

## **ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

**Copyright Protection.** This play (the “Play”) is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, and the Berne Convention.

**Reservation of Rights.** All rights to this Play are strictly reserved, including, without limitation, professional and amateur stage performance rights; motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video, and sound recording rights; rights to all other forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction now known or yet to be invented, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, photocopying, and information storage and retrieval systems; and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

**Performance Licensing and Royalty Payments.** Amateur and stock performance rights to this Play are controlled exclusively by Playscripts, Inc. (“Playscripts”). No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this Play without obtaining advance written permission from Playscripts. Required royalty fees for performing this Play are specified online at the Playscripts website ([www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)). Such royalty fees may be subject to change without notice. Although this book may have been obtained for a particular licensed performance, such performance rights, if any, are not transferable. Required royalties must be paid every time the Play is performed before any audience, whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. All licensing requests and inquiries concerning amateur and stock performance rights should be addressed to Playscripts (see contact information on opposite page).

Inquiries concerning all other rights should be addressed to Playscripts, as well; such inquiries will be communicated to the author and the author's agent, as applicable.

**Restriction of Alterations.** There shall be no deletions, alterations, or changes of any kind made to the Play, including the changing of character gender, the cutting of dialogue, or the alteration of objectionable language, unless directly authorized by Playscripts. The title of the Play shall not be altered.

**Author Credit.** Any individual or group receiving permission to produce this Play is required to give credit to the author as the sole and exclusive author of the Play. This obligation applies to the title page of every program distributed in connection with performances of the Play, and in any instance that the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing, or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and of a font size at least 50% as large as the largest letter used in the title of the Play. No person, firm, or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the author. The name of the author may not be abbreviated or otherwise altered from the form in which it appears in this Play.

**Publisher Attribution.** All programs, advertisements, and other printed material distributed or published in connection with the amateur or stock production of the Play shall include the following notice:

**Produced by special arrangement with Playscripts, Inc.  
([www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com))**

**Prohibition of Unauthorized Copying.** Any unauthorized copying of this book or excerpts from this book is strictly forbidden by law. Except as otherwise permitted by applicable law, no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including, without limitation, photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Playscripts.

**Statement of Non-affiliation.** This Play may include references to brand names and trademarks owned by third parties, and may include references to public figures. Playscripts is not necessarily affiliated with these public figures, or with the owners of such trademarks and brand names. Such references are included solely for parody, political comment, or other permitted purposes.

**Permissions for Sound Recordings and Musical Works.** This Play may contain directions calling for the performance of a portion, or all, of a musical work, or performance of a sound recording of a musical work. Playscripts has not obtained permissions to perform such works. The producer of this Play is advised to obtain such permissions, if required in the context of the production. The producer is directed to the websites of the U.S. Copyright Office ([www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov)), ASCAP ([www.ascap.com](http://www.ascap.com)), BMI ([www.bmi.com](http://www.bmi.com)), and NMPA ([www.nmpa.org](http://www.nmpa.org)) for further information on the need to obtain permissions, and on procedures for obtaining such permissions.

## The Rules in Brief

- 1) Do NOT perform this Play without obtaining prior permission from Playscripts, and without paying the required royalty.
- 2) Do NOT photocopy, scan, or otherwise duplicate any part of this book.
- 3) Do NOT alter the text of the Play, change a character's gender, delete any dialogue, or alter any objectionable language, unless explicitly authorized by Playscripts.
- 4) DO provide the required credit to the author and the required attribution to Playscripts in all programs and promotional literature associated with any performance of this Play.

*For more details on these and other rules, see the opposite page.*

## Copyright Basics

This Play is protected by United States and international copyright law. These laws ensure that playwrights are rewarded for creating new and vital dramatic work, and protect them against theft and abuse of their work.

A play is a piece of property, fully owned by the playwright, just like a house or car. You must obtain permission to use this property, and must pay a royalty fee for the privilege—*whether or not you charge an admission fee*. Playscripts collects these required payments on behalf of the author.

**Anyone who violates an author's copyright is liable as a copyright infringer under United States and international law.** Playscripts and the author are entitled to institute legal action for any such infringement, which can subject the infringer to actual damages, statutory damages, and attorneys' fees. A court may impose statutory damages of up to \$150,000 for willful copyright infringements. U.S. copyright law also provides for possible criminal sanctions. Visit the website of the U.S. Copyright Office ([www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov)) for more information.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:** If you break copyright law, you are robbing a playwright and opening yourself to expensive legal action. Follow the rules, and when in doubt, ask us.

Playscripts, Inc.  
325 W. 38<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 305  
New York, NY 10018

Phone: 1-866-NEW-PLAY (639-7529)  
Email: [info@playscripts.com](mailto:info@playscripts.com)  
Web: [www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)

## **Cast of Characters**

THE VELVETEEN RABBIT, childlike, open to the world, genuine and naturally shy

THE BOY, an energetic and loving child, lives in the present

THE SKIN HORSE, a sage, old toy

NANA, ruler of the nursery; firm, but cares deeply for The Boy

THE MODEL BOAT(CAPTAIN), a pompous seaman (A sloop)

TIMOTHY THE TIN SOLDIER, a wind up toy who puts on airs

DANCING RABBITS 1 & 2, sleek and proud; show-offs

DOCTOR, a knowledgeable man

WILD RABBITS 1 & 2, real rabbits

### *Suggested Cast Breakdown:*

Actor 1: The Velveteen Rabbit

Actor 2: The Boy

Actor 3: The Skin Horse, Dancing Rabbit 1, Wild Rabbit

Actor 4: The Model Boat, Dancing Rabbit 2, Doctor, Wild Rabbit

Actor 5: Timothy the Tin Soldier, Nana, Wild Rabbit

## **Production Notes**

There should be a difference in the nursery when the toys are alone, compared to when people are present. When people are in the room the toys are still and dull eyed and must be moved around the room, the lighting should be realistic. When the toys are alone, the light is warm; the toys are fully animated and mobile. Perhaps there is a magical sound that transforms the room when a person enters or exits.

