

PRINCE CASPIAN

Written by C. S. Lewis

Adapted for stage by Nicole Chavers Stratton

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SCENE #1

Miraz, Queen, Young Caspian

(Lights come up to reveal MIRAZ and his QUEEN. They are standing, looking rather bored and annoyed as CASPIAN plays with a kitten that a servant is holding.)

MIRAZ: Well, boy, I suppose we must teach you to ride soon and use a sword. You know your aunt and I have no children, as of yet, so you might have to be King when I'm gone. How shall you like that, eh?

YOUNG CASPIAN: I don't know. I shall have to ask my nurse.

QUEEN: You know you can talk to *us* – don't you, my boy? Your uncle wants to make you into a great ruler one day, but he can't do that unless you tell him what fills that little head of yours all day.

MIRAZ: Don't waste your time, my love; sadly, he's just like my brother.

YOUNG CASPIAN: I was just thinking that – I wish I could have lived back in the old days.

MIRAZ: What old days?

YOUNG CASPIAN: When everything was quite different – all the animals could talk, and there were nice people who lived in the streams and the trees. And there were Dwarfs and lovely little Fauns in all the woods. And —

MIRAZ: That's all nonsense! At your age you ought to be thinking of battles and adventures, not fairy tales.

YOUNG CASPIAN: Oh, but there were battles and adventures in those days. Once there was an evil White Witch who made herself Queen of the whole country. Then two boys and two girls came from somewhere, killed the Witch, and were made Kings and Queens of Narnia; their names were Peter and Susan and Edmund and Lucy. And it was all because of Aslan —

MIRAZ: Aslan? Who's he?

YOUNG CASPIAN: Oh, don't you know? Aslan is the great Lion who comes from over the sea.

QUEEN: *(in a thundering voice)* Who has been telling you all this nonsense? *(CASPIAN, frightened, says nothing.)*

MIRAZ: You will answer your Queen! Who has been telling you this pack of lies?

YOUNG CASPIAN: N—Nurse. *(bursting into tears)*

MIRAZ: Stop that noise.

QUEEN: A King must never cry.

MIRAZ: And never let me catch you talking – or thinking – about all those ridiculous stories again. There never were those Kings and Queens. And there's no such person as Aslan. Do you hear?

(YOUNG CASPIAN nods.)

QUEEN: *(speaking to a SERVANT)* Anwen! Conduct His Royal Highness back to his room.

MIRAZ: And send his nurse to me at once.

(Lights fade on the scene as the young girl begins to walk CASPIAN off stage. Lights come back up to reveal her bringing CASPIAN back into his room where his NURSE is busy working on a project. The young boy runs to his NURSE and begins to cry.)

SCENE #2

Trufflehunter, Pattertwig, Caspian, Squirrel 1, Red Dwarf 1, Red Dwarf 2, Dwarf 1, Dwarf 2, Trumpkin, Nikabrik, Glenstorm

TRUFFLEHUNTER: *(scolding her a bit for startling the PRINCE)* Pattertwig! *(then turning to CASPIAN with a smile)* Your Highness, this is Pattertwig the Squirrel!

PATTERTWIG: Welcome, your Majesty. *(gives CASPIAN a nut)*

CASPIAN: *(awkwardly)* Thank you.

SQUIRREL I: Can we take any messages to other friends? For we can go nearly everywhere, and we know nearly everyone!

PATTERTWIG: Yes, we can spread the word for all to come to a council here at Dancing Lawn to meet Prince Caspian.

TRUFFLEHUNTER: A very good idea, Pattertwig.

(PATTERTWIG and the other SQUIRREL nod and take off. Next the Red DWARFS approach.)

RED DWARF 1: Long live King Caspian.

TRUFFLEHUNTER: Looks like someone has already been spreading the word. Here are the Dwarfs of Shuddering Wood.

RED DWARF 2: These gifts are for you, my Prince. *(They give gifts – mail shirts, helmets, and swords for CASPIAN and the others.)*

(Next the Black DWARFS approach CASPIAN looking at him suspiciously.)

DWARF 1: If you are against Miraz, we'll have you for King.

CASPIAN: I am – or rather he is against me.

