

QUEEN ZIXI OF IX: OR THE STORY OF THE MAGIC CLOAK

A full-length dramedy by
Jason Tremblay

Adapted from the novel by L. Frank Baum

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

BUD, a peasant boy.

FLUFF , his sister.

AUNT RIVETTE, their aunt.

QUEEN ZIXI OF IX, the One and Only.

QUEEN LULEA*, Queen of the Fairies.

FAIRY ESPA*, a tiny fairy.

FAIRY EREOL*, fairy messenger.

FAIRIES*, of every color.

OLD MAN IN THE MOON*, old and wise.

TALLYDAB*, Lord High Counselor.

TOLLYDOB*, a general.

TULLYDUB*, royal steward.

JIKKI*, King's valet.

QUEVO*, a spy.

INNKEEPER* , a nice guy.

PEOPLE OF NOLE*, of every size.

FARMER*, an angry man.

SON*, his son.

FAT WOMAN*, with a cow.

THIN WOMAN*, with a cow.

DAME DINGLE*, a spinster.

SAILORMAN*, her son.

ROLY ROGUES*, you'll see.

* can be doubled

PRODUCTION NOTES

Certain lines list the speaker only as FAIRY or ROLY ROGUE. In those cases, it is left to your production to decide which Fairy or Roly Rogue should be assigned the line.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Adapted from the novel by L. Frank Baum, which was first serialized in the children's magazine *St. Nicholas* from November 1904 to October 1905.

Queen Zixi of Ix: Or the Story of the Magic Cloak, was winner of East Valley Children's Theatre Aspiring Playwriting Contest for 2011 and performed by East Valley Children's Theatre at the Mesa Arts Center in Mesa Arizona, February 9-19, 2012 with the following cast:

Bud - Casey Pettyjohn

Fluff - Emily Simzyk

Aunt Rivette - Alyssa Kewenvoyouma

Queen Zixi of Ix - Kelly Nicole

Queen Lulea - Rachel Carder

Fairy Espa - Haley Reed

Fairy Ereol/Begger - Briana Lee

Fairies of Every Color - Abby Potts, Carol Field, Carlee Coulehan, Samantha Richins, Olivia Parker Swenson, Rachel Primrose

Old Man in the Moon - Zach Kobza

Adlena - Rachel Dike

Tallydab - Brian Vasher

Tollydob - Connor Applegarth

Tullydub - Jonah Carlson

Jikki - Kendra Matthews

Quevo - Griffin Siroky

Innkeeper/Old Man - Jake Olson

Farmer - Kevin Poppell

Farmer's Son - Tommy Blunt

Two Bickering Woman (one tall and one short) - Adriana Merrifield (tall), Alexis Hernandez (short)

Dame Dingle - Maddie Brito

Sailorman - Cody Hawley

The Roly Rogues - Ashley Fredericksen, Jesse Hawley, Calabria Pelletier, Kylie Burge, Rennie Payne, Jacob Payne

The People of Nole:

Servants to Queen Zixi - Alexis Odell, Ashlyn Riggs, Audrey Potts

Children of the Village - Isabella Chook, Katie Grosz, Lilie Grosz

Guard - Dillon Maclay, Calvin Mugge

Cow - Alexis Odell, Ashlyn Riggs

Artistic Team

Karen Rolston, Director, Sound & Props; Katie Olsen, Stage Manager; Sarah Kleppe, Assistant Stage Manger; Dori Brown, Light Design; Thomas Gilseth, Set Design; Cori Johnson, Makeup & Hair Design; Barbara Jakucki, Costume Design; Ariana Ziskin, Choreography

SCENE 1: THE WEAVING OF THE MAGIC CLOAK

(In the ancient moonlit forest of Burzee, a group of FAIRIES dance among the giant oak and fir. Bringing the celebration to a halt, their brilliant QUEEN LULEA plops down upon a little green mound.)

QUEEN LULEA: I am so tired of dancing, my dears. Every evening since the moon grew big and round we've done nothing but dance.

FAIRY: Nothing gives us as much pleasure as dancing!

QUEEN LULEA: But I'm bored! Can we not think of another way to entertain ourselves?

FAIRY: We can create something with our fairy powers.

QUEEN LULEA: What shall we create?

FAIRY: I have heard of a thinking-cap made by some fairies in Australia. Whatever mortal wore this thinking-cap was able to create the most noble and beautiful thoughts.

QUEEN LULEA: How wonderful!

FAIRY: The man who received it was so afraid someone else would steal the cap that he hid it away—so safely that he could never remember where he put it.

QUEEN LULEA: That's terrible! Another suggestion?

FAIRY: What about the fairies from Africa who created the pair of enchanted boots? They would carry whoever wore them away from danger—and never into it.

FAIRY: Didn't you hear? They came into possession of a great general. He wore them into battle one day, and immediately ran away. The fight was won by the enemy!

QUEEN LULEA: We want no enchanted boots. Think of something else.

(The tiniest of them all steps forward.)

FAIRY ESPA: Suppose we weave a magic cloak.

QUEEN LULEA: A cloak? What sort of magic powers must it possess?

FAIRY ESPA: Let its wearer have any wish instantly fulfilled!

(The other Fairies giggle at this preposterous idea. Queen Lulea waves her hand to quiet them.)

QUEEN LULEA: Quiet now, our sister did not think of the consequences. An instant's reflection would enable her to see that such power would give the cloak's mortal wearer as many privileges as we ourselves possess. You did intend the magic cloak for a human?

FAIRY ESPA: Yes, that was my intention.

QUEEN LULEA: It is a good idea, nevertheless. I propose we devote this evening to weaving the magic cloak. Only, its magic shall give to its wearer the fulfillment of only one wish.

FAIRY: What if more than one person wears the cloak? Who will have the wish fulfilled?

QUEEN LULEA: Each possessor of the magic cloak may have one wish granted, provided the cloak is not stolen. If the cloak is ever stolen it will not work for the thief. Now, let's get to work!