## Acknowledgments

*The Velveteen Rabbit* was originally produced by Lifeline Theatre in Chicago on December 16, 2006, with the following cast and crew:

THE VELVETEEN RABBIT ..... Cheryl Golemo  
THE BOY..... Brian Plocharczyk  
THE SKIN HORSE..... Paul Myers  
NANY / TOY SOLDIER.....Alice Pacyga  
MODEL BOAT / DOCTOR .....Hanlon Smith-Dorsey  
  
Director..... Jenifer Tyler  
Assistant Director .....Peter Greenberg  
Stage Manager .....Kaitlyn Talmage-Bowers  
Scenic / Props Designer.....Rebecca Hamlin  
Costumer Designer ..... Elizabeth Powell Wislar  
Lighting Design..... Kevin Gawley  
Original Music / Sound Design ..... Victoria DeIorio  
Technical Director..... Charlie “Ziggy” Olson  
Production Manager..... Cortney Hurley

All production groups performing this play are required to include the following credits on the title page of every program:

*The Velveteen Rabbit* was originally produced by Lifeline Theatre in Chicago, and premiered there in 2006.

# THE VELVETEEN RABBIT

by Elise Kauzlaric

BASED ON THE STORY BY MARGERY WILLIAMS

## Scene 1a: Christmas Morning: An Intruder

*(The scene opens on the nursery. The sun is just coming up. We see NANA putting a bow on a surprise package in the corner of the room; she sneaks quietly out of the nursery.)*

*(Many toys fill the nursery; among them are THE SKIN HORSE and THE MODEL BOAT. TIMOTHY THE TIN SOLDIER is put away in a cupboard. THE SKIN HORSE sits in a place of honor, more a museum piece than a toy to be played with. THE BOAT has been tossed to his place as if he just finished a “battle.” The toys look a bit worse for the wear.)*

*(THE BOY is asleep in bed, his China Dog is with him. Sounds of Christmas merriment are heard offstage. THE BOY wakes.)*

**THE BOY.** Christmas!

*(THE BOY runs to the nursery door and peeks out in the hall to see if the coast is clear. He creeps out of sight, heading downstairs. A moment later he runs back into the room discovered.)*

**NANA.** *(Offstage:)* Now, now. Back upstairs with you. You don't want to spoil your Uncle's Christmas surprise, do you?

**THE BOY.** But, Nana. I'm so excited! Can't I come down now?

**NANA.** *(Offstage:)* Soon, soon. We're almost ready for you.

*(THE BOY runs about playing with THE MODEL BOAT and TIMOTHY.)*

**THE BOY.** Wake up, Model Boat. It's Christmas morning!

*(He roughly knocks THE MODEL BOAT about. Then, he makes a bugle noise of reveille.)*

Up and at 'em, Lieutenant Timothy.

*(He swiftly moves TIMOTHY into attention and winds him up.)*

Don't you know it's Christmas morning, soldier? *(As TIMOTHY:)* Sir, yes, sir! *(As himself:)* Well let's get a move on and find out what's under that tree.

*(THE BOY lets TIMOTHY go from his winding.)*

Hup, two, three, four. Hup, two, three, four.

*(TIMOTHY can no longer walk in a straight line and slams into THE BOAT.)*

Alright, Lieutenant. Now I'm counting on you to get a look at my new toys. But Nana mustn't see you. You must take the hidden passage. *(As TIMOTHY:)* Yes, sir. *(As himself:)* God speed and quick return, Lieutenant.

*(He pushes TIMOTHY into the cupboard. He checks the hallway again.)*

**THE BOY.** Can I come down now, Nana!

**NANA.** *(From offstage:)* Not quite yet.

**THE BOY.** Now, Captain. The sea is rough, but we've got to get to the new toys. Do you think you can make it across? *(As MODEL BOAT:)* Aye, aye, sir. *(THE BOY acts out THE BOAT crossing the rough ocean complete with sounds of thunder and roaring waves.)* There she blows! *(Woosh.)* The waves are treacherous, but we've got to get to those presents. Batten down the hatches! *(Woosh, woosh.)* Ahhh! Look out for those rocks!

*(An eruption of welcomes is heard offstage.)*

**UNCLE ALBERT** *(Offstage:)* Now where has my nephew got to? Certainly he hasn't forgotten about Christmas.

**THE BOY.** No, no. I'm up here, Uncle! I haven't forgotten. Nana, please, can I come down now? Please!

**NANA.** *(Entering:)* Patience, patience.

**THE BOY.** Is everyone ready? Can we go and see?

**NANA.** Yes, yes, everyone's here and waiting. Your uncle has quite a shiny package for you! That'll be something exciting, I expect.

**THE BOY.** Oh, Nana! What do you think it is? A bicycle? Oh, I hope it's a bicycle.

**NANA.** Well, we'll just have to go see, won't we? Come along!

*(She exits.)*

**THE BOY.** *(Following her out:)* Oh, I'm sure it's a bicycle. Uncle Albert! Merry Christmas, Uncle.

**UNCLE.** *(Offstage sound cue:)* Well, there's my favorite nephew!

*(Offstage the sounds of festivities continue and fade. Music, lights. A change comes over the nursery.)*

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

The cock doth crow  
To let you know,  
If you be wise,  
'Tis time to rise.

