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Dramatic Publishing



A Christmas Musical

CHRISTMAS IN THE LAND OF OZ

By Ruth F. Perry
With Acknowledgements
To L. Frank Baum
For Background Information
About the Land of
Oz and Its Inhabitants



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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CHRISTMAS IN THE LAND OF OZ

A Play in One Act

For six men, seven women and extras

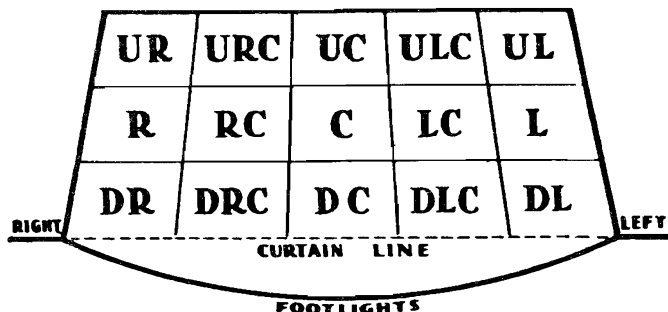
CHARACTERS

DOROTHY herself
UNCLE HENRY a Kansas farmer
AUNT EM his wife
TOTO himself
VERDA a girl announcer of Oz
GILDA of the Palace Staff
GUARD WITH GREEN WHISKERS. of the Palace Staff
 sometimes referred to as Guard
 and sometimes as Guard W.G.W.
SCARECROW King of The Emerald City
TIN WOODMAN King of the Winkies
COWARDLY LION. King of the Forest
WESTA Winkie Bowgirls and
WOTANA guards to King Tin Woodman
GLINDA THE GOOD. Witch of the South
WELDER of Oz
TWO WINGED MONKEYS themselves

TIME: The present.

PLACE: Kansas and Oz.

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: UR for *up right*, RC for *right center*, DLC for *down left center*, etc. A territory designated on the stage refers to a general area, 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.

CHRISTMAS IN THE LAND OF OZ

Scene 1

SCENE: The yard of Dorothy's farm home in Kansas. Lights down to pre-dawn and brightening. Before or on the curtains is a crude sketch of a one-room farm home with a practical section of porch. Downstage is a low rickety bench, nearby a bit of tattered rag rug that seems to belong to TOTO. Also a battered pie tin for water. Somewhere a rooster crows and the light increases. A fragment of a lark's song drifts down from above.

TOTO (barks impatiently offstage). Arf! Arf!
(He enters DR, crosses to the pie tin and looks into it hopefully. It's empty.) Wah-ter!
Wah-ter!

(DOROTHY enters porch via curtains C, her feet bare, carrying a pair of worn socks and sneakers. She comes forward, crossing the porch and pauses facing front, looks up at the sky, drops her burden, stretches up her arms in sheer delight.)

DOROTHY. Kansas! I love you! You're so beautiful! Look, Toto! The sky's just like a great big shining blue oatmeal bowl!

TOTO (coming a little nearer, glances doubtfully at the sky). It's O-kay! (Trots back to his pie tin, inspects it again. He glances at Dorothy and barks sharply.) Wah-ter!

DOROTHY. I know, Toto. You're thirsty. So am I.

But Aunt Em's gone for water. She'll be back soon. (Crosses to bench with her shoes and socks and sits down. The shoes are outgrown and she has a tussel getting them on. TOTO sprawls nearby on his rug and begins to play with a roughly rounded stone. He pats it with one paw, it moves and TOTO alerts.)

TOTO (barks). Got you, Mouse! (He pats it with his other paw. It moves again and he hunches nearer.)

(AUNT EM enters R. She carries two mismatched pails of water. TOTO races to her and crowds against her.)

TOTO. Arf! Arf!

AUNT EM. Down Toto! Just a minute! (He is trying to lap water from one of the pails. She puts down one pail and pours a little from the other into his pie tin.) There! Wouldn't you know! (For TOTO has jostled her arm and forced her to spill a little. She stands rubbing her arms and stretching them, and sees DOROTHY loitering over her sneakers.) Hurry up, Dorothy. Your breakfast'll be getting cold.

DOROTHY (pausing between sneakers). It's too hard for you to carry water all the way from the spring, Aunt Em. Why don't we get our water like we used to, right in the house?

AUNT EM (shaking her head hopelessly). We have to be patient. Your Uncle Henry'll buy us a pump soon's he gets a little ahead on the house. We all wish we had back our old cistern pump the cyclone carried away. But what with one dust storm after another, likely there's no water left in the ground even if we had it.

DOROTHY. The spring's still running.

AUNT EM. Not like it used to and the pasture's dry and brown. There's hardly any fodder for the cattle.

DOROTHY. But way last spring Uncle Henry said we'd soon be getting a new pump and now it's almost Christmas and we haven't even got a tree!

AUNT EM (with forced cheerfulness). There's still time to think about Christmas trees. Soon's your uncle's well and we get some rain, things'll be different. I saw a cloud in the sky only yesterday -- but it was just another dust storm.