(Queen Lulea waves her hand as all the Fairies assemble to create the magic cloak. They dance and weave the finest silk, silver shuttles in hand. Each Fairy weaves her own wonderful color. Queen Lulea joins in holding her own golden thread high.)

QUEEN LULEA: This then, the magic thread! That will give the cloak its wondrous power!

(When the weaving is complete, Queen Lulea holds out the cloak for all to see)

FAIRY ESPA: To whom shall we present it?

(The Fairies begin to call out the names of their favorite mortals to whom they believe the cloak should belong. During the chaos another fairy, EREOL, enters.)

QUEEN LULEA: Welcome, Ereol, you are late.

FAIRY EREOL: Yes, Your Majesty, I am late. The old King of Noland, whose guardian I have been since his birth, has passed away this evening, and I could not bear to leave him until the end came.

QUEEN LULEA: The old King is dead at last! He was a good man, but totally boring! Who is the new King of Noland?

FAIRY EREOL: There is none. The old King died without a single relative to succeed his throne, and his high counselors were in a great dilemma when I came away.

QUEEN LULEA: I am sorry you were not with us tonight, for we have had a rare sport. See! We have woven a magic cloak!

FAIRY EREOL: Who is to wear it?

(The good-natured dispute amongst the Fairies rises again.)

QUEEN LULEA: Come! Let us leave the decision to the Man in the Moon.

(In the moon, the face of an OLD MAN appears.)

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: I'm to decide another dispute, eh? Well, what is it this time?

QUEEN LULEA: We wish you to say what mortal shall wear the magic cloak.

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: Give it to the first unhappy person you meet. Happy people have no need of magic cloaks.

(And with that, the Old Man is gone.)

QUEEN LULEA: Our Man in the Moon is wise. Go, Ereol, and carry the magic cloak to Noland. The first person you meet who is really unhappy, be it man, woman, or child, shall receive from you the cloak as a gift from our fairy band.

(Fairy Ereol takes the cloak and exits.)

Come, my children. The moon is hiding behind the tree tops and it is time for us to depart.

(The Fairies vanish.)

SCENE 2: THE BOOK OF LAWS

(Inside the castle of the Kingdom of Noland, the KING'S COUNSELORS debate what to do in the kingdom. They are all high and mighty. Incredibly tall in their long dark robes and powder wigs. The chief counselor TULLYDUB is old and very pompous. The next in rank is TOLLYDOB, a general. And finally, TALLYDAB, the lord high steward. JIKKI, the King's valet, runs though and is unceremoniously tripped by Tollydob.)

TOLLYDOB: And just where do you think you are going?

JIKKI: To toll the bell for the King's death.

TULLYDUB: Remain here until we give you permission to go!

JIKKI: But the bell ought to be tolled!

TALLYDAB: Be silent! We know what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Now go!

JIKKI: Go where, sir?

TULLYDUB: Go fetch us some food.

(Jikki exits.)

TOLLYDOB: If we tell the people that the King is dead and do not immediately appoint his successor they will begin quarreling among themselves.

TULLYDUB: That will never do.

TALLYDAB: The new king must be chosen before we tell the people the King is dead.

(Jikki pops his head in the door.)

JIKKI: Sirs, hadn't I better toll the bell?

ALL: No!

(Jikki slams the door shut. A moment later it pops back open.)

JIKKI: Sirs, I was wondering if—

ALL: No!

JIKKI: I was just wondering if you'd like a bit of breakfast?

ALL: Oh, yes! Very, well! That sounds very good! Yes!

JIKKI: And shall I toll the bell?

ALL: No!

(The door slams once again.)

TOLLYDOB: The book!

TALLYDAB: What book?

TOLLYDOB: The Book of Laws.

TULLYDUB: I never knew there was such a thing. I always thought the king's will was the law.

TOLLYDOB: So it was! When we had a king! The Book of Laws was written years ago and was meant to be used when the king was absent, or ill, or asleep.

TALLYDAB: Have you ever read the book?

TOLLYDOB: No, but I will fetch it once and we shall see if there is not a law to help us out of our difficulty.

(Tollydob fetches the Book of Law which is ridiculously large and fantastically ornate. On its surface, a large silver padlock, for which Tollydob produces a large silver key and opens it. The Counselors search through passages.)

TULLYDUB: I have it!

TALLYDAB AND TOLLYDOB: What is it? Read it! Read it aloud!

(At that moment, the door flies open.)

JIKKI: Shall I toll the bell?

ALL: No!

(Tollydub adjusts his spectacle and reads.)

TULLYDUB: In case the king dies, and there is no one to succeed him, the chief counselor shall go at sunrise to the eastward gate of the City of Nole. And the forty-seventh person that so enters, be it man, woman, or child, rich or poor, humble or noble, shall immediately be proclaimed king or queen, as the case may be, and shall rule all the Kingdom of Noland forever after, so long as he or she may live. *And* if anyone, and that means anyone, shall refuse to obey the king's slightest wish, such person shall at once, immediately, without hesitation or delay, straightaway, no mumbling or fumbling, no dawdling, lagging, or lingering, no postponements or objections, that person should... there upon that instant...with no tarrying, tallying, or obstructions...no speeches or whining or...

TALLYDAB: Aw, get on with it! We'll be here all day!

TULLYDUB: That person should be put to death. That is the law!

ALL: This is the law.

(The door, yet again.)

JIKKI: Beg pardon! But shall I toll the bell?

TULLYDUB: No, you numskull! If the bell is tolled, the people will be told, and they must not know that the old King is dead until the forty-seventh person enters the east gate tomorrow morning!

SCENE 3: THE GIFT OF THE MAGIC CLOAK

(A tiny village, a day's walk from the great City of Nole. Two children sit at the bank of a great river. The young girl called FLUFF and her younger brother BUD are heartbroken over the recent death of their father)

FLUFF: Come on now, Bud. You can't be here by this beautiful river crying like a little baby.

BUD: He's not coming back, Fluff. Our father drowned in that river and he's never coming back.

FLUFF: He wouldn't want to see you crying would he?

BUD: I'm not crying. I just...what are we going to do?