DWARF 1: That'll do.

DWARF 2: Shall we go farther up for you, up to the crags?

DWARF 1: Yes, there's an Ogre or two and a Hag that we could introduce you to up there.

CASPIAN: Well, I'm not sure that would . . .

TRUFFLEHUNTER: No . . . no! We want none of that sort on our side. We should not have Aslan for our friend if we brought in that rabble.

TRUMPKIN: Forget, Aslan! *(cheerily but contemptuously)* What matters much more is that you wouldn't have me.

CASPIAN: *(addressing NIKABRIK)* But you do believe in Aslan – don't you?

TRUMPKIN: I'll believe in anyone or anything, that'll drive these cursed Telmarines out of Narnia.

NIKABRIK: Aslan *or* the White Witch.

TRUFFLEHUNTER: You do not know what you are saying. The White Witch was a worse enemy than Miraz and all his race.

NIKABRIK: Not to us Dwarfs, she wasn't.

(Next GLENSTORM the CENTAUR and his offspring enter.)

TRUFFLEHUNTER: Come, your Majesty – you must meet the great Centaur Glenstorm!

GLENSTORM: Long live the King. I and my sons are ready for war, and we are ready to fight by your side!

CASPIAN: Do you mean a real war to drive Miraz out of Narnia?

TRUFFLEHUNTER: Uhhh, if it's possible.

GLENSTORM: The time is now. A son of Adam has once more arisen to rule and name the creatures, and this council must be a council of war.

(Next REEPICHEEP and the other MICE arrive.)

REEPICHEEP: If there is war – then we shall be ready, Sire! (*with a dashing and graceful bow*) I place all the resources of my people unreservedly at your Majesty's disposal.

TRUMPKIN: Your Highness, this is the honorable mouse Reepicheep.

CASPIAN: I am pleased to meet you – sir.

SCENE #3

Peter, Susan, Edmund, Lucy, Trumpkin

PETER: It's no good – I haven't wanted to say it, but we're lost.

SUSAN: I knew we would get lost coming this way!

PETER: I'm sorry. It's my fault for coming this way.

SUSAN: Well come on then, let's go back and go the other way.

TRUMPKIN: Tubs and tortoiseshells! If we go back to the island and begin all over again – Miraz will have finished with Caspian before we get there. If we go downstream, we'll perhaps hit the Great River.

PETER: Come on, then. We'll have to go down this side of that gorge. (*pointing up ahead of them.*)

LUCY: Look! Look!

EVERYONE: Where? What?

LUCY: It's Aslan! Didn't you see? (*Her face has changed, and her eyes now shine.*)

SUSAN: Where did you think you saw him?

LUCY: I didn't *think* I saw him. I saw him.

PETER: Where, Lu?

LUCY: Right up there on this side of the gorge. Just the opposite of the way you want to go. And he wanted us to go where he was – up there.

EDMUND: How do you know that was what he wanted?

LUCY: I just know – by his face.

TRUMPKIN: There are lions in these woods, I've been told. But if he's the lion you knew when you were here before, he'd be pretty elderly now! What's to prevent him from having gone wild and witless like so many others?

LUCY: Why of all the stupid . . .

(LUCY becomes angry, and PETER lays his hand on her arm.)

PETER: It's all right, Lu, the D.L.F. doesn't understand. *(turning to him)* Trumpkin, we do really know a little about Aslan. And you mustn't talk about him like that again. The only question is whether Aslan was really there.

LUCY: *(her eyes filling with tears)* Do you think I don't know Aslan when I see him?

PETER: Yes, Lu, but we didn't see him.

EDMUND: There's nothing for it but a vote.

PETER: All right, you're the eldest, D.L.F. What do you vote for? Up or down?

TRUMPKIN: I know nothing about Aslan, but I vote down.

PETER: Susan?

SUSAN: Don't be angry, Lu, but I think we should go down. I'm dead tired and none of us except you saw *anything*.

PETER: Edmund?

EDMUND: Well, when we first discovered Narnia a year ago – or a thousand years ago, whichever it is – it was Lucy who discovered it first, and none of us would believe her. I was the worst. Yet she was right after all. I vote for going up.

