

A KNIGHT IN MY LOCKER

A TWO ACT COMEDY

By Christopher Burruto

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SYNOPSIS: When the evil Lord Spencer conspires against the kingdom, the Queen gives Princess Tuesday a magical apple, urging her to find a hero and bring him back to Aragonia. Tuesday bites the apple and finds herself transported to a modern-day middle school. She follows instructions from a “genie” trapped inside a metal wall, opens the locker, and discovers a knight! Well, sort of. Enjoy the wacky antics of “Sir Wallace of Fairfield Middle School” and his friends as they outwit teachers, bullies, family members, and the Aragonian Army in this time-bending travelogue full of humor, fun and medieval chaos. Oh, and um, no one's really quite sure how to get back to Aragonia . . .

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(APPROXIMATELY 7 MEN AND 9 WOMEN, PLUS EXTRAS)

NOTE: Cast is extremely flexible. A female can play the Principal/Spencer role just as easily as a male. Ruffians, bullies, etc. could all be played by either gender.

WALLACE (M).....Middle-high school age. He is getting weary of always being picked on by the school bullies. Has a best friend - Dewey - who is the comic relief. Wallace has an unrequited crush on Francine. Lacks the confidence necessary to stand up for himself, or ask out Francine.
(Approximately 142 lines)

FRANCINE (F).....Middle-high school age. School smart and people smart. She tolerates but likes Dewey, and has a secret crush on Wallace, but recognizes that he is too shy to do anything about it. (*Approximately 90 lines*)

DEWEY (M).....Middle-high school age. Wallace's best friend. The comic centerpiece of the play. Irreverent without being obnoxious. He likes everyone - life is a lark to him. But, he is deeper too than first glance, for he can see the problems facing his friend. (*Approximately 104 lines*)

TUESDAY (F).....Middle-high school age. The princess is sent to the future to find a hero! She has lived her entire life in secret. She is unaware that she is a princess or that the witch who cares for her is really her mother. She enters the world of the present with wide-eyed surprise and fascination. (*106 lines*)

SPENCER (M OR F).....Adult. King Gwydion's cousin. Spencer was passed over by his own father for succession to the throne in favor of Gwydion. He is jealous and power hungry, as well as a very funny character. Doubles as PRINCIPAL. (*Approximately 86 lines*)

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- TWITCHY (M OR F) Adult. Typical bumbling sidekick to the main nemesis. He's named Twitchy for a reason! S/he should be a very physical, nervous person abounding with physical humor. Doubles as ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL. (*Approximately 54 lines*)
- AXL (M OR F) Middle-high school age. Typical middle school bully. Equal parts bravado and cowardice. Double as RUFFIAN 1. (*26 lines*)
- TRAVIS (M OR F) Middle-high school age. Typical middle school bully. Equal parts bravado and cowardice. Double as RUFFIAN 2. (*19 lines*)
- HORTENSE (M OR F) Adult. An assistant to Nurse. *Note:* If male, change name to Horace. (*4 lines*)
- KING GWYDION/DAD (M) Adult. Becomes King after death of his uncle. A good King, he wants to reinvigorate his kingdom with fresh ideas. Unaware that Spencer wishes him harm. Could double as Wallace's dad. As Wallace's dad, he is thrilled that Wallace is bringing home not one, but two girls for dinner! *Note:* If necessary, Dad character can be played by another actor. (*17 lines*)

- QUEEN BEATRICE/MOM (F)..... Adult. Sweet, but not as naive as her husband, King Gwydion. Understands the threat that Spencer poses. After giving birth, she retreats into the woods and disguises herself as a witch. She raises her daughter, Tuesday, in secret and without revealing the circumstances surrounding their unusual life together. Could double as Wallace's mom. *Note:* If necessary, Mom character can be played by another actor. (23 lines/Queen; 12 lines/Mom)
- NURSE (F)..... Adult. A highly intelligent and intuitive person. She sees through Spencer and his plots, and devises the plan that allows the Queen and her newborn daughter to escape. (40 lines)
- LEONARD (M OR F)..... Middle-high school age. A friend of Wallace's and Francine's. A "nerd." Another victim of bullying. (6 lines)
- ACCOUNTANT (M OR F)..... Adult. A lawyer/accountant. Used for comic relief. Change the name to a local, overly-promoted accountant or lawyer. (2 lines)
- OGILVY (M)..... Adult. Knight Third Class. Somewhat bumbling and unskilled who is eager to please his superiors. Yet, he has a conscience and becomes an ally and savior of the Queen. (22 lines)

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SIBYLL DAPHNE ARMSTRONG (F). Middle-high school age. Wallace's sister. Funny and irreverent. (10 lines)

RUFFIANS/KNIGHTS/STUDENTS Adult and/or middle-high school age. Cast as many students as you wish in these roles. Students will have fun dressing up as knights and students. Several of these extras have speaking lines (3 lines/Troy [Extra bully]; 3 lines/Student; 1 line/Extra ruffian)

AUTHOR'S NOTES

A Knight in My Locker premiered in the spring of 2009 to two sold-out shows.