(At that moment, the children's AUNT RIVETTE enters.)

AUNT RIVETTE: Oh, there you are my dear children.

FLUFF: Aunt Rivette, I haven't seen you in years.

AUNT RIVETTE: That doesn't mean I haven't thought of you night and day. When I heard about the death of my brother I...are you crying there Bud?

BUD: No, I—

AUNT RIVETTE: Because from now on, there will be no crying. If I catch you crying again, I'll be sure to box your ears!

FLUFF: Why are you here, Aunt Rivette?

AUNT RIVETTE: I couldn't leave you two orphans here all alone now could I? I'm here to take you back to my home in the City of Nole. You dear, shall help me with my ironing and you, young man will carry water for my tubs.

BUD: This is our home!

AUNT RIVETTE: This was your home. Now come along now, we have a long journey ahead.

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(Reluctantly, the children rise and begin the long journey to Nole. During the long walk, Bud collapses.)

BUD: I can't go any further.

AUNT RIVETTE: Stand up you little beggar.

BUD: My feet are so swollen, they're busting through my shoes!

FLUFF: I need a break.

AUNT RIVETTE: There will be no breaks for either of you miserable souls! Now, there on the horizon rises the great City of Nole. There is no stopping until we get there!

BUD: I'm miserable.

FLUFF: Me too. I've never been so unhappy in my whole life!

AUNT RIVETTE: Up now! Both of you! Don't make me get a switch!

BUD: I can't move another inch.

AUNT RIVETTE: Very well then, there is an inn. Perhaps they have a room for the night.

(Aunt Rivette pounds on the door of the inn. The INNKEEPER opens the door.)

Pardon me, sir. I am traveling here with these two weary children; do you happen to have a room for the night?

INNKEEPER: We are full tonight. You can stay in the stable if you'd like.

AUNT RIVETTE: Very well, thank you for your generosity.

(The door slams shut.)

BUD: No rooms? There's no one around!

AUNT RIVETTE: You spoiled child. Be happy with what you get. The stable is here, just around the corner.

(The clan enters the stable. In one corner, an OLD BEGGAR feigns sleep.)

You see. We're not the only ones to sleep in the stable this night.

(As Aunt Rivette and Bud snuggle into sleep, Fluff is approached by the Old Beggar.)

OLD BEGGAR: Are you unhappy my dear?

FLUFF: I am the most unhappy person in the entire world!

(The Old Beggar removes her cloak. It is the fairy Ereol.)

EREOL: Then, I will present you with this magic cloak, which has been woven by the fairies. When you wear it you may have your first wish granted; and if you give it freely to any other mortal, that person may also have one wish granted. Use the cloak wisely, and guard it as a great treasure.

(Ereol spreads the folds of the great garment over Fluff's shoulders.)

AUNT RIVETTE: Where did you get that?

FLUFF: This stranger gave it to me.

AUNT RIVETTE: Take it off! Take it off this minute and give it to me or I will whip you soundly!

EREOL: Stop! The cloak belongs to this child alone, and if you dare take it from her I will punish you severely.

AUNT RIVETTE: What! Punish me! Punish me, you rascally fellow! We'll see about that.

EREOL: We will indeed. The cloak is a gift from the fairies; and you dare not anger them, for your punishment would be swift and terrible.

(Aunt Rivette moves to strike Ereol with her cane, but in a great puff of smoke, he is gone.)

AUNT RIVETTE: You may keep your cloak. If it does come from the fairies, I wouldn't touch it for the world. Bud, get up. This is no place for fine people. We must continue our journey to Nole.

(They continue on their journey. The sun begins to rise.)

FLUFF: Ah me! I wish I could be happy again.

(Fluff gives out a great laugh.)

AUNT RIVETTE: What's the matter with you?

FLUFF: Why, the sun is shining. The air is sweet and fresh. The trees are green and beautiful. The whole world is pleasant and delightful.

(Fluff begins to skip and dance.)

AUNT RIVETTE: Come along! Everyone is passing us on the road and we must hurry and get home before noon. The east gate of the City of Nole is just over there.

SCENE 4: KING BUD AND PRINCESS FLUFF

(Underneath the great East Gate of the Kingdom of Noland, the High Counselors have gathered. One by one, the people of the kingdom pass through the gate.)

TOLLYDOB: One, two, three, four, five, six!

TULLYDUB: This is going to take forever!

TALLYDAB: We must hurry the people along.

TOLLYDOB: If we hurry them, they may suspect our true intent.

TALLYDAB: We will be fine, so long as that idiot doesn't ring that blasted bell.

TOLLYDOB: Eight, nine, ten, eleven!

TULLYDUB: That's it! Hurry them through!

(The Counselors hurry several people through the gate calling out random numbers as they pass through.)

TOLLYDOB: Thirty-eight!

TALLYDAB: That's all? That was a very fine nobleman who passed through. He would have made a fine King!

TULLYDUB: Keep your voice down. You don't want...to hear about the...of the...

TOLLYDOB: Very right indeed!

(At that moment, there is a loud "BOOM!" It is Jikki ringing the BELL. The TOWNSPEOPLE hear the bell and, realizing what has happened, become enthralled with the Counselors' scene at the gate. Enter Bud, Fluff, and Aunt Rivette.)

TOWNSPEOPLE: The bell tolls for the King! The King is dead! Look, the counselors! They are here to choose the new king!

TULLYDUB: Quiet now!

(TWO PEASANTS pass through the gate.)

TOLLYDOB: Thirty-nine, forty!

BUD: What is going on?

FLUFF: I have no idea.

(A few more PEASANTS run through.)

TOLLYDOB: Forty-one...forty-four!

AUNT RIVETTE: Come on children, stop dallying about.

(Aunt Rivette enters, followed by Fluff.)

TOLLYDOB: Forty-five, forty-six...

(Bud enters.)

Forty-seven! Long live the new King of Noland!

COUNSELORS: Long live the King!

(The Counselors prostrate themselves in front of Bud, then rise and present him with a golden crown, a jeweled scepter, and a robe of ermine. The Townspeople break out a sudden cheer, waving their hats and bonnets above their heads.)