LUCY: Oh, Ed! *(seizing his hand)*

SUSAN: It's your turn, Peter, and I do hope –

PETER: Oh, shut up, and let a chap think. I'd much rather not have to vote.

TRUMPKIN: You are the High King – so . . .

PETER: *(turning back to them sharply)* Down. I know Lucy may be right after all, but we must do one or the other.

(They start heading down, with LUCY coming last – crying. They walk a ways until they finally come upon an opening.)

PETER: Look! That must be Beruna Bridge down there. *(pointing ahead)*

(Suddenly they see SOLDIERS.)

TRUMPKIN: Down! *(They all run and hide.)* Bottles and battledores! It's Miraz's men – he must have an outpost down there.

PETER: I ought to have my head smacked for bringing us this way at all.

LUCY: I suppose we'll have to go right back up the gorge now.

PETER: Lu, you're a hero. That's the nearest you've got today to saying *I told you so*. Let's go.

(Lights fade out on them as they begin their journey again, but this time the way that LUCY had suggested.)

SCENE #4

Miraz, Glozelle, Sopespian

(LORD GLOZELLE and LORD SOPESPIAN approach Miraz's tent. They are shocked to see EDMUND, GIANT WIMBLEWEATHER, & GLENSTORM sitting outside, waiting for a response, having delivered the challenge. They go inside and find MIRAZ – upset.)

MIRAZ: There! *(flinging the letter across the table to them)* See what a pack of nursery tales our jackanapes of a nephew has sent us. I have been challenged to a battle by the so-called High King Peter of Narnia. The letter was delivered by his supposed royal brother out there – King Edmund and those other two characters.

GLOZELLE: *(looking at the letter)* By your leave, Sire. If the young warrior whom we have just seen outside is the King Edmund, then I would not call him a nursery tale but a very dangerous knight.

MIRAZ: Pah! Do your Lordships believe those old wives' fables about Peter and Edmund and the rest?

GLOZELLE: I believe my eyes, your Majesty.

MIRAZ: Well, this is to no purpose; but as touching the challenge, I suppose there is only one opinion between us?

GLOZELLE: I suppose so, indeed, Sire.

MIRAZ: And what is that?

GLOZELLE: Most infallibly to refuse it. If, as is likely, the High King Peter is more dangerous than his brother out there – why, on your life, my Lord King, have nothing to do with him.

MIRAZ: Plague on you! I wanted your counsel on the policy of the matter; whether we, having the advantage, should hazard it on a wager of battle. Do you think I am asking you if I should be afraid to meet this Peter – if there is such a man? Are you trying to make it appear that I am as great a coward as your Lordship?

GLOZELLE: Your Majesty may say your pleasure.

MIRAZ: You talk like an old woman, Glozelle. What say you, my Lord Sopespian?

SOPESPIAN: Do not touch it, Sire. Thankfully your Majesty has excellent grounds for a refusal without any cause for anyone to question your honor or courage.

MIRAZ: Are you also bewitched today? You two are as lily-livered as hares and have the effrontery to imagine me to be the same! Grounds for a refusal, indeed! Are you soldiers? Are you Telmarines? If I do refuse it you will think, and persuade others, that I am a coward.

GLOZELLE: No man of your Majesty's age would be called coward by any wise soldier for refusing to combat with a great warrior in the flower of his youth.

MIRAZ: So I'm to be a dotard with one foot in the grave, as well as a coward. I'll tell you I had meant to refuse it, but I'll accept the challenge! (*MIRAZ storms out of the tent and shouts to EDMUND.*) Do you hear? I accept the challenge!

(The two LORDS look at one another and smile.)

GLOZELLE: I knew he'd do it, if he were properly chafed.

SOPESPIAN: Have I taken your Lordship's meaning aright?

GLOZELLE: If the King undertook wager of battle, why, either he would kill or be killed.

SOPESPIAN: So.

GLOZELLE: If the King kills, we will have won this war. If he be killed, we should be just as able to win the war without him. And after that, we should be both victorious and kingless. Let's not forget, that it was we who first put him on the throne. What gratitude has he shown us? – And I'll not forget he called me a coward. It shall be paid for.