DOROTHY. What's the matter with Uncle Henry, anyway? He lies on the bed so much. Why doesn't he get well?

AUNT EM. I think the heart's gone out of your Uncle Henry. I noticed it first when the cows began to die off. Last night, when Bluebell died there were tears in your uncle's eyes. He was so proud of her being a Jersey and such a good milker. If only we'd get a little rain now and then so there'd be grass for the cattle -- you'd see. He'd soon be himself again.

DOROTHY (excited). But that's what happened to the Tin Woodman! He lost his heart. But he got a new one from the Wizard and then he was happy again and as strong as ever.

AUNT EM (patiently). I know. (She's heard all this before.)

DOROTHY. Maybe we could go to Omaha and find the Wizard. Maybe he'd give Uncle Henry a new heart. Couldn't we do that? Couldn't we at least try?

AUNT EM. Omaha!

DOROTHY. Omaha is where he was born and he said that's where he was going. Is Omaha so

far away? After all, Toto and I got to Oz and that's much farther away than Omaha.

AUNT EM. Lots of things happened during the cyclone -- try not to think about Oz so much, Dorothy.

TOTO (listening with head cocked, doubtfully). Arf!

DOROTHY (troubled). But Toto and I did go to Oz and everything happened just as I said!

AUNT EM. Yes, yes, of course it did. But even if we were in Omaha right this minute, where would we look for the Wizard? Omaha's a big city. Probably it's one of the biggest in the world. Maybe the Wizard isn't even there any more. It's been more than a year.

DOROTHY (discouraged). He did say something about joining the circus again. If he's done that, he might be anywhere. (She drops down on the bench again, her head in her hands.) It's a good thing the Tin Woodman isn't here. He'd weep so much all the oil in the world wouldn't clear away the rust!

AUNT EM (thoughtfully). Seems to me the other feller'd be the one to ask. Him the Wizard left in charge at Emerald City when he went away. The one that got all the brains. There must be some reason Henry 'n I can't seem to make ends meet 'n grow enough grass for our stock and even get a few fixings for Christmas. He'd be the one to ask, not the Wizard.

DOROTHY (brightening and speaking decisively). Right, Aunt Em! The Scarecrow's the one to ask. Besides, he likes to help people. Toto 'n I'll start right away for the Emerald City.

AUNT EM (dreamily). I saw an emerald once at a party. It was the day I first met your Uncle Henry 'n I was wearing a green dress. I must've

been about seventeen.

DOROTHY. What was the emerald like? I never noticed them much in the Emerald City except that they were green and sparkled a lot.

AUNT EM (still dreamily). They're the greenest green there is. Like all the first grass 'n early leaves of spring melted down into one little trembling square of green light.

DOROTHY. Light?

AUNT EM. The light's inside the emerald. It sort of splashes out at the edges.

DOROTHY (warmly). I'd like to get you an emerald, Aunt Em. I could've brought you one from Oz. They were lying around all over.

AUNT EM (glancing down at her faded dress and clumsy shoes. She's out of the dream). No, no! Emeralds must be paid for. They cost a lot.

DOROTHY. How much?

AUNT EM (not sure). As much as ... maybe twenty dollars ...

DOROTHY (surprised). For just one teensy stone?

AUNT EM (nodding and turning to other matters). Yes, but right now you 'n Toto'd better eat your breakfast. I'll hotten the oatmeal. (Starts to pick up the pails but pauses to ask.) Just how do you plan to get back to Oz, Dorothy? Do you think another cyclone'll come along 'n hit you on the head like before?

DOROTHY. No. I'll have to find my magic silver slippers that brought me back from Oz. The ones I lost when I landed. It took the cyclone two days and a night to get me to Oz and even then I had to find the yellow brick road and walk ever so far to get to the Emerald City. But it only took the silver slippers the wink of

an eye to get me back. That's what the kind witch Glinda said when she gave them to me: "Tell them where you want to go and they'll get you there in the wink of an eye."

AUNT EM. They've got to be somewhere. Can you remember when you last had them on?

DOROTHY (frowning with the effort to remember). We were almost home when the first slipper fell off, because I could see the barn. We were slowing down and getting lower. Then the wind began blowing hard and the other slipper came off and I could see Uncle Henry milking Bluebell. I ran to him right away.

AUNT EM (happily). And Henry shouted to me: "Dorothy's back! She's home!" and I came running out of the house ---

DOROTHY. And I forgot to look for the slippers until the next day and, by then, we couldn't find them! Not anywhere.

TOTO (has come nearer. He is looking earnestly up into their faces. He seems puzzled.) Arf? Arf?

AUNT EM. Then the slippers aren't together? You'll have to find TWO of them.

TOTO (crosses to DOROTHY and looks pointedly at her sneakers). Arf? Arf?

DOROTHY (absently). No, Toto. My sneakers won't do. It's got to be the magic silver slippers. You remember them!

TOTO (gives a comprehending) Arf! (He gets the idea and trots away wagging his tail and exiting L.)

AUNT EM (fondly, looking after him). You'd almost say Toto understands every word we say.