TOWNSPEOPLE: Long live the King of Noland!

(An OLD MAN grabs the bonnet from Aunt Rivette's head.)

OLD MAN: Why don't you greet the new King? Are you a traitor to your country?

(Stupefied, Aunt Rivette waves her bonnet and screams.)

AUNT RIVETTE: Long live the King!

TULLYDUB: May it please Your Serene Majesty to condescend to tell us who this young lady is?

BUD: That's my sister, Fluff.

TULLYDUB: All hail Princess Fluff!

TALLYDAB: Now, Your Majesty. To your castle we must go!

(The Townspeople gather around Bud and Fluff and lift them into the air and march off in a joyous and rowdy procession to the castle. Still in shock, Aunt Rivette follows behind.)

SCENE 5: BUD DISPENSES JUSTICE

(The procession ends at the Palace of Nole, where the crowd gently places Bud in his throne. They gather around, kneeling before him.)

TOLLYDOB: Behold our new King! Be it known far and wide the severe penalty doled out to anyone who refuses to obey his slightest wish.

(Silence. Bud stands and is amazed to learn that this very simple movement causes everyone to bow their heads in reverence.)

BUD: Um, hello...

ALL: Hello!

BUD: Um, I'm Bud...

ALL: All hail King Bud!

BUD: Um, I'm not sure what to do...

(Jikki approaches the King.)

JIKKI: Beg pardon, Your Majesty! But the lord high counselor desires to know the King's will.

BUD: Tell him I want to be left alone to talk to my sister, Fluff.

JIKKI: The King wishes a moment alone with his sister! Everybody out!

(The Townspeople exit.)

FLUFF: Oh, Bud! Think of it! I am the royal Princess Fluff, and you're the King of all Noland! Isn't it funny!

BUD: What does it all mean? We're only poor children; I can't really be a king. I wouldn't be surprised if Aunt Rivette came in any minute and boxed my ears.

FLUFF: Didn't you hear what that fat man said about the law? You're the rightful King and can do whatever you please; and I'm the princess, because I'm your sister; so I can do whatever I please!

BUD: If you're a princess, why are you wearing that old gray dress and those patched-up shoes? Father said that princesses only wore the loveliest dresses.

FLUFF: I really ought to have some new dresses.

BUD: Call in that old man. I'll order something and if he obeys me, then I'll believe I'm really a king.

FLUFF: Listen now, Bud. Don't let these folks see you're afraid, or that you're not sure whether you're a king or not. Order them around and make them afraid of you. That's what the kings do in all the stories I ever read.

BUD: Okay. Call in that old donkey with all the silver buttons all over him.

FLUFF: Here's a bell-rope. Pull it and he will surely appear.

(Jikki enters instantly and bows low to each of the children.)

BUD: What's your name?

JIKKI: Jikki, Your Gracious Majesty.

BUD: Who are you?

JIKKI: Your Majesty's valet, if you please.

BUD: I want some new clothes and so does my sister.

JIKKI: Certainly, Your Majesty. I'll send the lord high steward here at once.

(Jikki exits as Tallydab enters.)

TALLYDAB: I beg Your Majesty to command me.

BUD: We want some new clothes.

TALLYDAB: They are already ordered, Your Majesty, and will be here presently.

BUD: Oh.

TALLYDAB: I have ordered twenty suits for Your Majesty and forty gowns for the princess. I hope these will content Your Majesty and the princess until you have time to select a larger assortment.

BUD: Oh.

TALLYDAB: I have also selected seven maidens, the most noble in all the land, to wait upon the princess. They are now awaiting her Highness in her own apartments.

(Fluff shrieks with joy and claps her hands.)

FLUFF: I'll go to them at once!

(Fluff rushes off.)

TALLYDAB: Has Your Majesty any further commands? If not, your counselors would like to confer with you in regard to your new duties and responsibilities.

BUD: Send 'em in!

(Tallydab claps his hand and the remaining Counselors enter.)

TULLYDUB: Your Majesty, we are here to instruct you, with your gracious consent, in your new and important duties.

BUD: Is this a joke?

TOLLYDOB: We would never joke with your mighty and glorious Majesty?

BUD: Are you sure there is no mistake? I'm just the ferryman's son.

TALLYDAB: There can be no mistake. We high counselors have ourselves interpreted and carried out the laws of the land, and the people, your subjects, have approved our action.

BUD: I supposed I'll have to be King whether I want to or not.

TOLLYDOB: Your Majesty speaks the truth. With or without your consent, you are the King. It is the law.

COUNSELORS: It is the law!

BUD: Then I want some new toys! A whole room full.

TULLYDUB: Of course Your Majesty.

BUD: It's good to be the King!

TALLYDAB: It is time for you to hear the grievances of your people.

BUD: What's the matter with 'em? Why don't they keep out of trouble?

TOLLYDOB: I don't know Your Majesty, but there are always disputes among the people.

BUD: That isn't the King's fault is it?

TULLYDUB: No, Your Majesty; but it's the King's place to settle these disputes, for he has the supreme power.

BUD: You just fix up things to suit yourselves.

(Fluff enters wearing a new dress.)

FLUFF: Isn't it wonderful?

TALLYDAB: Marvelous.

FLUFF: You all look so serious.

TULLYDUB: We were just going over the King's responsibilities.

BUD: Which I don't care a thing about.

TOLLYDOB: But Your Majesty. It is not only expected, it is your duty.

BUD: I won't!

TOLLYDOB: You must, Your Majesty.

BUD: Am I not the King?

TULLYDUB: Certainly, Your Majesty.

BUD: And isn't the King's will the law?

TALLYDAB: Of course, Your Majesty.

BUD: Then get out of here and leave me and my sister alone!

FLUFF: Bud, do you remember father saying that people in this world always have to pay for anything good they get?

BUD: What do you mean?

FLUFF: If you are going to be the King, and wear fine clothes, and eat lovely dinners, and live in a palace — then you ought to be willing to pay for all these pleasures.

BUD: How can I pay for them?