**THE MODEL BOAT.** *(Moaning, while putting himself upright:)* Well... My stern has seen better days. This is how my mast broke in the first place. Why does it always have to be a *rough* sea? Why not a peaceful lake? Or a nice pond...with goldfish. *(Moan.)*

**TIMOTHY.** *(Emerging from the cupboard:)* Why does he always call me Lieutenant? Really! I've been a Major since before he was born. *(Moan.)* I really felt a spring come loose that time. *(Moan.)* Oh, yes. There it is. Must he wind me up so tightly? *(Whining:)* And my sword is broken!

**THE SKIN HORSE.** He's just a child. He doesn't know any better.

**TIMOTHY.** Easy for you to say! *(Mumbling to BOAT:)* Sitting at ease on his pedestal all day.

**THE MODEL BOAT.** Beggin' your pardon, Skin Horse, but you don't know what it's like. Pointy masts and rudders don't come to as nice a stop as little...rolly wheels.

**THE SKIN HORSE.** You're quite right.

**TIMOTHY.** Well...I expect that will be the last action we see for some time. He'll be too busy with the *new* recruits. I only hope

Nana doesn't notice my sword. You know how she likes to "clean out" after birthdays and holidays.

**MODEL BOAT.** Buck up, man! We're not that far gone! *(Sotto voce:)* If old shabby over there can last from generation to generation, surely we can make it more than two Christmases.

**TIMOTHY.** You're right. Of course, you're right.

**MODEL BOAT.** I say! Have you noticed that bundle over yonder? Looks suspiciously festive, don't you think?

**TIMOTHY.** Ah! Affirmative. An intruder at ten o'clock.

**MODEL BOAT.** Well, let's have a look, man.

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

Hark, hark, the dogs do bark  
The beggars are coming to town  
Some in rags and some in jags  
And one in a velvet gown

**THE MODEL BOAT.** What's he blubberin' on about?

**TIMOTHY.** Something about velvet? Oh, never mind him. Eyes on target.

*(They slowly approach the bundle.)*

Watch your back! You remember the incident with the kitten.

*(The two toys reach the bundle and reveal a splendid, oversized stocking full of chocolate, oranges, and other goodies—in the center is a beautiful velveteen rabbit with pink sateen ears, a sprig of holly between her paws and a beautiful bow tied around her neck.)*

**MODEL BOAT.** Hmmm. It's a...bunny.

**TIMOTHY.** Confirmed. A bunny...

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Hello.

**MODEL BOAT.** Yes... Ahoy, there.

*(They start to laugh.)*

**TIMOTHY.** A bunny! And you were worried!

**THE MODEL BOAT.** Shiver me timbers!

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Excuse me. But why are you laughing?

**TIMOTHY.** Why she's nothing but a stuffed rabbit.

**MODEL BOAT.** Where are her springs?

**TIMOTHY.** Her joints?

**MODEL BOAT.** Her mechanical whats-its?

*(Coming in close to THE BUNNY:)*

**MODEL BOAT & TIMOTHY.** What do you DO?

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I...I beg your pardon?

**TIMOTHY.** No medals, no badges. No accessories of any kind.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I have this sprig of holly.

**TIMOTHY.** Really! A sprig of holly. How impressive.

*(They erupt with laughter again.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Well, what do you do?

**TIMOTHY.** *(Composing himself:)* Ahem. I am Timothy. The Soldier. Major, to be precise. I have a wind up spring and can walk both to *and* fro all on my own.

**MODEL BOAT.** Walking in circles is more like it.

**TIMOTHY.** I have many decorative medals and badges.

**MODEL BOAT.** Oh, no Timothy. What's that on that badge there?

*(Pointing to Timothy's chest:)*

**TIMOTHY.** What?

*(He looks down.)*

**MODEL BOAT.** Doot!

*(He flicks him in the nose with his finger and laughs heartily.)*

**TIMOTHY.** *(Sotto voce:)* Would you stop that! Are you trying to make me look bad? And this is Model Boat.

**THE MODEL BOAT.** Ahoy, young bunny. Permission granted to call me Captain. A few ground rules, landlubber. My mast's not for climbing, my stay's not for plucking, I tend to drift to my starboard side so watch where you stand, and mind my rudder—I can't be looking around for little whipper-snappers loitering about my stern.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Um...very pleased to meet you. I'll...certainly try. *(To THE SKIN HORSE:)* And, who are you?

*(All eyes turn to THE SKIN HORSE.)*

**THE SKIN HORSE.** I am the Skin Horse.

*(Pause.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** *(Respectfully:)* I see.

*(A moment.)*

*(Whispering to MODEL BOAT:)* I beg your pardon, but what's a Skin Horse?

**MODEL BOAT.** Horse's Skin.

*(A blank look from THE BUNNY.)*

Why he's made of true Arabian horse hide!

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Really?

**TIMOTHY.** He belonged to The Boy's Uncle. He's an antique! Some think that's something special...fancy! Heaven knows why. Half the time I don't even know what he's talking about. They certainly don't make them like that anymore, and isn't it obvious why? His coat is bald in patches...and you can see the seams showing through underneath.

**THE SKIN HORSE.** And most of my tail has been pulled out to string bead necklaces.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh, excuse me. I didn't mean to whisper. I...

**THE BOY.** *(Offstage:)* Oh, thank you, Uncle Albert. I love it, I love it, I love it!

**TIMOTHY.** Take cover!

**MODEL BOAT.** As you were, man!

*(The toys hobble back to where THE BOY left them—TIMOTHY to the cupboard, BOAT to his wreckage.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** *(To THE SKIN HORSE:)* Medals? Masts? I didn't know I needed to bring anything along with me. I have nothing to show for myself.