During play selection, the students participating in our drama club love plays that involve swords and medieval costumes. And, it is our philosophy to try to get kids to play kids as much as possible, that's what they're good at, and that's what they enjoy!

This play is a melding of the two - kids being able to dress up and use swords, as well as having the opportunity to just be themselves on stage.

The idea of a Princess traveling through time to the present, was very attractive to me, yet, but how to do it on stage? We decided to use a locker as the transportation device. That a locker is also the place where Wallace is frequently imprisoned made sense. It is through the locker that Wallace travels back through time, but it is through the locker that Wallace becomes confident enough to shake himself free of the bullies which press him.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The throne room and the school hallway are the main set pieces. Each one can be constructed using one flat. In our production, we had one flat painted as a throne scene, then flipped to represent the school hallway. A simple chair would even do as the throne as well.

The nurse's chamber can be represented by a chair at stage right or left. Add a spinning wheel if desired. The same is true for the witch's hut. A simple chair plus a cauldron or two is sufficient.

The school hallway: a bank or flat denoting lockers. Benches on either side of the bank of lockers, or downstage should work. One of them should open. If using cardboard flats, simply scoring and cutting one should be sufficient.

Wallace's dining room: a table and chairs.

Wallace's bedroom: a bed or couch, table or desk, and chair.

COSTUMES

- Queen costume
- King costume
- Peasant costume for Tuesday
- Crowns for King and Queen. Multiple crowns for Spencer as he seems to always break his
- Spencer and Twitchy would wear dark clothes both for when they are in the past, as well as the present. They should, in a way, mirror, the bullies
- Witch's costume
- Peasant costumes for Nurse and Horace
- Knight costumes and shields for knights
- Ruffians can be dressed as peasants or quasi-pirates

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- Students should be dressed as students are in the school in which the play is performed. Backpacks, notebooks, etc. Some can be dressed in football jerseys, cheerleader outfits, etc.
- Bullies could wear white and ripped t-shirts, leather coats, etc.

PROPERTY LIST

- Crowns for King and Queen
- Swords for knights and ruffians
- Briefcase and papers for Accountant
- Shields
- Baby and baby blanket
- Basket for Nurse
- Book/apple
- Throne - simply a large (preferably wooden) chair with red or blue cloth draped over it
- Tie - an ugly one - for Dewey to give to Wallace
- Cane for witch
- Clipboard for the Principal
- Lightsabers
- Silly String
- iPod
- Cell phones

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

- Scene 1: Throne Room
- Scene 2: School Hallway
- Scene 3: Throne Room
- Scene 4: Nurse's Chamber
- Scene 5: School Hallway
- Scene 6: Witch's Hut
- Scene 7: Throne Room
- Scene 8: Nurse's Chamber, thirteen years later
- Scene 9: The Woods and Ruffians

- Scene 10: Throne Room
- Scene 11: School Hallway
- Scene 12: School Hallway
- Scene 13: Witch's Hut
- Scene 14: School Hallway
- Scene 15: School Hallway

ACT TWO

- Scene 16: School Hallway
- Scene 17: Wallace's House
- Scene 18: Wallace's Bedroom
- Scene 19: Wallace's Bedroom, the next morning
- Scene 20: School Hallway
- Scene 21: School Hallway
- Scene 22: Principal's Office
- Scene 23: School Hallway
- Scene 24: Witch's Hut
- Scene 25: Throne Room
- Scene 26: School Hallway

DO NOT COPY

ACT ONE, SCENE 1
THRONE ROOM

Flat denotes castle interior. King and Queen mime conversation with courtier and knights.

KING: *(Joyfully.)* My Queen Beatrice. (Referring to Queen's pregnancy) Boy or girl, it matters not! No child will be more beautiful, smarter, or more beloved.

QUEEN: My Lord Gwydion. *(More serious.)* Must you must travel so soon after your ascension to the throne . . . *(Interrupted as Spencer and Twitchy enter, stand off close to wing.)*

KING: Do not worry, my dear Queen.

QUEEN: I do worry! The roads are filled with marauders, thieves, and cutthroats. *(meaning Spencer.)* You have inherited troubled times.

KING: *(explaining.)* True. And, that is why I must travel-- so the people will see me as a willing ally in their quest for a better life.

QUEEN: But -

KING: I need to see with my own eyes the troubles which confront us; we must deliver law and justice not just by our speeches, but by our deeds. *(Beat. Gently.)* I will be back soon. That much I promise. Come, *(Beat.)* A good night's rest for you and the future King . . . or Queen!