FLUFF: By attending to your responsibilities and doing all the disagreeable things the King is expected to do.

BUD: Why do you always gotta be right? Send 'em in!

(Tollydob pulls the bell rope. Jikki enters followed by a FARMER and his SON.)

FARMER: Your Majesty, my son insists upon running away from home, and I wish you would tell me what to do with him.

BUD: Why do you run away?

SON: Because he whips me.

BUD: Why do you whip the boy?

FARMER: Because he runs away.

BUD: We'll if anyone whipped me, I'd run away, too. If the boy isn't whipped or abused he ought to stay at home and be good. But it's none of my business anyhow.

TOLLYDOB: Oh, Your Majesty. It really must be your business. You're the King, you know; and everybody's business is the King's.

BUD: How's that fair?

(Fluff leans over and whispers into Bud's ear.)

See here! The first time this man whips the boy again, or the first time the boy runs away, I order my lord high steward to give them both a good switching. Now go home and try to behave yourselves!

(The Farmer and his Son exit. Two OLD WOMEN, one very fat and one very thin, enter leading a COW. Each one holds a rope that is tied to one of the Cow's horns and each has a bandage over her mouth.)

Why are their mouths covered?

JIKKI: Your Majesty, each of these women claim to own the cow and while they were waiting they quarreled so loudly I had to shut them up. Now, Your Majesty, please decide which of these women own the cow.

BUD: I can't.

TULLYDUB: Oh, Your Majesty, but you must.

(Again, Fluff leans over and whispers into Bud's ear.)

BUD: Send one of the women away! Bring a pail and a milking stool.

(The Thin Woman is led away. The pail and stool are retrieved. As soon as she is gone, the bandage is removed from the mouth of the Fat Woman.)

FAT WOMAN: The cow's mine! It's my cow! I own it!

BUD: Hold! If the cow belongs to you, let me see you milk her.

FAT WOMAN: Certainly, Your Majesty, certainly!

(The Fat Woman seizes the pail and the stool and plops down on the left side of the Cow. The Cow gives a swift kick, sending the woman flying across the floor, and landing with the milk pail stuck on her head. The Cow moos and looks blandly around.)

BUD: Put this woman in the room and fetch the other woman here.

(The Fat Woman is led out as the Thin Woman is brought in.)

Now, if you'd please milk the cow

THIN WOMAN: Of course, Your Majesty.

(The Thin Woman approaches the Cow on the right side and pats it gently.)

So, Boss! So-o-o-o, Bossie, my darlin! Good Bossie! Nice Bossie!

(The Cow turns its head to look at the lean woman and makes no objection when she sits down and begins milking.)

BUD: The cow is yours! Take her and go home!

(Everyone applauds the King enthusiastically.)

TALLYDAB: Another Solomon has come to rule us!

BUD: Tell me, where did you get such a nice faithful Bossie as that?

THIN WOMAN: Must I tell you the truth?

BUD: Of course.

THIN WOMAN: Then, Your Majesty. I stole her from that fat woman you have locked up in that room. But no one can take the cow from me now, because you have given her to me.

(The room goes silent.)

BUD: Then how could you milk the cow and she couldn't?

THIN WOMAN: She doesn't understand cows and I do. Simple as that. Good day, Your Majesty. Much obliged.

(The Thin Woman exits with the Cow.)

BUD: Have we any cows in the royal stables?

TULLYDUB: Certainly, Your Majesty.

BUD: Then give one to the fat woman and send her home. I've done all the judging I am going to do today. I'm going upstairs with my sister to play.

(At that moment, Aunt Rivette rushes in.)

AUNT RIVETTE: Hold on! Hold on! I demand justice! Justice of the King! Justice of the law! Justice to the King's aunt!

BUD: What's the matter with you?

AUNT RIVETTE: Everything's the matter with me. Aren't you the new King?

BUD: Yes. That's what I am.

AUNT RIVETTE: Am I not your aunt? Am I not your aunt?

BUD: Yes.

AUNT RIVETTE: Why am I left to live in a hut and dress in rags? Doesn't the law say that every blood relation of the King shall live in a royal palace?

BUD: I don't know. Does it?

TULLYDUB: The law says so, Your Majesty.

BUD: Must I have that old hag around me all the time?

AUNT RIVETTE: Hag yourself! I'll teach you to call me a hag! Wait 'til I get you alone!

BUD: The King can do what he likes, can't he?

TULLYDUB: Certainly, Your Majesty.

BUD: Then let the lord high steward step forward!

FLUFF: Oh, Bud! What are you going to do?

BUD: You let me alone! I'm not going to be a king for nothing. Aunt Rivette whipped me once, sixteen hard switches! I counted 'em.

(Tallydab bows before Bud.)

BUD: Get a switch.

(Tallydab pulls out a long, slender switch.)

Now, you give Aunt Rivette sixteen good switches.

FLUFF: Oh, don't Bud!

(Aunt Rivette falls on her knees trembling.)

AUNT RIVETTE: I'll never do it again! Let me off, Your Majesty! Let me off this once! I'll never do it again! Never! Never!

BUD: Alright. I'll let you off this time. But if you don't behave, or if you interfere with me or Fluff, I'll have the lord high steward take charge of you. Just remember I'm the King. Now

you may go upstairs if you wish to and pick out a room on the top story. Fluff and I are going to play.

(Bud takes off his crown and robe and places them on his thrown.)

Come on, Fluff! We've have enough business for today!

SCENE 6: THE POWER OF THE MAGIC CLOAK

(In her new room, Aunt Rivette pulls new clothes from a giant wooden trunk. Unsatisfied with everything she finds, she tosses the clothes on to Jikki, who has become nothing more than a pair of hands, the great mound of discarded clothes covering the rest of his body. A PALACE GUARD stands guarding the door. After a moment, Bud and Fluff enter.)

FLUFF: What in the world is going on here?

AUNT RIVETTE: See what I've got?

(She holds out a small purse full of gold.)

The lord high steward gave me a whole purse of gold and I'm going to buy the finest clothes! I'll make Mammy Skib and Mistress Kappleson and all my other neighbors wild with jealousy!