**THE SKIN HORSE.** The Boy doesn't care about such things.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** What does he care about?

**THE BOY.** *(From offstage:)* Oh, Nana. Isn't it wonderful?

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** What games does he play? Does he like to read? What songs does he sing?

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

One to make ready,  
And two to prepare;  
Good luck to the rider,  
And away goes the mare!

*(The Nursery transforms.)*

### **Scene 1b: A Wonderful Bunny / Advice from the Toys**

**THE BOY.** *(Riding on a shiny new bicycle, ringing a bell as he goes:)* Look, Captain! Uncle Albert got me this bicycle. Isn't it the best thing you ever saw? *(He spies the stocking in the corner.)* Nana! Oh, Nana. My stocking! I missed my stocking! Come quick!

*(He starts to explore the contents of the stocking.)*

**NANA.** *(Offstage:)* I'm coming.

**THE BOY.** Hurry, Nana!

**NANA.** Here I am, child. Well. I was wondering when you'd notice your beautiful stocking.

**THE BOY.** *(Pulling THE BUNNY out of the stocking:)* Oh, Nana, look! Look at the wonderful Bunny!

**NANA.** Yes, yes. I see her.

**THE BOY.** (*Untying her bow, bouncing and spinning THE BUNNY around the room:*) Hello, Rabbit! Hello! Oh, Nana. I always wanted a Bunny just like this!

**NANA.** I seem to remember hearing that before about a toy soldier and a sailboat...

**THE BOY.** But look at her Nana. She's different. (*A moment.*) Hello. Oh! Isn't she the most wonderful Bunny you've ever seen?

**NANA.** Yes, yes. A wonderful bunny.

*(Goodbyes erupt offstage.)*

**UNCLE.** (*Offstage-sound cue:*) Where did my nephew get to?

**NANA.** (*As she exits:*) Come along now. Come say your goodbyes to your Uncle.

**THE BOY.** Here I am, Uncle Albert. Coming! (*Running off:*) Merry Christmas, Uncle! Thank you *so much* for the bicycle.

*(The nursery transforms again.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh, goodness! How did I do? Was I alright? Do you think he liked me?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** You made quite an impression.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** An impression! Oh, I do hope he comes back soon.

**MODEL BOAT.** I wouldn't hoist your sails so soon if I were you. He'll forget about you quickly enough.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Why...what do you mean?

**MODEL BOAT.** They lose interest very fast. That's the way children are. One day you're first prize in the lake races at the Sunday picnic, the next you're belly up...getting dry rot...in a puddle. Hmph! As I was saying, the boy likes excitement! Adventure!

**TIMOTHY.** (*Emerging from the cupboard:*) I doubt *very* much that the boy will ever play with you again. Why, you remind me of the toys I used to see in the nursery back when I was a Private. Simple.

Plain. Modern times call for modern toys. If you can't spin about or make noise, he won't find much use for you. And what are you, but bit of cloth stuffed with sawdust! (*To THE MODEL BOAT:*) Hardly fit to swab your deck. Ha-ha!

*(They continue to laugh as THE MODEL BOAT returns to his position, TIMOTHY to his cupboard.)*

**MODEL BOAT.** Ha-ha! Well done, sir.

**TIMOTHY.** Why, thank you. I thought so.

*(THE SKIN HORSE and THE VELVETEEN RABBIT are left alone.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Well. They certainly are splendid toys. I suppose I don't look like much next to them.

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

There was a man in our town,  
And he was wondrous wise;  
He jumped into a brier bush,  
And scratched out both his eyes

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I beg your pardon?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Those two may talk as if they are the most important toys in the nursery, but I've seen too many of their kind come and go to pay any attention to their boasting.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh, but they seem so wonderful!

**THE SKIN HORSE.** They may have gears and wheels and move about with little help from The Boy, but they also break their main-springs and pass away. In the end they are just toys and will never turn into anything else.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** But...aren't we all just toys?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** They are not REAL.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** REAL?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** The Boy's Uncle made me REAL. That was a great many years ago.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** What is REAL?

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

A wise old owl sat in an oak,  
The more he heard, the less he spoke;  
The less he spoke, the more he heard;  
Why aren't we all like that wise old bird?

*(Music up; lights fade and the scene transitions.)*

**Scene 2: First Night in Bed**

*(It is bedtime several days later. NANA enters like a "great wind" to "tidy" the nursery. THE BOY enters in his pajamas and searches through his toy chest, under his bed, etc.)*

**NANA.** Come, come. Time for bed.

**THE BOY.** Nana, have you seen my little china dog?

**NANA.** I haven't time to search for china dogs. Into bed with you.

**THE BOY.** But I always sleep with him. Nana, I can't go to bed without...

**NANA.** Here. Take your new bunny to bed. You've barely played with her since Christmas. She'll do to sleep with you.

*(She drags THE BUNNY out by the ear and gives him to THE BOY.)*

**THE BOY.** My Bunny! I'd forgotten! Hello, Bunny!

**NANA.** To bed, to bed!

*(She winds a music box and sings a lullaby to THE BOY as she tucks him into bed.)*

**THE BOY.** Goodnight, Nana.

**NANA.** Goodnight, my child.

*(Moonlight lights the nursery.)*

**THE BOY.** Here we are, Bunny. This is my bed. Now you sleep right... there. All tucked in! *(Yawning:)* Goodnight, Bunny.

---

*(He cuddles down to sleep. The nursery transforms. THE BUNNY looks over him. THE SKIN HORSE is on his pedestal.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh, look. Skin Horse! I get to sleep in The Boy's bed!

