person could survive on that indefinitely. (*FRANNIE offers the goo to SIMON.*) That is, a peasant could. (*FRANNIE offers the goo to HUMMUS.*)

HUMMUS. I have a sensitive stomach.

FRANNIE. If we had a choice, we wouldn't eat it either. But we're starving to death. And half the town is sick with the spots. My mother is dying. We don't know what to do, Your Majesty. We need food.

SIMON. Why don't you just purchase some food?

SIEGFRIED. Or take some from somebody else?

HUMMUS. Or borrow some food from a neighbor?

FRANNIE. All the food is gone. We can't buy it or borrow it or take it. There's nobody we can ask for help. Your Majesty, you have to stop the war.

KING. That's completely ridiculous. Sons, kill this woman! (*The PRINCES close in on FRANNIE.*)

SIEGFRIED. You can't stop the war. There's more land to conquer.

SIMON. The war takes priority over everything.

HUMMUS. War is a beautiful thing.

*(Suddenly: thunder, lightning, explosions, darkness, then light. PROPHETESS appears in a puff of smoke. She points a magic rod into the air. FRANNIE manages to wriggle away from the PRINCES and watches from a distance.)*

HUMMUS. Wow!

SIEGFRIED and SIMON. Another woman! *(The PRINCES draw weapons.)*

PROPHETESS. I am the prophetess! The moon is falling out of the sky!

SIMON. Women are not allowed here!

SIEGFRIED *(to KING)*. Can I kill them both?

PROPHETESS. Listen. The moon is falling out of the sky!

HUMMUS. What is she talking about?

KING. Sons, kill these women! *(The PRINCES close in on the PROPHETESS and FRANNIE.)*

PROPHETESS. Look! *(She points at the moon. Everybody looks. It drops a few inches. Everybody gasps.)*

KING. What's going on here? Is this some kind of trick?

PROPHETESS. The moon is falling. I must take you to see the great Moon Minion immediately!

KING. Who?

PROPHETESS. The Moon Minion. She communicates with the moon.

SIEGFRIED. Why do you want us?

PROPHETESS. Because the moon has asked to speak to you. *(Terror. They look at her.)*

SIMON. Wait a minute. The moon's just a big lump of rock.

HUMMUS. Yeah.

PROPHETESS. There is no time to argue. You must come with me.

KING. We're not going anywhere.

PROPHETESS. Look! *(She points at the moon. Everybody looks. It drops a few inches. Everybody gasps.)*

HUMMUS. It'll kill us all!

SIMON. How can we stop it?

PROPHETESS. You must see the Moon Minion and speak with the moon. Come with me. *(PROPHETESS extends her hand to KING.)*

KING. I need time to think!

*(CAPTAIN rushes in, kneels.)*

CAPTAIN. Your Majesty! Princes! I have news!

SIEGFRIED. What is it, Soldier?

CAPTAIN. The moon is falling!

PRINCES. We know that!

CAPTAIN. Wait. There's more. Peasants are surrounding the castle. They're upset about the moon. We're trying to hold them off, but the troops are starting to break ranks. They want to be at home with their families when the moon falls. What should we do?

KING *(thinking)*. Hmm...

PROPHETESS. You must come with me! It is the only way to stop the moon.

KING. I'm trying to think! Sons...

SIEGFRIED *(decisively)*. Tell the men that all deserters will be executed. Then order them to fire their weapons into the crowd to quiet the mob.

FRANNIE. You can't do that!

SIEGFRIED. Who's going to stop us?

FRANNIE. It isn't right!

SIEGFRIED. Those are your orders, Captain.

CAPTAIN. Yes, sir. (*Exits. FRANNIE follows him to the exit, and watches out the door. The noise of the crowd outside filters in: clanging, screaming, chanting, gunshots.*)

PROPHETESS. We must go before it is too late!

KING. This is absurd.

PROPHETESS. Are you coming?

KING. No!

PROPHETESS. This will be easier if you cooperate.

KING. I'm not going anywhere. (*PROPHETESS zaps KING. He falls out of the throne, unconscious.*)

HUMMUS. Father! (*HUMMUS and SIMON run to the fallen KING.*)

SIEGFRIED (*drawing a weapon*). You'll pay for that, Witch! (*PROPHETESS zaps SIEGFRIED's hand. It stings. He drops the weapon. Immediately he draws another.*)

PROPHETESS (*ready to zap*). Must I do that again? (*SIEGFRIED sheathes/holsters his weapon. SIMON kneels by the KING.*)

SIMON. He's alive!

PROPHETESS. We have to go now! There is little time!

HUMMUS. But we can't just leave our father!