BUD: We don't care!

AUNT RIVETTE: Why, you owe me everything! If I hadn't brought you to Nole you wouldn't have been the forty-seventh person to enter the gate.

FLUFF: That's true.

BUD: I don't care how many dresses you buy!

AUNT RIVETTE: I'm going to spend every piece of this gold! I don't like to go through the streets in this poor dress. Won't you lend me your cloak until I get back?

FLUFF: Of course I will.

(Fluff removes her cloak and throws it over Aunt Rivette's shoulders.)

BUD: Great! We're going out to buy some toys. And candy. There isn't any in the whole palace!

FLUFF: I suppose the old King didn't care for candy.

AUNT RIVETTE: Jikki! Come now, it's time to go shopping. Jikki?

(Jikki shakes free of the pile of clothes.)

BUD: You can't go treat him like a clothes hamper.

AUNT RIVETTE: We are going shopping! I'll buy yellow silk and white velvet and a purple brocade and a sky blue bonnet with crimson plumes! Oh dear! If I could only walk faster, all the shops are so far! I wish I could fly!

(No sooner has she spoken than two great feathery wings appear. Turning her head, she sees the wings and gives out a great scream and begins to jump about waving her arms about frantically. The motion of course causes her to fly about the room.)

Stop! Help! Murder!

(The children double over in laughter, thoroughly amused. Jikki, on the other hand, stands petrified.)

Save me! Someone save me!

BUD: Stop flying! Stop moving your arms about!

(Taking Bud's advice, she lands high up on a piece of furniture.)

AUNT RIVETTE: Get a ladder! Please get a ladder!

FLUFF: Oh Bud, I let her wear the magic cloak! What are we to do?

BUD: Why don't you fly down!

AUNT RIVETTE: I'm not a bird!

BUD: You look like an old buzzard!

AUNT RIVETTE: I'm going to fall and break my head!

BUD: That would be hilarious!

FLUFF: Bud stop it, she's in real trouble.

(Jikki picks the cloak up off the ground and puts it on.)

Jikki, what are you doing?

JIKKI: Putting an end to this nonsense. I wish that the lady would come down unharmed and that she no longer be able to fly.

(With that, Aunt Rivette's wings disappear and she floats safely back down to the ground.)

AUNT RIVETTE: That cloak! It's evil! I need some air!

BUD: Guard! Take her outside and see that she doesn't try to fly away.

(The Palace Guard and Aunt Rivette exit.)

FLUFF: Oh, Jikki, how smart of you.

JIKKI: Take back your cloak and keep it safe. It is very powerful. Someone may try to steal it.

BUD: Who in the world would do that?

JIKKI: There is one who comes to mind. In these halls, we dare not speak her name. She would do anything to have that cloak.

(In another space, the lights come up on QUEEN ZIXI OF IX. She sits combing her long beautiful hair.)

FLUFF: Tell us!

JIKKI: You don't want to know. Your lives are full of fun and are so carefree.

BUD: As King of this kingdom, I order you, tell us now.

JIKKI: Have you heard of the land of Ix?

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FLUFF: Not at all.

JIKKI: Not far from our land of Noland, if you were to climb the great mountain range and go down the other side, cross a broad and swift river, and pick your way through a dark forest you would find yourself in the land of Ix. Even before you came to the great city, you would see the high marble towers of Queen Zixi's magnificent palace.

BUD: Who is Queen Zixi?

JIKKI: The most powerful witch there ever was. Though she is beautiful and looks no more than sixteen, in fact she is six hundred and eighty-three years old and has prolonged her life in this extraordinary way through her magic.

FLUFF: If she's so powerful then she'd have no use for my cloak.

JIKKI: You see there is one thing her art was unable to deceive and that one thing is a mirror. To mortal eyes Zixi is charming and attractive, yet her reflection in a mirror shows to her an ugly old hag, bald of head, wrinkled, with toothless gums and withered, sunken cheeks. There are no mirrors allowed in her palace, for she cannot stand to see her own face!

FLUFF: The secret of my cloak is known to but a few of us. How would she know it even exists?

JIKKI: Oh, she has ways my dear, she has ways.

SCENE 7: THE WITCH QUEEN

(As Queen Zixi sits in her magnificent palace, combing her magnificent hair, the Palace Guard enters and begins removing pieces of his garments, revealing himself as QUAVO, a spy in the employ of Queen Zixi.)

QUEEN ZIXI: Quavo! What news do you bring?

QUAVO: As you suspected my Queen, the old King has died.

QUEEN ZIXI: Of course he has. I could hear that stupid bell ringing for a thousand miles. Tell me something that I don't know.

QUAVO: I have composed a song.

QUEEN ZIXI: A song?

QUAVO: I am a minstrel, my Queen, and my job is to sing.

QUEEN ZIXI: You are not a minstrel. You are a spy!

QUAVO: I've always wanted to be singer. I could use the practice.

QUEEN ZIXI: Very well sing your song. Be quick about it.

QUAVO: Might I have some accompaniment?

QUEEN ZIXI: What accompaniment?

QUAVO: When minstrels sing they always have accompaniment.

QUEEN ZIXI: Then play your guitar. Get on with it. What news do you have of Noland?

QUAVO: I don't know how to play the guitar.

QUEEN ZIXI: You what?

QUAVO: I was thinking with your magic you could...

QUEEN ZIXI: On with the news, Quavo, before I turn you into a pile of mud!

QUAVO: Right.

(Quavo clears his throat.)

OF NOLAND NOW A TALE I'LL SING
WHERE REIGNS A STRANGELY YOUTHFUL KING—
A BOY, WHO HAS BY CHANCE ALONE
BEEN CALLED TO SIT UPON A THRONE.
HIS SISTER SHARES HIS LUCK, AND SHE
THE FAIRIES' FRIEND IS SAID TO BE;
FOR THEY DID MYSTIC ARTS INVOKE
AND WEAVE FOR HER A MAGIC CLOAK
WHICH GRANTS ITS WEARER—THUS I'M TOLD—
GIFTS MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD.
SHE'S BUT TO WISH, AND HER DESIRE
QUITE INSTANTLY SHE WILL ACQUIRE;
AND WHEN SHE LENDS IT TO HER FRIENDS,
THE FAVOR UNTO THEM EXTENDS—

QUEEN ZIXI: Stop! Do you lie, Quavo?

