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Product Code: Y611-A

The Velveteen Rabbit

Based on the book by Margery Williams

Adapted for the stage
by **Sage Golding**

Dedicated to my father
for all the unconditional love he has shown me.

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CHARACTERS

Flexible casting / Doubling possible
4F / 4M / 10 Either + Optional Other Toys
Note: Adjust pronouns in script as needed

FAIRY
CHILD
NANA
MOTHER
FATHER
VELVETEEN RABBIT
TOY ROBOT
TOY LION
TOY HORSE
TOY "HEAR NO EVIL" MONKEY
TOY "SEE NO EVIL" MONKEY
TOY "SPEAK NO EVIL" MONKEY
TOY BOAT
TIN SOLDIER
TOY CAT
MISCELLANEOUS OTHER TOYS
REAL RABBIT #1
REAL RABBIT #2

TIME
1922

PLACE
A loving home

The Velveteen Rabbit

Adapted by Sage Golding

SCENE ONE

AT RISE: *Morning; interior of the living room which is decorated for Christmas. There is a Christmas tree with a number of wrapped gifts under it. The room is dimly lit. A light appears on FAIRY.*

FAIRY

There is nothing a toy hopes for more than to be loved—truly loved. Because it is only when one receives pure and unconditional love, that they truly can become real.

FAIRY exits.

Holiday music is heard as NANA enters turning on additional lights. It is Christmas morning! MOTHER enters with another gift and places it under the tree.

NANA

More gifts? On Christmas morning?!

MOTHER

I just wrapped it this morning.

NANA

You should have told me yesterday; I would have wrapped it for you. I thought you were done gift buying.

MOTHER

(Smiling)

I thought I was too, but I saw this in the window the other night when I was in town and just couldn't resist.

CHILD *(Off)*

Can I come down yet?

MOM

No, we aren't ready yet and your father is still not in here.

CHILD (*Off*)

I can't wait!

NANA

(*Calling off*)

You know your mother wants it perfect before you come down.

MOTHER

(*To NANA*)

I know it's probably silly to fuss over making it all look perfect before he comes down but...

NANA

I think it's lovely! It makes it feel more special.

MOTHER

Speaking of "special," how are things coming in the kitchen for brunch today? Did you even get to bed last night?

NANA

Yes, eventually. I just want to make sure everything is ready when your family arrives.

MOTHER

I guess we both like perfection.

*MOTHER and NANA laugh as
FATHER enters.*

FATHER

(*Overhearing MOTHER'S last comment*)

Well, I must say you two are both pretty perfect!

MOTHER

If you are trying to butter me up, it's too late. I've already bought your Christmas present.

CHILD (*Off*)

Are you ready yet? Did Santa eat the cookies and milk I left him?

MOTHER

You will just have to check when you get down here.

FATHER

Santa Claus may have skipped our house this year. (*Smiles at his little joke*)

CHILD (*Off*)

What?!

MOTHER

Your father is teasing. (*Gives one last look around*) Alright, you can come down now!

MOTHER and FATHER stand aside proudly as CHILD enters.

CHILD

Wow! Everything is beautiful! (*Runs to an empty plate and an empty drinking glass left for Santa*) He took all the cookies and the carrots for the reindeer! Can we open gifts?

FATHER

Of course, we can!

NANA

I'll leave you all so you can have this time together.

MOTHER

Oh, Nana stay! You are family, too, and we have a gift for you as well.

MOTHER hands a gift to NANA and one to FATHER. She chooses two for CHILD and then picks up a gift for herself. NANA opens her gift. It is a brush and mirror set.

NANA

You shouldn't have! It's much too nice.

MOTHER

Nonsense. I know you've needed a new set.

NANA

Thank you both. It's just lovely.

MOTHER opens a gift. It is a necklace.

MOTHER

(Hugs FATHER)

Oh honey, it is beautiful! Nana, help me put it on.

FATHER

I know you've been eyeing that for some time now.

NANA helps her. CHILD has opened a windup robot.

CHILD

A real robot! Santa got me a real robot!

FATHER

You can wind him up and he walks!

NANA

Do you have one of those that can wash dishes?

FATHER opens his gift. It is two neckties.

CHILD

We had a tie between the ties, so we got you both!

FATHER

I love the colors!

CHILD unwraps a figure of a lion.

MOTHER

Now that is a regal lion!

NANA

Is that the one that you said was made by soldiers wounded in the war?

MOTHER

Yes.

CHILD

I have never seen such a brave looking lion!

CHILD unwraps the last gift. It is a velveteen rabbit which is spotted brown and white with real thread whiskers and ears lined with sateen.

CHILD (*Cont'd*)

Oh! (*CHILD gives the toy velveteen rabbit a hug*) Look at those eyes! And real whiskers! (*Hugs FATHER and MOTHER*) Thank you for everything!

NANA

We are going to have to make more room in the nursery, especially since I'm sure you'll get more toys from the rest of your relatives when they get here today.

CHILD

And socks from grandma.

MOTHER

And you better be grateful when you get those socks.