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Husssssh...

*(The music box plays.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Skin Horse?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Yes, little one.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Did you ever sleep in the Boy's Uncle's bed?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** I was his favorite toy. His prized toy. He loved me more than anything.

*(A moment passes, the music plays.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Skin Horse. What is REAL? Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Real isn't how you are made. It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real. once you are Real you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always.

*(THE BOY turns in bed and pins THE BUNNY slightly with his weight.)*

*(THE BOY smooshes her with a pillow.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Ooof! Skin Horse! Oh! Skin Horse!

**THE SKIN HORSE.** What is it, little one?

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh! Did the boy's uncle ever hold you so... *(He squeezes her.)* Doh!...tightly?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Just close your eyes.

*(THE BOY squeezes her again.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** *(Gasping a bit:)* Ahhhh! Oh, dear! I can scarcely breathe!

**THE SKIN HORSE.** There, there. Hush, little one.

*(In his sleep, THE BOY hugs THE BUNNY.)*

**THE BOY.** *(Yawning / half conscious:)* Bunny. Tomorrow, I'll show you all my favorite games. And... *(Yawn)* ...and we'll play all day long...

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh! Skin Horse! Did you hear?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Shhh... Be still little one.

**THE BOY.** *(Sleepily:)* Can't you sleep little Bunny? When I can't sleep Nana always sings to me. Would you like me to sing to you? Alright, Bunny. *(Yawn.)*

*(THE BOY sings.)*

Sleep, sleep, sleep and dream  
Dream of tomorrow and what will be  
I'll always have you  
You'll always have me  
If only in your dreams

*(THE BOY and THE VELVETEEN RABBIT fall asleep.)*

### **Scene 3: Evil Fortress**

*(Musical transition: Lights change. It is afternoon, several weeks later.)*

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

March brings breezes loud and shrill,  
To stir the dancing daffodil

*(THE BOY runs on with THE BUNNY.)*

**THE BOY.** So, what should we do today, Bunny? What do *you* think? Something new. Something we haven't played yet. Ooo! I know. I love this one. I'll show you how to play Evil Fortress! This is going to be fun! Now you sit right over here. Alright, Bunny? I'll be right back! Evil Fortress! Ahhhh!

*(He runs offstage to gather material for the fort.)*

**TIMOTHY.** Ohhh. Not Evil Fortress. I always end up being “sacrificed for the good of the cause.” Why must every game he teaches her leave me as a casualty?

**MODEL BOAT.** Show a little courage! If I have to be the fortress wall, I think you can handle another reconnaissance mission.

**TIMOTHY.** Just once I wish I could be “his majesty” over there. Always treated like top brass.

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

If wishes were horses then beggars would ride,  
If turnips were swords I’d have one by my side.  
If “ifs” and “ands” were pots and pans  
There would be no need for tinkers hands!

**THE MODEL BOAT.** Well, we’ve lost him again.

**THE BOY.** *(Offstage:)* Alright, Bunny!

**THE MODEL BOAT and TIMOTHY.** Ahhh!

*(The toys return to their positions. THE BOY reenters with various “supplies” and moves the toys around the nursery acting out the fantasy as he speaks. The movement in the following should be rough on MODEL BOAT and TIMOTHY and begin to show the ways THE VELVETEEN RABBIT will eventually show wear; tugging ears, dragging across the floor, etc... THE SKIN HORSE is treated respectfully.)*

**THE BOY.** Over here is the mighty fortress where the wise old wizard is being held captive. We must bring down the fortress walls and rescue him. Now, you stay behind this barricade until we know the coast is clear. Soldier! We need you to cross over and make sure the time is right for our mission.

*(He winds up TIMOTHY, who clunkily walks in circles.)*

He isn’t going to make it! Ahhhh!

*(THE BOY knocks him over with an “enemy projectile” and TIMOTHY teeters to the ground.)*

Come on, Bunny. We’ve got to get in closer.

*(He moves forward and pelts “the fortress” with more pillows, balls, or various items.)*

Take that! And that! We’ll never let you have the Wizard!

*(He topples over THE MODEL BOAT and triumphantly stands over him with THE BUNNY.)*

We’re coming! We’re coming to save you! Mighty Wizard, we have come to rescue you from this evil fortress and take you home with us. Never again will these villains threaten our kingdom.

*(He trumpets a regal tune while he ceremoniously displays “The Wizard” and THE BUNNY.)*

From now until forever, this noble Bunny and I will bring peace and order to this land!

*(Breaking out of the fantasy:)*

Oh! That was great, Bunny. Next time I’ll show you how you to climb the fortress wall! Hmm. Do you smell chicken? Are you hungry? I’m hungry. Let’s go see what Nana made! Come on, Bunny!

*(He exits the stage, dragging THE BUNNY along with him.)*

*(The nursery transforms.)*

**TIMOTHY.** Well, how do you like that? Chicken. I’ve never had chicken.

**THE MODEL BOAT.** I’ve never had the wind so knocked out of my sails. Ohhh, it’s dry dock for me for sure!

**TIMOTHY.** *(Defeated:)* Who’d have ever guessed he’d have so much fun...with a bunny?

---

**Scene 4: To be REAL**

*(Lights, music, transition to several weeks later. Bedtime.)*

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

The man in the moon  
Looked out of the moon  
And this is what he said,  
'Tis time that, now I'm getting up,  
All children went to bed."

*(THE BOY enters with THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.)*

**THE BOY.** Time for bed, Bunny. In you go.

**NANA.** *(From offstage:)* Lights out and go to sleep. I don't want you staying up 'til all hours tonight, whispering with that silly bunny.

