

FREE SCRIPT EXCERPT

PRINCE CASPIAN

A Children's Play

Based on the book by C.S. Lewis

Adapted for the stage by Ann Garau

A glimpse of the dialogue, characters,
humour, and heart of the play.



CLASSICAL CHILDREN'S PLAYS

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Cast of Characters

(In Order of Appearance)

Peter	Trumpkin
Edmund	Talking Beast
Susan	Assorted Animals
Lucy	Reepicheep
Caspian	Centaur
Doctor Cornelius	Two Telmarine Soldiers
Glozelle	Aslan
Sopespian	Hag
Messenger	Werewolf
Nikabrik	King Miraz
Trufflehunter	

Synopsis of Scenes

A quick map of the full play

ACT ONE

SCENE 1. The End of the Holidays (a London railway station)

SCENE 2. Tales of Old Narnia (Prince Caspian's school-room)

SCENE 3. Uneasy Celebration (a town square in Narnia)

SCENE 4. Escape (Prince Caspian's bedroom)

SCENE 5. An Enemy (Trumpkin's burrow in the woods)

SCENE 6. The Gathering (a grassy glen)

SCENE 7. Battle (near Aslan's Howe)

ACT TWO

SCENE 1. A Land of Memories (London Station / ancient Cair Paravel in Narnia)

SCENE 2. Doubt (a ravine above the River Rush)

SCENE 3. The Light of Faith (Aslan's Howe)

SCENE 4. Awake, Narnia! (the woods near Aslan's Howe)

SCENE 5. Sorcery and Sudden Vengeance (inside Aslan's Howe)

SCENE 6. The Duel (Miraz' Army Camp)

SCENE 7. Home (Miraz' Army Camp)





ACT ONE

Scene 1: The End of the Holidays (A London railway station)

(Takes place on a bench or row of chairs set below stage front.)

PETER: Here's a free bench; we can wait for the train together here.

EDMUND: Do you think we've got time to eat our lunch before it gets here?

PETER: We've still got half an hour to wait; that's plenty of time for a sandwich. I wonder what kind Mother packed us?

SUSAN: Lucy and I will have to eat on the way; we've only got a few minutes until the train for the girls' school arrives.

LUCY: I don't think I could eat anything anyway. My stomach is all tied up in knots. I wish I could keep going to my old day-school at home where I knew everyone. Who wants to go to boarding school, anyway?

EDMUND: Oh come on, you've got to start going some time!

LUCY: If only we could all stay together. I hate being split up like this into girls' schools and boys' schools.

SUSAN: Well, at least you and I can be there together. When I started going to boarding school, I didn't have a big sister to show me around.

PETER: It even smells like the end of the holidays, have you noticed? There's that sort of autumny smell in the air.

EDMUND: You know what it smells like to me? It smells like chalkboards and algebra. Ugh.

All four sigh, slump, and look for the train. They remain like this for the remainder of Act I. They are free to continue to mime looking for the train, or checking their watches, or (silently) chatting.

Scene 2: Tales of Old Narnia

(Prince Caspian's school room, in Miraz' castle)

Caspian is sitting or standing, reading a textbook, but then lets it droop. Stage is set with small table, on which are a loaf of bread, some fruit, and a bottle of wine with two goblets. GLOZELLE and SOPESPIAN are sitting at the table; they mime eating, drinking, and talking. They are not paying attention to CASPIAN and do not hear the following conversation.

CASPIAN: History, history, history! I hate doing school lessons. All on my own, never anyone to play with, because (changes voice and manner into a caricature of an adult voice) “princes don’t play with just anyone.” I wish I wasn’t even a prince, no matter what my uncle says. It’s all so dull. Narnia is dull. This whole world is dull. I wish...I wish the stories about Old Narnia were true. With all those strange creatures – the naiads and the dwarfs and things. It sounds a thousand times better than what it’s like now.

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: Good morning, dear prince. I see that you are already studying your History.

CASPIAN: Unfortunately.

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: Come now! The history of Narnia is a fascinating topic. Full of battles and conquest! After all, you yourself are named after a conqueror – your own ancestor, Caspian the Conqueror.

CASPIAN: That’s true. But hold on, Doctor Cornelius. Here’s something I’ve never understood. He doesn’t seem to have added any other countries to our kingdom. If he was a conqueror, who was he conquering?