COURTIER: *(to king, interrupting Queen.)* Sire, excuse me. *(With distaste.)* Your cousin, the Lord Spencer, and his counselor, Twitchy, crave audience. *(Bows.)*

SPENCER: *(Oily.)* Cousin. *(To King.)* My Lady . . .

QUEEN: *(coldly.)* Spencer . . . Twitchy.

SPENCER: My Queen. You are so "huge" - "ly" captivating. Motherhood certainly agrees with you.

QUEEN: *(coolly.)* Thank you, Lord Spencer. *(she exits.)*

KING: My cousin Spencer. I know the great love you had for your father, for I shared it. Though he was my uncle, he was as a father to me. Indeed, I grieved his recent passing as deeply as any son.

SPENCER: *(nods head.)* Thank you cousin.

KING: Further, *(a little uncomfortable.)* I know it was expected that you should be his successor.

SPENCER: Indeed.

KING: I was as surprised as you that he named **me** his successor.

SPENCER: No hard feelings. My father *(Beat.)* made his choice. And I have no choice, but to live with it. *(The Queen curtsies and exits)* My lady...

SPENCER: Cousin. Papers for you to sign -

KING: Papers?

SPENCER: Why of course. Making me Regent . . . to rule in your absence.

KING: *(beat.)* Yes, I remember.

SPENCER: *(introducing.)* This is my counsel: Mr. *(Pause.)* Cellino Barnes . . . *(Or any other locally advertised law office. He bows curtly, opens briefcase.)*

KING: What happened to your other counselor, that Mr -

TWITCHY: Shapiro? *(In quotes.)* The Hammer?

KING: Right, Shapiro.

TWITCHY: Tax evasion . . . *(hands papers to king who begins signing. Ticks these off on his fingers.)* lying under oath, scandals . . . you know. The usual.

KING: I see . . . *(signs.)*

ACCOUNTANT: *(sign.)* Here . . . and here as well . . . there . . . here again . . .

KING: I feel like I'm signing my life away . . .

ACCOUNTANT: This page . . . here . . . there . . . Yes. It feels a little like that, sometimes . . . *(spencer and Twitchy exchange glances. One last one.)* I guess we're done here. Thank you Sir. *(he bows and begins to exit. Aside.)* Here's my card. In case you're injured in an accident . . .

KING: Thank you. Well, I guess I shall be off. *(takes off crown.)*

COURTIER: You're not taking your crown, Sir?

KING: *(leaves it on throne.)* People must see and know a King by his deeds, and not just by his adornments.

COURTIER: *(smiles and nods.)* Bless thee, good Sir.

KING: My good cousin Spencer - *(Beat.)* Promise me *(Beat.)* the Queen will wait for nothing while I am away.

SPENCER: *(Smarmy.)* Dearest cousin! Of course! I'll treat her exactly as her station demands.

KING: Good. Until my return, then. *(exits with a couple of knights.)*

SPENCER: *(Three count. Slowly.)* Until. Your. Return . . . *(looking off stage. Blows whistle or claps. A knight or two appears.)*

SPENCER: Are your men in position?

KNIGHT: *(wearing dark knight costume.)* Yes, my Lord Spencer. All is according to your instructions.

SPENCER: *(firm. angry.)* As soon as the King passes the bridge -

KNIGHT 1: We understand sir.

KNIGHT 2: It shall be done.

SPENCER: Do this well, and you will be rewarded handsomely . . .

KNIGHT 1: *(looks at other knight.)* Who's handsomely?

SPENCER: *(Pause.)* Dismissed. *(knight bows and exits.)* Twitchy. Is this the best you could do? Honestly? Who's handsomely?

TWITCHY: Tough economy! Times are rough!

SPENCER: *(nods.)* Ah Twitchy . . . Look around you . . . pretty soon . . . all this will be mine! *(sits on throne with flourish. Crown sits on nearby pillow.)* Ah, the piece de resistance. Twitchy? Would you mind? *(Indicating the crown. Twitchy hands over crown.)*

TWITCHY: *(Twitchy places it on Spencer's head. Queen enters unseen.)* How's the fit?

SPENCER: Not perfect - a little loose and crinkly actually, especially toward the front. Maybe I'll grow into it in time!

QUEEN: "Uneasy lies the head that carries a crown . . ."

SPENCER: My Ladyship. I didn't hear you come in . . . *(spencer and Twitchy scramble to act like they're polishing the crown, etc.)*

QUEEN: Obviously...

TWITCHY: We were just . . .

QUEEN: The King has departed then . . .