**THE BOY.** Yes, Nana. We'll go to sleep. You heard her, Bunny. No whispering tonight.

*(He props THE BUNNY over to watch over him as he sleeps and curls up in bed.)*

Goodnight, Bunny.

*(Lights change, the nursery transforms. We see THE SKIN HORSE.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Goodnight, my Boy. *(A moment.)*  
Hello, Skin Horse.

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Hello, little one.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh! We had such fun today. We have fun everyday. I wish you could come with us sometime.

*(A moment.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Skin Horse. Does it hurt? To be REAL?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Sometimes. But, when you are Real you don't mind being hurt.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Does it happen all at once, like being wound up, or bit by bit?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** It doesn't happen all at once. You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't often happen to toys who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh! How I would love for The Boy to make me Real. Look! My fur IS getting a bit thin. Right here. But, I don't know if I would like losing my eyes and whiskers. Maybe The Boy can make me Real without those uncomfortable things happening?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Perhaps so, little one.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** *(To the audience:)* Oh! To be REAL!

### **Scene 5: Do I Look That Bad?**

*(Lights, music. Transition: Time passes and it is now spring.)*

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

In the merry month of May  
When green leaves begin to spring,  
Little lambs do skip like fairies  
Birds do couple, build and sing.

**TIMOTHY.** Well, what a surprise. Gone again. Out playing with his precious Bunny. Ever since the weather warmed up we've barely seen hide or hair of them. No pun intended.

**THE MODEL BOAT.** I still can't fathom what he sees in her.

**TIMOTHY.** She's looking pretty shabby these days. Granted, she was never much to look at, but now!

**THE MODEL BOAT.** That velveteen has surely seen better days.

**TIMOTHY.** Never mind that; it's a wonder her ears stay attached! Why they're just holding on by a thread.

**THE SKIN HORSE.** You're surely quick to see the little rabbit's flaws. Her fur may be wearing thin, but don't you know it's because the boy hugs her so tightly while he sleeps. And perhaps the pink is rubbing off her nose, but only because the boy kisses her there so often. You seem to see so much—except that the little rabbit is so very happy.

*(THE SKIN HORSE exits. THE MODEL BOAT and TIMOTHY are left alone.)*

**THE MODEL BOAT.** Hmmph!

**TIMOTHY.** Pish!

**THE MODEL BOAT.** Thinks he knows so much.

**TIMOTHY.** I was only saying she looks a bit worn.

*(Pause.)*

**THE MODEL BOAT.** It would just be nice if he paid a little attention to us everyone once in a while.

**TIMOTHY.** Precisely! I never get a hug.

**THE MODEL BOAT.** If truth be told, I suppose I am a wee bit jealous. Just a wee bit.

**TIMOTHY.** Well. Good for you. The first step is admitting it.

*(THE MODEL BOAT stares, accusingly.)*

Oh, alright. I'm jealous, too. Are you happy?

**THE MODEL BOAT.** Well, Major. I guess we were wrong. Spinning about and making noise just isn't as important as we thought. I suppose the little rabbit is impressive after all.

**TIMOTHY.** Oh, Captain. To think we'd see the day. Out-ranked...by a bunny.

*(They put themselves away in the cupboard.)*

**Scene 6: She's Real!****THE SKIN HORSE.**

One for sorrow,  
Two for joy,  
Three for a girl,  
Four for a boy,  
Five for silver,  
Six for gold,  
Seven for a secret  
Never to be told.

*(It is the end of the day. THE BOY lets out a whoop from offstage, playing with THE BUNNY.)*

**THE BOY.** Back, ye villains! You'll never catch the royal bunny!

*(THE BUNNY has transformed since we last saw her. As the other toys described--her nose is faded, her ears are tattered, her fur is wearing thin. THE BOY has adorned her in a woodland crown.)*

**THE BOY.** People of Sapphire Forest. The royal bunny has conquered the evil knights that threatened this peaceful village. A new day is upon you. A time for joy! A time for laughter.

**NANA.** *(Entering:)* A time for bed!

**THE BOY.** Ohhh, Nana! We had so much fun today! We ran all through the forest! We defeated the rebels at the hollowed out log. We narrowly escaped the Great Giant of the Elm by digging a tunnel by the river's edge. And we freed all of the innocent people of The Sapphire Forest...

**NANA.** Yes, yes. Quite a busy day!

*(Brushing THE BUNNY off with her apron:)*

Goodness! From the looks of it I'd guess you dug the tunnel with the rabbit itself.

**THE BOY.** She's an excellent digger!

**NANA.** Just filthy. And wet! I'll have to set it out by the fire to dry.

**THE BOY.** No, no, no, no, Nana. She's just damp from burrowing.

**NANA.** Now, now. You must learn not to bring all sorts of outside rubbish inside after play. You can have your bunny in the morning.

**THE BOY.** But I can't sleep without my Bunny! Oh please, Nana, please don't take her! I promise I'll set her right beside my pillow 'til she's dry. Nana please!

**NANA.** Alright, alright! My goodness. You must have your old Bunny! Fancy all that fuss over a toy.

**THE BOY.** Give me my Bunny! You mustn't say that. She isn't a toy. She's REAL!

*(In that moment, something remarkable happens to THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.)*

**THE BOY.** You're REAL. Aren't you bunny?

**NANA.** I'm sorry. I didn't mean to upset you. Of course you can have your bunny. Now, in you go. To bed, to bed. Bunny too.

*(NANA tucks them into bed, the bunny watching over THE BOY.)*

Well! I declare if that old Bunny hasn't got quite a knowing expression.