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: Whom, not who, your Highness. And he conquered Narnia itself, of course.

CASPIAN: Narnia! Why, didn’t we always rule Narnia? What men lived here before us?

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: There were no men before you.

CASPIAN: But you said...

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: I said there were no men. No humans. I didn’t say there was nobody at all.

CASPIAN: Wait... you mean...

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: (nods slowly)

CASPIAN: (loudly, in excitement) You mean all those stories of Old Narnia are true? The stories of Aslan and the talking beasts and all the other creatures?

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: Shh, your majesty! Somebody might hear! Your uncle, King Miraz, hates the tales of Old Narnia. (Beckons Caspian closer to him, looks around furtively, and leads him further away from GLOZELLE and SOPESPIAN.) All the stories that you have heard are perfectly true. Narnia always belonged to the talking beasts and the good giants, the dwarfs and fauns, the dryads in the trees and the naiads in the wells.

CASPIAN: Well – what happened to them? Why did they disappear?

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: Your ancestors are what happened to them, your Highness. Ten generations ago you Telmarines came over the Western Mountains under Caspian the First, later known as Caspian the Conqueror, and took over the entire land. Now mind you, we Narnians fought back as well as we could, but we were no match for men in armour on horseback. The few survivors retreated into the woods, and have never been seen again.

CASPIAN: The woods? Ugh! Everyone knows the woods are full of – well, full of ghosts. Nobody dares even go near them. How could anyone live there?

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: Your Highness speaks as you have been taught. But there are no ghosts in the woods. When the Telmarines took control of this land, they made themselves the enemies of every wild thing - including the trees. They cut down as many trees as they could – so many, indeed, that finally all the dryads retreated deep inside each tree. They have never been heard of since. But you Telmarines have never forgotten that the trees are alive, so now you all believe that they have ghosts in them. But it is all lies.

CASPIAN: But Doctor Cornelius – why do you say “You Telmarines”? You’re a Telmarine, too.

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: Am I?

CASPIAN: Well – I know you’re not very tall, but you’re a man, anyway.

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: Am I?

CASPIAN: (gasps) You mean – Doctor Cornelius, are you a – are you a dwarf? Are you one of those surviving Narnians?

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: (again looking around, to make sure that GLOZELLE and SOPESPIAN are not listening.) I’m not a pure dwarf; I also have human blood in my veins. After the wars, some of the dwarfs survived by disguising themselves as humans and living among the Telmarines. They married Telmarine women, and no one ever suspected that their children were not completely human. I am descended from one of those children. But if there are any true dwarfs still living, no doubt they would look down on me.

CASPIAN: True dwarfs... do you think there might be some true dwarfs left? Even now?

DOCTOR CORNELIUS: I don’t know. I’ve been looking for them all my life. But when your Majesty grows up and becomes King in your uncle’s place, perhaps you may find out if there really are dwarfs left, or other creatures of Old Narnia. And if there are, perhaps you will care for them. My hope, dear boy, is that you might find a way to awaken Old Narnia again. But now enough. Nobody must hear us talking about these things. If your Uncle Miraz found out I was telling you about them... (shakes his head.) Come with me, it’s time for grammar.

Exeunt

GLOZELLE: (looking up) There goes the prince.

SOPESPIAN: He is growing quickly; soon he will be old enough to rule as king himself.

GLOZELLE: If Miraz ever allows him to rule, that is. I'll wager my dappled Pomely that Miraz finds a way to get rid of Caspian.

SOPESPIAN: Which is the better king, think you? Miraz, or Caspian when he is grown?

GLOZELLE: (glances around quickly) The question is whether we need a king at all.

SOPESPIAN: (starts in surprise; quickly looks around, and leans closer to GLOZELLE) Softly. Now. Have I understood your Lordship aright?

GLOZELLE: I need not tell your Lordship that Miraz is hardly a great leader. If it should ever happen that both Miraz and Caspian were killed, then...

SOPESPIAN: Is it your meaning, my Lord, that you and I could rule this land quite happily without a King at all?

GLOZELLE: (bitterly) After all, it was we who first put Miraz on the throne. And in all the years that he has enjoyed it, what gratitude has he shown us? Has he given us great lands? Great power? Wealth? Nothing close to what we deserve.

SOPESPIAN: Say no more. We understand each other perfectly.

Exeunt.



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