SPENCER: *(Pause. Knowingly.)* Yes, my guess is most certainly "departed." *(Aside.)* If my knights have good aim! *(laughs. Queen curtsies, then exits. Spencer thereupon sits on crown which is still on the throne. He jumps up in obvious pain)*

TWITCHY: Lord, After the King is *(slashing motion with hand.)*, what do we do . . . with her?

SPENCER: She presents a little problem for us, doesn't she? We'll have to get rid of her. Charges of conspiracy, traitor to the realm, that sort of thing . . .

TWITCHY: I'm good with forging documents . . . recall, I used to be employed by King Arthur *(Beat.)* Anderson . . .

SPENCER: Oh, yes, yes, that accounting firm. Right. What a huge mess that was. You're just the man. (*changes tone.*) Who are we kidding? We'll probably just end up, you know (*Slashing motion.*)

TWITCHY: Need I remind my Lord, that she is...um...with child? (*Mimes pregnant belly.*)

SPENCER: So, I've noticed . . .

TWITCHY: You can't - you know - (*Slashing motion.*) when she's (*Mimes large belly.*)

SPENCER: (*aghast.*) Of course not! What kind of monster do you take me for? (*Beat.*) I'll get someone else to do it!

TWITCHY: More humane!

SPENCER: (*earnestly.*) That's me, Lord Spencer . . . a gentler, more compassionate usurper.

Lights down.

ACT ONE, SCENE 2
SCHOOL HALLWAY

Students in hallway talking before lights go up. Wallace, Dewey and Francine right center. Wallace looking at homework.

WALLACE: See here Dewey? I think that this polynomial is really a smooth function and it should be replaced by this set of integers--you know--numbers--here.

DEWEY: (*Looks at him.*) Are you speaking English? We actually learned that in class?

WALLACE: Yeah! Yesterday! And, Francine . . .

FRANCINE: (*Three count.*) Yes, Wallace . . .

WALLACE: (*Gives her love eyes. Getting a hold of himself.*) - Uh . . . as you probably remember from class, a square matrix here, encodes several important chromatic properties of the set, here (*Points.*) and here. (*They look at one another.*)

FRANCINE: Oh, I see it, Wallace. (*Looks at him admiringly.*) You explain things so well . . . you're my calculus hero.

DEWEY: (*A little sarcastically.*) Yeah. Mine too . . .

WALLACE: Thanks. Well, as Newton stated: *(Bullies enter. Swagger and push some kids out of the way.)* - Uh, oh. Here come those bullies! *(Attempts to hide behind Dewey and Francine.)*

DEWEY: Newton said, "Here come those bullies!?" *(Dewey and Francine exchange looks.)* What are you doing?

WALLACE: Hiding! *(Stage whisper.)* From Axl and Travis!

DEWEY: *(Joking.)* You steal their lunch money? Again?

WALLACE: Funny, Dewey . . . they're going to steal MY lunch money. And, my homework. Everyday!

DEWEY: It's just their way of being friendly.

WALLACE: Thanks Dewey for the unconditional support.

FRANCINE: *(Kindly.)* Wallace, it's not like they're *(Beat.)* super human or anything -

WALLACE: Try subhuman. Look, they don't have to be superhuman to put me in a headlock or stick me in my locker. Which, need I remind you, they do all the time!

FRANCINE: They're just people. Stand up to them. Be brave!

WALLACE: *(Like he's going to do it now.)* Okay! *(Psyches himself up.)* I'll be brave! Tomorrow *(Francine and Dewey deflated.)* I'll be brave tomorrow!

DEWEY: Wallace, I'm going over there right now and straighten this whole thing out! *(Begins to leave.)*

WALLACE: *(yells.)* NO! *(Everyone stops and stares. Quieter.)* No, Dewey.

FRANCINE: *(Not believing.)* Wallace, what are you going to do . . .

WALLACE: *(Looks from one to other.)* Hide!

FRANCINE: You can't hide forever you know. *(He's hiding behind Dewey still.)*

WALLACE: I know, I know...just until graduation!. . . *(Beat. Cowardly.)*

Lights down.

**ACT ONE, SCENE 3
THRONE ROOM**

Spencer, Twitchy, Queen, Nurse, and courtiers mime conversation. Knight enters, stumbles and falls. Knight has sword in him.

KNIGHT: *(breathless, dying.)* Attacked. Ambush! Thieves! Cutthroats!

ALL: Who?

KNIGHT: The King is dead! *(Queen swoons.)*

SPENCER: *(to Knight.)* Send out a party to scour the roads for these murderers. Whoever is responsible shall be punished - that much I swear . . . *(knights exit. Queen goes into labor.)* What's with all the writhing and moaning?

NURSE: She is in labor! And, she's lost her husband! Fool!