DOROTHY (earnestly). Oh, he does.

TOTO (excitedly). ARF! ARF! ARF! ARF!

DOROTHY. Hear him Aunt Em? He's found something.

AUNT EM. A field mouse probably.

TOTO (sharply and nearer). ARF! ARF!!

(Enter TOTO. He trots in with a silver slipper in his mouth.)

AUNT EM (almost screaming). Toto! You've found the silver slippers!

DOROTHY (hugging TOTO and taking the slipper, examines it and kisses it). Yes! It's my own darling, darling, wonderful slipper. (Kisses it again.) But where's the other, Toto? One slipper's no good without the other. (Urges him L.) Come on. Show us where you found it. (TOTO tries to go R. DOROTHY half pulls, half drags him L. TOTO escapes and runs a few steps R, pauses and barks. DOROTHY goes after him, collars him and tries to pull him L. He resists, setting his jaw and hanging back.) Come on! You must find the other slipper. Like this. (She thrusts out one foot, then the other pointing to each.) One -- two. (Points to silver slipper.) Where? (TOTO seems baffled.)

AUNT EM. You can't expect too much of dumb animals, Dorothy. (DOROTHY pulls L and TOTO braces himself and pulls R, and then, with a sudden output of strength, he breaks free and races for the fence corner, and begins digging furiously.) He's after a field mouse.

DOROTHY (fondling the first slipper). If you'd only show me where you found it, Toto!

AUNT EM. When the good Lord called them dumb animals, He meant DUMB!

(UNCLE HENRY enters C.)

UNCLE HENRY. What kep' you all this time, Em?
AUNT EM (worried). You look bad, Henry. Has something else happened?

UNCLE HENRY. I just buried Bluebell. I dug her grave down by the willows where she liked to rest. (Turns aside sadly.)

AUNT EM (kindly). Bluebell had a good life. Come on and have breakfast, Henry. (Picks up pail.) I kept it hot on the back of the stove and I've brought fresh cool water. (She and UNCLE HENRY exit.)

DOROTHY. Come on, Toto. Let's eat breakfast.

TOTO (glances back at her, redoubles his efforts, glances back triumphantly). Wait! One Min-it! (TOTO yanks something from the ground under the brush.)

DOROTHY (alerting, for TOTO has the missing slipper in his mouth). Toto, you found it! You're just the smartest, dearest doggie in the entire world! (Takes the slipper and examines it, picking up the first slipper to be certain there's no mistake. She compares them delightedly.) There couldn't be two other magic slippers like them in the world. Now we can go back to Oz and find the Scarecrow! Maybe there'll still be time before Christmas. Only only only there was a magic spell I had to say, I can't remember just how it went. Something like this, (Standing on her left foot.) Ep - pe, pep - pe, ka - ke -- no, that was the charm for my golden cap. I wish I had it here. Let's see? First I put them on, of course. (Sits, pulls off a sneaker and puts on a slipper.) Why, it fits perfectly! My

sneakers're too tight! (Puts on other slipper, stretches out her feet delightedly.) They're very comfortable! But they don't feel one bit magical! Maybe -- the magic's all used up? Still, I don't see why it would be, do you, Toto?

TOTO (barks it). Try-them!

DOROTHY. There was something I did with my heels ... something about clapping them together? Toto, come here and watch in case I do it wrong. (TOTO comes closer and watches alertly, head cocked.) It's all coming back to me. Glinda said first tell the slippers where I want to go. That's easy. (Speaks firmly to the slippers.) Silver Slippers, take me to the throne room in the Emerald City, please.

TOTO (anxiously). Care-ful!

DOROTHY. Don't worry, Toto. We're not ready to start yet, I'm just practicing. And then Glinda said to clap my heels together and take the FIRST STEP. You have to do that three times. Now we'll test to see if the magic is still on. (Toes in, heels wide, she claps her heels together and takes one step forward.) One! Oh, Toto it's working! I felt a sort of ZING in the slippers when I took the First Step. The First Step is very important, Toto, if you ever expect to get anything done. You mustn't wait too long to take it. Remember that.

TOTO (watching intently, barks agreement). Right! Right!

DOROTHY. Now just once more -- to be sure -- (Toes in again; claps her heels and steps forward.) Two! (If convenient the lights go down as if under a heavy power drain. A low hum and a wind effect begin. TOTO growls. He

tries to put a paw over her mouth, starts to back away and growls again. DOROTHY, excited, grabs him by his collar.) Hush, Toto! Just once more! (Toes in, claps her heels and steps forward the third time.) Three! (The lights flicker feebly and go out in a complete blackout. There is a sharp crack and the wind increases. TOTO howls in terror. The lights flicker on and off, then there is complete silence. DOROTHY and TOTO exit during blackout and all stage properties are removed except the porch which now serves as the base of the throne of Oz and the fence corner which now is completely covered by signs. Every trace of Kansas is gone.)

AUNT EM (in panic calls through the blackout). Dorothy! Dorothy, where are you? (Her voice trails off in despair.) Dorothy?