*(She exits. Moonlight fills the nursery.)*

**THE BOY.** *(He hugs THE BUNNY tightly.)* Goodnight Bunny.

*(He yawns. THE BUNNY beams as THE BOY drifts to sleep.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Goodnight. *(Giggling with joy:)* Goodnight! Oh! Skin Horse! Skin Horse, did you hear? Just like you said. You heard him, didn't you?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Yes, little one.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I'm REAL! The Boy said it himself. I'm not a toy any longer. Oh, I don't know how I can possibly sleep! I feel so...different. I love my Boy so much! Is that how you felt, Skin Horse?

**THE SKIN HORSE.** I was his Uncle's favorite toy. His prized toy. He loved me more than anything and I will always be REAL to him.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh, but it's so much more than that. More than I ever imagined.

*(THE BOY stirs in his sleep.)*

Shh. It's alright. I'm here. I'm right here.

*(THE BUNNY sings to THE BOY:)*

Sleep, sleep, sleep and dream  
Dream of tomorrow and what will be  
I'll always have you  
You'll always have me  
If only in your dreams

*(She quietly watches over THE BOY.)*

### **Scene 7: Let Me See Your Throat**

*(Transition. Time passes. It is summer. Lights up on the nursery; bright music fills the air. Birds chirp. NANA enters to tidy the nursery. We hear THE BOY laugh from offstage.)*

**NANA.** It's a beautiful summer day. Wouldn't you and your bunny rather be outside?

*(Entering with THE BUNNY:)*

**THE BOY.** That's just where we're going, Nana. Bunny was just hiding in the laundry basket. Weren't you, Bunny?

*(As she is "tidying" THE BOY, NANA brushes The Boy's hair from his forehead and notices his forehead is warm.)*

**NANA.** Hmm. Let me see you. *(She feels his forehead and looks at his face.)* How are you feeling?

**THE BOY.** Just fine, Nana.

**NANA.** Open your mouth—let me see your throat.

*(He does.)*

**THE BOY.** Really, Nana, I'm fine!

**NANA.** Oh, alright. If you say so. Up you go.

**THE BOY.** *(Leaping out of bed:)* What do you say, Bunny? Should we go to the woods? Perhaps we should see if the Giant of the Elm has caused anymore trouble. Come Royal Bunny! Come!

*(They gallop off.)*

**NANA.** Mind you conquer all the evil in the forest in time for dinner!

*(Musical transition to the wood.)*

### Scene 8: Bunnies in the Wood

*(THE BOY and THE BUNNY have been playing in the wood for some time.)*

**THE BOY.** *(Running in with THE BUNNY:)* Ah! Here we are. Safe in the Emerald Glen! I think we escaped. The Giant of the Elm wouldn't dare come after us here.

*(THE BOY looks a bit weary and feels his throat.)*

Whooh! I'm tired. Are you tired too, Bunny? Why don't you stay right here where it's safe and get some rest. I will scout ahead to see if any more trouble is about. Never fear little Bunny! I shall return.

*(He exits.)*

*(THE BUNNY sits; taking in the sounds of the wood.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** *(To the audience:)* Well! I've never been alone in the woods before. *(Pause.)* It's very...big.

*(She sings a bit of the lullaby. We hear a rustling of leaves. She stops.)*

What was that? *(Pause.)* Did you hear something?

*(Pause. She starts to hum again. More rustling. THE BUNNY freezes, as two sleek RABBITS enter the wood.)*

*(Whispering:)* Oh! Why they're bunnies, like me! I've never met another bunny before! I wonder if they will want to play.

*(THE BUNNY sits very still as she examines THE RABBITS from afar.)*

Oh. Look at their fur—they look so new. Goodness, they must be very well made, for I can't see their seams at all! How they move about! Can you see where they are wound up? They must be a different kind of bunny altogether!

*(They hop forward sniffing THE BUNNY, circling her, examining her. THE BUNNY sits perfectly still. They all stare, noses twitching.)*

**DANCING RABBIT 1.** Why don't you get up and play with us?

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh...I don't feel like it.

**DANCING RABBIT 2.** Ho! It's as easy as anything!

*(DANCING RABBIT 2 shows off by giving a big hop sideways and standing on his hind legs.)*

See?

*(He sniffs and examines THE VELVETEEN RABBIT again.)*

I don't believe you can!

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I can! I can jump higher than anything. *(To audience:)* Well, at least I can when the Boy throws me.

**DANCING RABBIT 1.** Can you hop on your hind legs?

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Of course. But, I don't want to. I'm really quite comfortable.

**DANCING RABBIT 2.** She hasn't got any hind legs! Oh, boy. *(Laughing:)* Fancy a rabbit without any hind legs.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I have! I have got hind legs! I'm sitting on them, is all.

**DANCING RABBIT 1.** Then stretch them out and show me, like this! *(Showing off.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I don't like dancing. I'd rather sit still. I told you, I'm quite, quite comfortable.

**DANCING RABBIT 2.** *(Coming very close to THE VELVETEEN RABBIT and brushing her with his whiskers:)* She doesn't smell right!

**DANCING RABBIT 1.** She isn't a rabbit at all! She isn't even real!

*(THE RABBITS begin to laugh.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I am Real! I am Real! The Boy said so.

**DANCING RABBIT 2.** Why she's nothing but a toy!

*(THE TWO RABBITS exit, still laughing.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh, please come back and play with me! Do come back! I *know* I am Real! Please!

*(Pause. Thunder rumbles in the distance.)*

Oh, dear! Why did they run away like that? Why couldn't they stop and talk to me?

*(More thunder. It begins to rain.)*

Oh, I wonder where The Boy is. If he were here, he would have told them. He would have told them that I'm Real.