SPENCER: Stay your tongue, hag! Take her to some other room to have her baby...child...thing ! *(Nurse and Queen exit. Spencer looks down at dead knight.)* I say, knight! Good show. Excellent! Very realistic. *(Whispers.)* All right! Up and attem. Twitchy? What's all that red liquidy stuff? There? And there? *(They're peering.)*

TWITCHY: Blood.

SPENCER: *(Jumps back, repelled)* Eww. See if he's breathing.

SPENCER: *(impatient.)* Well?

TWITCHY: *(pokes body with sword. Makes production of seeing if dead. Shouts, etc.)*

SPENCER: *(impatient.)* Is the man dead?

TWITCHY: Nothing there. Gone.

SPENCER: *(they bow heads for a three count, then with excitement.)* Say, Twitchy, what's he got in his hand there?

TWITCHY: *(excited.)* Looks like the King's Badge of Office!

SPENCER: Well now! *(Takes it gingerly.)* Looks like it needs a new home. *(Puts it on.)* How's it look? *(Does gang sign. Twitchy does beat box.)*

TWITCHY: "Bling is the thing for the brand new King!"

SPENCER: "Bling is the thing for the brand new King!" *(Sound of baby crying. They both look stage left.)*

SPENCER: That must be the Queen!

TWITCHY: *(Beat.)* How strange! *(Beat.)* She sounds just like a baby!

SPENCER: *(Pause. Gives a look.)* That IS a baby, you nitwit!

TWITCHY: Oh . . .

NURSE: *(Enters with baby in blanket.)* The Queen has given us . . . a Royal Princess.

SPENCER: *(Peers in. Revulsion. Shudders.)* Eww . . .

TWITCHY: *(Coos.)* Hello there! It's Uncle Twitch-ay. *(Ad-lib baby talk.)*

SPENCER: Twitchy! *(Stops. To Nurse.)* The Queen?

NURSE: The Queen is no longer counted living among men.

SPENCER: She's dead, then. *(Nurse bows her head.)* Splendid! - Sad. Really. Tragic. In a sad way. You may go. *(Nurse bows and exits.)*

TWITCHY: With the Queen dead, you can wear that Badge of Office with impunity. *(Spencer grabs it on his chest in shock.)*

SPENCER: *(Shocked.)* Do you think she saw it on me? *(Clutches at neck.)* The throne is not mine to claim . . . *(Pause.)* while that child lives. . . send for a knight *(Referring to dead knight.)* Are you sure this one's -

TWITCHY: Quite sure . . . why don't we kidnap the baby, and just *(Pause.)* leave her in the woods to fend for herself . . . it's been done before . . .

SPENCER: Yes, *(Pause.)* and I am still in therapy, thank you very much! *(Becomes emotional)* No, Twitchy, I want to do something . . . new! Unexpected!

TWITCHY: Push the envelope? Break new ground? Think *(Mimes.)* outside the bun?

SPENCER: Precisely! *(Spencer rings bell. Knight enters.)* Knight, what is thy name?

OGILVY: *(Looks at other knight on ground.)* Ogilvy, my Lord. Squire Second Class . . .

SPENCER: *(Slowly with oily enthusiasm.)* How would you like a promotion to *(Pause. Looks at Twitchy.)* Double Secret Agent Knight, First Class? Hmm?

OGILVY: *(excited.)* Double Secret Agent?

TWITCHY: I didn't know there was such a thing!

SPENCER: *(Looks at Twitchy.)* There is! Now!

OGILVY: *(Eager.)* How shall I serve you, my Lord?

SPENCER: How are you? With children?

Lights down.

ACT ONE, SCENE 4
NURSE'S CHAMBER

Left apron. Table, chair, spinning wheel. Nurse, Queen, and Hortense.

NURSE: *(To Queen.)* My Queen *(Queen stirs upon the bed.)* Your suspicions are correct: Spencer is behind the King's death . . . I saw him wearing the King's Badge of Office. I did as you asked; *(Beat.)* I told Spencer you were dead.

QUEEN: *(Tired.)* It is a lie that prevents more death. Spencer will, no doubt, come after the infant princess . . . help me protect her . . . *(A pounding is heard; it is Ogilvy)*

OGILVY: Open up! In the name of Lord Spencer . . .

NURSE: My Queen! Silence! Appear as dead!

OGILVY: Open the door! In the name of Lord Spencer, Regent of Aragonia! *(Bursts in.)* I am here for the child! The Queen!

NURSE: *(Angry.)* Yes, there lies your Queen. Are you here to offer your prayers for the dead?

OGILVY: Where is the child? *(Hortense holding it. Ogilvy draws sword.)*

NURSE: *(Knowingly. Bravely.)* Only a tyrant orders the killing of an innocent child. *(Three beats.)* Only a monster would follow those orders. *(Knight raises sword.)* Which are you then? A tyrant? Or a monster? *(The baby cries. He lowers sword.)*

OGILVY: I am neither . . .