QUAVO: NOW MAY I DIE AT BREAK OF DAY
IF FALSE IS ANY WORD I SAY.

QUEEN ZIXI: Spit it out! And don't you dare sing another note!

QUAVO: The cloak belongs to Princess Fluff. I have seen its powers with my own eyes.

QUEEN ZIXI: You remember how it looks.

QUAVO: It's beautiful.

QUEEN ZIXI: Very well.

(She opens her purse and gives him a few coins.)

Describe this cloak to me. Thread by thread.

(She leans in and whispers into his ear. He smiles from ear to evil ear.)

SCENE 8: THE THEFT OF THE MAGIC CLOAK

(With the help of Quavo, Queen Zixi transforms herself into ADLENA, a beautiful young girl dressed in a simple white gown with pink ribbons. When the transformation is complete, she swirls her wand over her magic cauldron and from its belly removes a leather school satchel. Opening it ever so cautiously, she reveals the contents to Quavo.)

QUAVO: Puuurrrfect!

(Quavo exits. In another space, Fluff and Bud play tennis. A small, silver trunk sits next to them. They laugh and carry about, hitting the ball this way and that. Jikki enters and approaches Fluff.)

JIKKI: Pardon me; there is a young girl here who wishes to speak to Your Highness.

FLUFF: Send her here.

(Jikki motions and Queen Zixi enters disguised as Adlena.)

ADLENA: Please, Your Highness, may I be one of your maids?

(Fluff laughs.)

FLUFF: I have eight already!

ADLENA: My father and mother are both dead; and I have come all the way from my castle to beg you to let me wait upon you.

FLUFF: Who are you?

ADLENA: My name is Adlena.

FLUFF: Then, Adlena, you shall certainly be one of my maids, for there is plenty of room in the palace, and the more girls I have around me the happier I shall be.

ADLENA: Thank you, Your Highness!

BUD: Are we going to play or are we going to talk?

FLUFF: Now wait over here; my brother and I have a game to finish.

ADLENA: Certainly Your Highness!

(As Fluff and Bud resume their match, Adlena opens her satchel and removes a fake magic cloak that looks exactly like the original save for the magic thread that gives it its power. She throws the counterfeit around her shoulders. It doesn't take long for Fluff to notice.)

FLUFF: See here! What do you mean by wearing my cloak? Take it off instantly!

BUD: Oh, here we go!

ADLENA: It isn't your cloak. It is one of my own.

FLUFF: Nonsense! There can't be two such cloaks in the world!

ADLENA: How funny. You mean we have cloaks that look alike?

(Fluff opens her trunk and removes the real magic cloak.)

FLUFF: I keep it very close so no one will steal it. It was made by fairies.

ADLENA: Oh, they do look the same. Mine was made by my poor old mom. How odd. I think yours is a little longer.

(Adlena throws the fake cloak around Fluff's shoulders.)

No, I think mine is a bit longer.

(Adlena switches the cloaks again. And again and again until they are completely mixed.)

FLUFF: Which one is mine?

ADLENA: This one of course.

(Adlena folds up the fake cloak and places it in the trunk.)

BUD: Fluff, you'd best take your cloak and put it away. You shouldn't have it here on the tennis courts.

FLUFF: It's so very nice to meet you, Adlena. You have a very beautiful cloak indeed. Now if you'll excuse me, I must put this away. I will see you in the palace.

ADLENA: Of course, Your Highness.

(Fluff and Bud exit. Adlena sneaks off and finds herself in a great forest.)

At last! At last I shall see my own beautiful reflection in a mirror, instead of that horrid old hag!

(Adlena transforms herself back into Queen Zixi and throws the magic cloak over her shoulders.)

I wish that my reflection in every mirror will hereafter show the same face and form as that in which I appear to exist in the sight of all mortals! Ah, there's a crystal spring. Now, indeed, I shall at last see the lovely Queen Zixi!

(Queen Zixi goes to the spring. She gives out a sudden shriek of disappointed rage! She rises and throws off the cloak. She plops down in a corner and begins to sob. After a moment, The Old Man in the Moon appears.)

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: Ah, the lovely Queen Zixi, why do you cry so?

QUEEN ZIXI: My wish of the magic cloak didn't work! All I see is the reflection of a horrid beast!

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: The magic cloak will grant no wish to the person who has stolen it.

QUEEN ZIXI: So there is no hope for me in this entire kingdom.

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: See now, you are not the only one crying in this forest tonight. Look over there, what do you see?

QUEEN ZIXI: It's an old alligator, and he is crying. Why would an alligator be crying?

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: You see he is crying because he cannot climb a tree.

QUEEN ZIXI: Why would he want to climb a tree?

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: Because he can't.

QUEEN ZIXI: That is very foolish!

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: Oh, I don't know. It doesn't strike me that it's much more foolish than the fancies some other people have.

QUEEN ZIXI: Perhaps not.

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: How about up there? What do you see in a tree?

QUEEN ZIXI: I see an owl and he's crying as well.

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: He wails because he cannot swim in the river like a fish.

QUEEN ZIXI: Why would an owl wish to swim?

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: Because he can't.

QUEEN ZIXI: But that's absurd!

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: I don't think that's as absurd as the longings of some other folks.

QUEEN ZIXI: We are all alike—the alligator, the owl, and the powerful Queen of Ix. We long for what we cannot have, yet desire it not so much because it would benefit us, as because it is beyond our reach. If I call others fools, I must also call myself a fool for wishing to see the reflection of a beautiful girl in my mirror when I know it is impossible. So hereafter I shall strive to be contented with my lot.

(And with that, Queen Zixi tosses away the cloak and exits.)

OLD MAN IN THE MOON: You are very wise, Queen Zixi. Very wise indeed.