*(More thunder, lightning.)*

**NANA.** *(Running on:)* Ah! There you are. All the trouble I go through for that child. Such a fuss! But he must have you! So off I go into the rain. I knew I should have kept him in bed this morning. Running about all over the forest with a fever! Come along, you. We must get back.

*(She grabs THE BUNNY and rushes offstage. Musical transition—Thunder, lightning and rain continue.)*

### **Scene 9: Scarlet Fever**

*(Lights change to The Boy's bedroom. He is in bed, ill. A DOCTOR is in the room.)*

**THE SKIN HORSE.**

I do not like thee, Doctor Fell,  
The reason why I cannot tell;  
But this I know, and know full well,  
I do not like thee, Doctor Fell.

*(NANA enters with THE BUNNY.)*

**NANA.** Can you tell what it is, doctor?

**DOCTOR.** Temperature of 103...rash, sore throat. I'm quite certain it's Scarlet Fever.

**NANA.** Oh, my heavens. What's to be done?

**DOCTOR.** It's important that he rest. Let no one but yourself enter the room. Plenty of warm fluids and blankets. Keep a close eye on him until the fever breaks.

**THE BOY.** *(Half conscious:)* Where is my Bunny? Please. Please bring me my Bunny.

**NANA.** There, there child. Your bunny is right here beside you. I'll do just as you said, Doctor. I'll send word if there is any change.

*(THE BOY moans, speaks unintelligibly.)*

**DOCTOR.** Shhh. There, there. Rest, child. *(To NANA:)* I'll call again in two days time. Good night.

**NANA.** Doctor? Is he going to be alright?

**DOCTOR.** I'm afraid it's just too soon to tell.

*(He exits. NANA follows.)*

**THE BOY.** *(THE BOY talks in a fever dream, not fully conscious, whimpering:)* Bunny!

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I'm here. I'm right here.

*(THE BOY moans, speaks unintelligibly.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I'm here. I won't leave. *(To THE SKIN HORSE:)* Oh, Skin Horse! He's so very sick. Some sort of fever the doctor said. He's so hot he burns my fur, but he shivers as though he's ice cold.

**THE SKIN HORSE.** He is lucky to have you by his side.

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** I won't leave him. He needs me. I'll stay with him until he's well. I'll stay with him always.

*(They sit and watch over THE BOY for a moment. The rain continues.)*

**THE SKIN HORSE.** Does it hurt little one? Being Real?

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** A bit. But I don't mind at all. I know he needs me.

*(THE BOY shivers and moans. THE VELVETEEN RABBIT turns her attention back to THE BOY.)*

*(During THE VELVETEEN RABBIT's dialogue, NANA and THE DOCTOR move about in a stylized passage of time, as THE BOY slowly recovers.)*

*(THE BUNNY can remain "active" throughout the action, but it is almost as though she is in THE BOY's thoughts.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Shhh. There, there. I'm right here. You just rest, and I'll stay right here. And when you are well again, we'll go out in the garden—with the flowers and the butterflies. And we'll play splendid games in the raspberry thicket. When you are well again...oh...what wonderful times we will have together.

*(She sings the lullaby:)*

Sleep, sleep, sleep and dream  
Dream of tomorrow and what will be  
I'll always have you  
You'll always have me  
If only in your dreams

*(By the end of the song several days have passed and THE BOY is on the mend. THE BUNNY goes still.)*

### **Scene 10: A Trip to the Seaside**

**THE BOY.** Hello, Nana.

**NANA.** My! You're looking better than this morning. You'll be up and about in no time.

**THE DOCTOR.** *(Entering:)* Well! Let me have a look at you!

*(He examines THE BOY.)*

Swelling down, temperature back to normal. Are you feeling better?

**THE BOY.** Yes, sir. Much better.

**THE DOCTOR.** Quite glad to hear it. Now, what you need is some nice, fresh air. Some time outside. My prescription...a day at the seaside. *(To NANA:)* You should take him tomorrow.

**THE BOY.** Oh, Nana!

**THE DOCTOR.** Now you mustn't overdo it. Just sit. Read. Enjoy the air. It'll do you wonders after so much time in bed. *(To NANA:)* Is there another room he can sleep in tonight?

**NANA.** Yes, of course – the guest room down the hall.

**THE DOCTOR.** Very good. He should sleep there tonight so this room can be disinfected. Now remember what I told you. All the books and toys that the boy has played with in bed must be burnt!

**NANA.** Of course, Doctor. How about his old bunny? He's never without it.

**THE DOCTOR.** That? Why, it's a mass of Scarlet Fever germs! Burn it at once.

**NANA.** The poor dear. I'm afraid he's grown quite attached to it. Is it really necessary...

**THE DOCTOR.** Nonsense! Get him a new one. He mustn't have that any more! *(To THE BOY:)* Come along, son. You've got quite a day tomorrow. The seaside awaits you.

*(He walks THE BOY out.)*

### **Scene 11: The Burning Pile / Transformation**

*(NANA begins to strip the bed and "remove" the nursery. THE VELVETEEN RABBIT is active, but NANA has no acknowledgment of her movement or words. At the end of the transition THE BUNNY is on the pile to be burned.)*

**THE VELVETEEN RABBIT.** Oh! How exciting. I knew my Boy would get well. Nana? We are going to the seaside. Shouldn't we go with him? No, Nana. Wait. We mustn't be left behind. Nana? My

## **THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!**

In order to protect our associated authors against copyright infringement, we cannot currently present full electronic scripts.

To purchase books with the full text, and to apply for performance rights, click ORDER or go back to:

*[www.playscripts.com](http://www.playscripts.com)*