NURSE: *(Puts hand on his shoulder.)* Spare her good knight! Be not a pawn of evil, but a hero. *(He nods. Pause.)* Take the child, bring her into the Haunted Wood -

OGILVY: The Haunted Wood *(Seriously.)* is dangerous and wicked! I cannot -

NURSE: *(Not unkindly.)* It is for the unwary. Listen. Deliver this child to the Witch of the Wood!

OGILVY: *(In awe.)* The Witch!

NURSE: Yes. Near the bend in the river is a large oak. Beneath the oak is a hut, cleverly hidden. There lives the Witch. Give her the child!

OGILVY: *(Reluctant.)* Am I to save the life of the child, only to deliver her into the hands of one who will surely do her harm?

NURSE: The Witch of the Wood will not harm the child. Or you. That I promise. Go now. Let no one see you. Travel by the old roads. If you see or hear anyone, hide yourself.

OGILVY: I shall do as you say. *(Ogilvy exits with baby.)*

QUEEN: *(Stirs.)* What is your plan?

NURSE: Do you feel well enough to travel, my Queen?

QUEEN: Yes, I think so -

NURSE: We must move swiftly.

QUEEN: Where are we going, my friend?

NURSE: *(As she bundles up.)* The Haunted Wood.

QUEEN: *(She stays Nurse with a hand.)* Nurse, there is no witch of the wood - it is an old wive's tale spun to keep children out of trouble.

NURSE: You're right! There's never been a Witch of the Wood, my Queen *(Beat.)* Until now. *(Beats.)* Come, we must hurry! *(Lights fade down as they prepare to leave.)*

ACT ONE, SCENE 5 SCHOOL HALLWAY

Wallace and Francine. Students pass in background. Dewey proudly wearing an ugly shirt or tie).

FRANCINE: Thanks for helping me with my math homework
Wallace, it really helped!

Bell rings.

FRANCINE: First bell. History. See you guys later, okay?

WALLACE: See you Francine. *(Wallace stares after her. She turns once to look at him. She waves. Wallace stares and waves. Long after she's gone.)*

DEWEY: *(Five count. He looks from Wallace to Francine, back to Wallace.)* Uh, you can stop waving Wallace, she's on the other side of town by now. Look, the Annual Sweetheart's Dance Extrava-Palooza is coming up next week . . . *(Knowingly.)* are you thinking about asking anyone?

WALLACE: Next week? Already? I haven't really thought about it . . .

DEWEY: Well you'd better think about it! And soon. Let me give you some sage Dewey advice! *(Beat.)* This tie *(produces the world's ugliest tie)* will make you irresistible. Guaranteed. You can ask any girl you want! *(Pause.)* Or any **certain** girl!

WALLACE: *(Flustered.)* What **that** supposed to mean??

DEWEY: *(Pause. Sighs.)* See if you can guess who I am *(Waves just like Wallace did.)* "Bye Francine, see you after history.." That was a pathetic display! How long have you liked Francine?

WALLACE: *(Defensive.)* What? I don't know what you're - what are you talking about? That's so completely...*(Admits it. Sheepish. Pause.)* Two years?

DEWEY: Two years? Try five. Eighteen if you count preschool! Geesh! How long are you going to go on like this? Torturing yourself?

WALLACE: I'm working *(Beat.)* on a strategy!

DEWEY: *(Waves just like Wallace did.)* "Bye Francine, see you after history.." is **NOT** a strategy! Ignoring your feelings is not a strategy, my friend! Seize the day! Got it? Look. Gotta go to English. *(Points finger.)* We're going to talk later, understand!

WALLACE: Got it! See ya . . . *(Wallace turns and bumps into someone. He drops his books which spread all over the floor, he gathers his stuff, then looks at the feet of the person standing in front of him. He slowly gets up and sees it's Axl. He then turns the other way and sees Travis.)*

AXL: And where do you think you're going, my little friend? *(All freeze.)*

Lights down.

**ACT ONE, SCENE 6
WITCH'S HUT**

Flat, denoting Witch's hut. There is a broomstick, a cauldron, and a small wooden table. An old, hunched woman dressed in rags sits in a chair. It is the Witch. There is a pounding on the door. She rouses.

WITCH: *(Rises, relies on cane and hobbles to the door. The door creaks as it opens, she comes back to the room. A knight follows, holding the baby.)* You have brought me the princess? Orphan child of the King and Queen?

OGILVY: How do you know?

WITCH: I know many things, knight. *(Pause.)* Place the child in the basket. Gently now. *(He does so.)*

OGILVY: The nurse said the child would not be harmed.

WITCH: And so she shall not. Nor you. But listen well, Sir Knight, and do as I ask . . .

OGILVY: I will . . .