PROPHETESS. No. We will bring him with us. But we must go now. (*Pause.*)

HUMMUS. I think we'd better go with her.

SIEGFRIED. But that witch just shot our father!

SIMON. Siegfried, we have to stop the moon. Do you know how much it weighs? It could blast the earth into tiny bits!

PROPHETESS. Now. Form a circle around the king. (*PRINCES begin to do so. FRANNIE sneaks over and gets in the circle, between SIMON and PROPHETESS.*) Hold hands, everyone. (*Notices FRANNIE sitting next to her in the circle.*) Who are you?

FRANNIE (*caught*). I'm Frannie. From Theblot. I want to help.

PROPHETESS. Theblot? Interesting. (*Thinks, looking at FRANNIE, then:*) Yes. You could be useful.

FRANNIE (*surprised*). Then I can go?

PROPHETESS. Yes. Everyone, hold hands! (*SIMON, who is sitting next to FRANNIE in the circle, will not hold her hand.*) Everyone, Prince! (*SIMON reluctantly takes FRANNIE's hand.*) Moon, make it so! (*Thunder, lightning, explosions. Blackout.*)

## SCENE TWO

SCENE: *A witches' cave.*

AT RISE: *The MOON MINION stands, a cyborg: half human, half machine. MINION attempts to psychically contact the PROPHETESS. She pushes buttons and turns dials on her machine parts.*

MINION. Prophetess. Come in, Prophetess. Can you hear me, Prophetess? Do you have the king and his sons? Are you there, Prophetess? (*Pause.*) Nothing.

(*PEASANT 1 and PEASANT 2 burst in.*)

PEASANT 1 and PEASANT 2. Minion!

PEASANT 2. The moon is falling!

PEASANT 1. We need your help!

MINION. I know. I know. I know all about it. I'm worried sick about it. We're doing everything we can. We're working on it.

PEASANT 1. Can we do anything?

MINION. It's all in the Prophetess's hands right now. She's the only one who can do anything right now.

PEASANT 2. There's nothing we can do?

MINION. Try and think happy thoughts. Yes. That might help. *(Pause.)* Or it might not. *(Trying to contact PROPHETESS again.)* Prophetess. Come in, Prophetess. Please come in, Prophetess. *(Waits, then:)* Nothing.

PEASANT 1. Minion. I hate to bother you at a time like this. But the village is very hungry. Our food supplies are running low. We're down to two bugs a day. If the moon doesn't kill us, we'll die of starvation!

MINION *(points)*. There's some bread over there in a basket.

PEASANT 2 *(moving to the basket)*. I haven't seen bread in so long. And such nice bread, too.

MINION. I'm so tense. I can't possibly eat. My stomach is in knots. Take the bread to the village and feed as many people as you can.

PEASANT 1 and PEASANT 2. Thank you, Minion.

MINION. That's all I can do for now. Come back later, after the moon stops, and I'll see what I can do. I want to help you. But I'm too busy right now. I have to stop the moon.

*(PEASANT 1 picks up the bread. Thunder, lightning, explosions, darkness, then light. PROPHETESS, FRANNIE, PRINCES and KING appear, in a puff of smoke, holding hands in a circle.)*

HUMMUS. Wow! *(They break the circle. PRINCES and FRANNIE begin to look around. PEASANT watches the PRINCES.)*

SIMON. Where are we?

MINION. Prophetess, where have you been? I've been trying to reach you for hours! Did everything go as planned? What happened to the king? Is he okay?

PROPHETESS. He was resistant. I had to zap him. He will be unconscious for some time.

MINION. We can't wait. I have to contact the moon now. Help me. Hurry. *(PROPHETESS helps MINION with her machine parts.)*

SIMON. Are we underground?

PROPHETESS. You are in our secret cave, Princes. Touch nothing!

HUMMUS *(to MINION and PROPHETESS)*. What do you want us to do?

MINION. Be patient, Prince. I am preparing to contact the moon. Be patient.

PEASANT 2 *(recognition)*. You're the princes! *(To SIEGFRIED.)* Your shoes are so nice. I've never seen shoes like that. They're so shiny and smooth...May I touch your shoes?

SIEGFRIED. Touch me and I'll kill you. *(PEASANT 2 backs away and bumps into HUMMUS.)*

HUMMUS. How dare you bump into me! This is a brand new uniform! *(PEASANT 2 backs away. HUMMUS brushes himself off. PEASANT 2 gets in SIMON's way.)*

SIMON. Out of my way, Peasant! *(PEASANT 2 runs away, and trips, falling. PEASANT 1 runs to his aid. FRANNIE approaches.)*

PEASANT 1 *(to FRANNIE)*. Please don't hurt us. We didn't mean to get in the way.