SCENE 9: THE ATTACK OF THE ROLY ROGUES

(In the darkness, we hear the deep, dark chant of the ROLY ROGUES.)

ROLY ROGUES: Roly, Roly, Roly Rogue! Roly, Roly, Roly Rogue!

(As the lights come up, Jikki crashes to the ground having been kicked firmly in the rear by a Roly Rogue. The Roly Rogues enter in procession leading the High Counselors, who they have bound and gagged. The Roly Rogues are unlike any people in the entire world. Their bodies are big and fat, like giant rubber balls with tiny arms and legs which they can withdraw like a turtle into its shell. The Counselors attempt to fight the Roly Rogues, but they bounce easily off the Roly Rogues' rubber-like bodies. The procession continues across the stage and exits.)

(The lights come up on Bud and Fluff in their own space. They are having a picnic.)

FLUFF: What I'm saying is that you have to treat all your people with respect. You can't order a nobleman to stand on his head in front of a mob of people.

BUD: He was pompous and deserved it. Besides, I gave him a good dinner afterward.

FLUFF: The people look up to you. You have to set a good example.

(Aunt Rivette enters.)

AUNT RIVETTE: Children, you have to come quickly!

BUD: Can't you leave us alone?

AUNT RIVETTE: Your kingdom has been invaded by the Roly Rogues. Your people have been enslaved!

BUD: Stop making stuff up.

FLUFF: What in the world is a Roly Rogue?

AUNT RIVETTE: Giant, beastly creatures that roll around on the ground. Their bodies are like giant rubber balls. And they smell. Terrible.

FLUFF: What are we going to do?

BUD: I don't know.

(Aunt Rivette helps herself to a slice of cake.)

AUNT RIVETTE: One thing is for certain. Our happy lives are ruined forever. The sooner we escape to some other country where the Roly Rogues cannot find us, the safer we'll be.

BUD: We can't just run away.

AUNT RIVETTE: We don't have a choice. They'll crush us in an instant.

BUD: What about the magic cloak? We could use it to drive them away.

FLUFF: You'll have to make the wish Bud; you're the only one with a wish left.

BUD: I wanted to save my wish for something else. Something fun. But if I must, I must.

AUNT RIVETTE: Where is the cloak?

FLUFF: It's locked up in my trunk at the palace.

AUNT RIVETTE: Your enemies have possession of the palace.

BUD: I'm not afraid.

FLUFF: I'm not letting you go alone.

BUD: Come on then, let's go.

(Bud and Fluff run off to the palace. Hiding behind a column, they see the Roly Rogues have made slaves of the Counselors and

Jikki. Tallydab is being used as a chair and Tollydob a foot stool. Tollydub fans one of the Roly Rogues as Jikki scratches another's back with a rake.)

BUD: What in the world has happened here?

FLUFF: There's the trunk!

BUD: What should I wish?

FLUFF: Wish the Roly Rogues back to where they came from.

BUD: What if they come back? I'll wish them all dead.

FLUFF: It would take forever to bury those giant bodies.

BUD: How about I wish they instantly disappear.

FLUFF: Excellent. Be careful.

(Bud sneaks over to the trunk without being seen. He pops open the lid and pulls on the cloak.)

BUD: Alright you ugly rascals!

ROLY ROGUE: Who are you?

BUD: I'm the King of Noland! You better show me proper respect!

ROLY ROGUE: We don't care who you are!

ROLY ROGUE: I bet he tastes like chicken!

BUD: I wish every one of the Roly Rogues dead and buried!

(Nothing happens!)

I wish every one of the Roly Rogues to instantly disappear!

(Again nothing. The Roly Rogues begin to roar with laughter.)

ROLY ROGUE: Like to try again?

BUD: I wish...

ROLY ROGUE: Seize him!

(Bud and Fluff scramble off barely escaping the attack of the Roly Rogues. They escape and stop to catch their breath.)

BUD: The old thing's a fraud!

FLUFF: Something went wrong. Are you sure you hadn't wished before?

BUD: I'm sure.

FLUFF: Maybe the cloak's powers won't work on them.

BUD: What should we do now? Our whole country is conquered by these monsters; it isn't safe for us to stay here.

FLUFF: Remember Jikki telling us of Queen Zixi? She is the only one powerful enough to protect us.

BUD: What if she's mean?

FLUFF: I heard she's very beautiful and kind to her people.

BUD: There's no one else we can trust.

(Bud and Fluff exit and journey to the land of Ix.)

SCENE 10: IN THE PALACE OF THE WITCH QUEEN

(Bud and Fluff reach the palace of Queen Zixi. They are greeted by Quavo.)

QUAVO: Welcome to the Palace of Ix.

BUD: Doesn't he look familiar?

(Fluff shrugs.)

I am King Bud of Noland and this is my sister Princess Fluff. My kingdom has been conquered by a horde of monsters, and—

QUAVO: Monsters?

FLUFF: We have come to the Queen of Ix to ask her assistance.

QUAVO: They didn't follow you here?

BUD: No, they —

(Queen Zixi enters.)

QUEEN ZIXI: Greetings my dears, I am the Queen of Ix.

FLUFF: You're more beautiful than I ever imagined!

BUD: We've come to ask for your help. Our kingdom has been overrun by the Roly Rogues.

QUEEN ZIXI: Roly Rogues, oh my. They are a fierce bunch.

FLUFF: They're terrible and they won't go away.

QUEEN ZIXI: You must be Princess Fluff.

FLUFF: I am, Your Majesty.

QUEEN ZIXI: I have heard a great many things about your magic cloak. Perhaps you could use it to drive away the Roly Rogues.

BUD: No, we tried. The old thing won't work anymore.

QUEEN ZIXI: Oh, you have the cloak again?

FLUFF: I keep it locked up in my favorite trunk.

QUEEN ZIXI: Your favorite trunk? Then I am sorry to say, you have not the fairy cloak at all, but the imitation one.

FLUFF: What do you mean?

QUEEN ZIXI: I must make a confession. We have met before and I stole your magic cloak.

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