WITCH: Go into these woods, and there kill a wild deer. Anoint your sword with its blood and cover the child's blanket with blood as well. *(Hands over the blanket.)* Return to the castle having done these things, and present the blanket to Spencer as evidence of your deed.

OGILVY: *(Nods.)* I shall.

WITCH: You must never speak of this to anyone. On your life!

OGILVY: On my life. It shall be as you say . . .

WITCH: Go then. Let no one see you. Hide yourself upon the road.

OGILVY: I shall. *(He exits quickly.)*

Three beat count. She collapses upon the floor. The baby cries. She slowly rises to comfort the baby. Nurse emerges from behind the flat with Hortense.

NURSE: Hortense, hot water. Herbs. My Queen, you know that the child must never know who she really is . . . and, you must never, *(Beat.)* ever leave these woods. No matter what. Not as long as Spencer holds sway over Aragonia.

QUEEN: I understand...

NURSE: *(Comforting Witch/Queen.)* Word will spread among the people that there's a Witch of the Woods. People will be afraid; no one will disturb you here.

QUEEN: A clever plan Nurse.

NURSE: My Queen, I must return to the castle. I promise you, soon I'll be back to tend to you and the Princess.

QUEEN: Thanks. To you both; we owe you our lives!

NURSE: Come, Hortense. *(She pauses to turn around.)* Your Majesty, your daughter, the princess, have you a name for her?

QUEEN: *(Beat.)* What is this day, my friend?

NURSE: It is Tuesday, my Queen.

QUEEN: Then, I shall name her Tuesday. Because it is upon this day that our old lives ended, and our new ones began.

Lights down.

ACT ONE, SCENE 7 THRONE ROOM

Spencer, Twitchy, Ogilvy, and extras are in the Throne Room. Spencer is seated on the throne. Ogilvy kneels before him.

OGILVY: Here my Lord, is the evidence you crave. *(Gives him bloodied blanket.)*

SPENCER: Well done, knight! This deed shall be long remembered. *(Beat.)* You may go. *(Knight bows and exits.)* Twitchy?

TWITCHY: Yes, my Lord.

SPENCER: Where's my Crown? Now it is indeed mine to wear!

Twitchy gives him the crown.

SPENCER: *(Spencer puts it on.)* Dang-nagit. Now, it's too small! Too large, too small - *(Whining.)* Someday, I want it to be just right!

TWITCHY: Maybe your head's too big!

SPENCER: *(Hand on Twitchy's shoulder, almost fatherly.)* Twitchy, it's not the size of the crown that matters, what matters now is that *(Silly.)* I am King of the castle! I am King of the castle. *(They do a little cheerleader-type dance.)* This morning, I was number four! And now, I'm number one! I'm number one! I'm number one!

TWITCHY: Sire? What shall be your first course of action?

SPENCER: *(Seriously.)* First, I want to see how much MONEY there is in the royal treasury!

TWITCHY: And then, Sire?

SPENCER: Spend it! On me! Then I'll raise taxes! And start all over again!

TWITCHY: But, the people are overtaxed already!

SPENCER: *(Dismissive.)* Fine! *(New idea.)* Then, we'll borrow! From China! And spend, baby spend!

TWITCHY: *(Touch of sarcasm.)* Sire . . . what if we run out of money?

TOGETHER: *(Three count. Look at each other.)* Bailout!

Freeze as lights fade. Lights: slow fade.

ACT ONE, SCENE 8 NURSE'S CHAMBER

Slow fade up. Thirteen years have passed. Characters have aged appropriately. Nurse on apron readies herself for travel. She has a basket.

HORTENSE: Another trip to see little Tuesday, my dear?

NURSE: Yes, but not so little anymore -

HORTENSE: *(Sighs.)* If I am not mistaken, she is thirteen years old today. And still has no idea that she is a princess!

NURSE: Aye, or that the old Witch who cares for her is really her mother, the Queen!

HORTENSE: *(Helps bundle her up.)* Tread the roads safely, my dear. These thirteen years have proved ill for the Kingdom. Spencer has savaged the coffers; people are poor! Resorting to robbery, and thievery to still the hunger that gnaws their every waking hour . . .

NURSE: I'll be careful. The Witch of the Wood is very much feared, especially in these dark times. Little do they know, that the witch they fear, is really their own beloved Queen, and the child she protects, *(Beat.)* their only hope!

HORTENSE: Safe travels my dear, safe travels . . . *(Hug or they clasp hands and part. The Nurse exits.)*

ACT ONE, SCENE 9 THE WOODS AND RUFFIANS

Sound of creaking trees, wind, and footsteps. Nurse crosses left to right in front of the curtain. The actors who play Axl and Travis should be among the ruffians.

NURSE: *(Halfway.)* Hello? Anyone there? *(Pause.)* Come out and show yourselves . . . *(She pauses, then continues walking. A loud crash . . . ruffians appear stage left . . . she runs stage right. Ruffians enter stage right. The Nurse is cut off.)*

RUFFIAN 1: [AXL] Hello Miss!

RUFFIAN 2: [TRAVIS] What you've got in tha basket, Miss?

NURSE: Nothing that concerns you!

RUFFIAN 1: *(Slowly; Menacingly.)* I think we'll be the judge of that.

They grab for it. Push her down. Put a sword on her.

RUFFIAN 1: What treasure boys?

RUFFIAN 2: A book! *(Ruffians moan in disappointment.)*

RUFFIAN 1: I hate books!

RUFFIAN 2: This won't feed the hole in ma belly!

NURSE: *(Defiantly.)* They're to feed something more important than your stomach . . .

RUFFIAN 2: *(Beat. To one another.)* Hmph. What do we do wit her?

RUFFIAN 1: *(Beat.)* Dispatch her. *(Beat.)* Hide her body in the woods.

They all agree. Nurse at knife point.

WITCH: (*Emerges stage right.*) Leave her . . .

RUFFIAN 1: Who are you?

RUFFIAN 2: An ugly troll! Dressed as a hag! (*Ruffians laugh. Witch knocks staff upon ground. It lights. Thunder. Suddenly, they are scared.*)

RUFFIAN 1: The Witch!

RUFFIAN 2: The Witch of the Wood!

RUFFIAN 1: We didn't mean -

RUFFIAN 2: Don't hurts us!

WITCH: Leave her and you shan't be harmed. (*Witch raises broomstick! Lightening, thunder cracks. One ruffian faints dead away.*)

RUFFIAN 1: (*Backs away leaving the one behind.*) We didn't mean nothing . . . don't put no spell on us. (*Turns and exits stage left. The one who fainted remains on the ground.*)

WITCH: (*Waits until ruffians are off.*) Are you safe?

NURSE: My Queen. (*curtsies.*) Thank you. I am. But, the woods and fields, the towns and villages, they are no longer safe it seems. (*Thief stirs and quickly lays back down, listening.*)

WITCH: Those ruffians - they have a curiously familiar look about them.

NURSE: Yes, some of them were your own knights, once upon a time. But, dark times have blackened their once fair hearts. (*Sigh.*)

WITCH: Those ruffians, they will be back when their fear subsides.

NURSE: Aye, the more they repeat their story, the bolder they will become. These are dark times. They have been ever since the King was killed and... (*She stops. Three count.*) Forgive me, my Queen.

WITCH: That's alright.

NURSE: These years have taken a toll upon the Kingdom. (*Pause.*)

WITCH: True. (*Changes tone.*) But on a different note, those thirteen years have been a boon to Princess Tuesday! Today is her birthday! She will be so pleased to see you!

NURSE: How is our young Princess?

WITCH: Growing into a beautiful young lady who will soon have to make her way in this wide and oft perilous world. (*Sighs.*) How time has flown! Come. Let us be gone. There we will talk further (*Looks around.*) There is more than one kind of evil in these woods . . . (*Exits stage right. We see Ruffian 2 rise, look both ways, then run off. Lights down.*)

ACT ONE, SCENE 10
THRONE ROOM

King, Twitchy, ruffian, several knights including Ogilvy.

RUFFIAN: (*Kneeling.*) It is as I say, my Lord Spencer. The Nurse called her "my Queen." And there was talk of a Princess . . .

SPENCER: (*Astonished.*) So, the Queen is alive! And her daughter , the Princess too! (*To ruffian.*) You may go.

TWITCHY: (*Waits for ruffian to exit.*) Lord Spencer! If the Princess is still alive -

SPENCER: - she is the true heir to the throne. And, if the people find out I tried to have her murdered . . . there's nothing worse than a job half done - what do I pay you for anyway? (*Angry.*) If any of my knights was responsible, so help me -

Suddenly, Ogilvy takes out a sword and slashes out at a knight. He quickly exits.

TWITCHY: After him you nitwits! (*Two knights exit, running.*)

KNIGHT 1: (*Looking out the window.*) He has taken a horse!

KNIGHT 2: (*Looking out the window.*) Two of your knights, Lord Spencer, already lie slain by the bridge!

KNIGHT 1: Shall we use arrows, my Lords?

TWITCHY: Of course, use arrows! Fools!

SPENCER: No! (*Everyone holds. Pause.*) Let him escape - (*Characters on stage ad-lib confusion.*) Follow at a distance! Our traitorous knight will lead us straight to our quarry! Begone! (*Exit running. SOUND OF HORSES GALLOPING.*) Come Twitchy, it has been thirteen long years! But is finally time for us to settle this matter once and for all!

Lights down.

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