CHILD

Of course, I will. Now I'll have more socks to make puppets with!

MOTHER

(Laughing)

Don't you dare!

FATHER

Why don't you get this paper and things cleaned up and move your new toys to the nursery while your mother and I help Nana in the kitchen.

CHILD

I'll get my new toys to help me clean up!

FATHER

As long as you and your new friends get it all nice and tidy.

MOTHER, FATHER, and NANA exit while CHILD begins to clean up. CHILD sets toy lion, velveteen rabbit and robot next to each other then introduced them to one another. [Note: You may add toys but if you do, include them in the introductions.]

CHILD

Lion, this is rabbit and robot. Robot, this is lion and rabbit. Rabbit, this is robot and lion. I hope you all like it here. You will meet a lot more friends when you get up to the nursery. I just have to finish cleaning this all up. Robot, I'm excited to have you tell me about Santa's workshop. I bet it's just amazing there!

MOTHER *(Off)*

Hurry up! People will start getting here any moment!

CHILD

Yes mom, I'm almost done. Wait until you all meet horse! He has been in the nursery since my dad was little. Horse will answer any questions you have. He is so smart.

CHILD exits with arms full of papers.

SCENE TWO

AT RISE: *Interior; evening in the Nursery. There are various toys spread around the room. The room should be designed to allow for the actual toys to be switched out with the actors playing those toys. CHILD is cleaning up the nursery as MOTHER and FATHER enter.*

FATHER

Did you have a good Christmas?

CHILD

Yes, I did!

MOTHER

Make sure you write thank you cards for grandma, grandpa and your aunts and uncles tomorrow.

CHILD

Can you help me?

MOTHER

You are old enough now that you can do it yourself.

CHILD

But the addresses...

FATHER

We'll help with that.

NANA

(Entering)

I just wanted to check if any help is needed.

MOTHER

I'd say it is looking pretty good.

FATHER

Let's get ready for bed, it's been a long and exciting day.

MOTHER puts her arm over CHILD's shoulder and they exit with FATHER. As NANA shuts off the lights.

SCENE THREE

AT RISE: *The nursery sits in a quiet dim glow. A magical transformation has taken place. All the toys are now alive.*

TIN SOLDIER

Attention! Attention! We must do roll call. See who is here, who are casualties and see who is newly enlisted!

VELVETEEN

(Very shyly)

Excuse me, I'm not sure if I'm "newly enlisted" or a "casualty."

CAT

If you are talking, you're not a casualty. If today is your first day, then you are newly enlisted.

Each of the TOYS introduce themselves with VELVETEEN being last.

TIN SOLDIER

Those of you who are new, welcome! Make sure you follow the rules of the nursery or Nana may just throw you out. *(VELVETEEN raises its paw)* Did the rabbit just raise its paw? I don't believe I've seen a rabbit raise its paw before to ask a question.

CAT

We've never had a rabbit here before, that's why.

TIN SOLDIER

Do real rabbits raise their paw to ask a question?

LION

(Inspecting VELVETEEN)

It is stuffed with saw dust. I can smell the wood. I don't imagine real rabbits smell like that.

TIN SOLDIER

What is your question rabbit?

VELVETEEN

What are the rules?

TIN SOLDIER

They are pretty simple. Do not be out of place. Nana has a place where you belong and that is where you must be at the end of the day. Also, know your place amongst the toys.

VELVETEEN

What is the difference?

TIN SOLDIER

Some toys are simply better than other toys. Know where you stand amongst us! The highest rank toys are the ones that are "real." Metal toys and toys that move on their own, even when adults are around, like robot, are very important. Other toys can also be more important.

LION

Who decides?

TIN SOLDIER

There is a system in place. Those who are important, like myself, will let you know. If you have to ask if you are important enough, then you probably aren't. Any further questions? *(Doesn't pause for questions)* Good, no questions!

VELVETEEN

(Very worried)

Know my place? Oh dear. I know where I am going on the toy shelf, but that is all I know.

LION

Well, I know I must be important. My background is in the military. I need to make sure that Tin Soldier knows that. I assume he can just tell that I am important, but I need to make it very clear to him.

LION goes to TIN SOLDIER for a private conversation. The TOYS in the nursery start to interact with each other, but VELVETEEN isolates itself, clearly worried. HORSE, who is brown with bald patches and most of its tail hair gone, has been watching VELVETEEN with concern. HORSE walks over to VELVETEEN.

HORSE

Don't worry there fella, Tin Soldier is a lot of talk. I've been here longer than anyone else in the nursery. His type comes and goes, a new leader who thinks they know better than everyone else. Eventually someone simply replaces them too. You will find there is always someone who thinks they "know better," only later to be replaced by someone else who "knows better." The funny part is they are the type that often know the least. They think that if they say their ideas louder, it somehow makes them right.

VELVETEEN

How could I ever be something like Tin Soldier or even Robot?

HORSE

Well you certainly don't want to be like Tin Soldier. Robot does some neat things but eventually those "new things" are no longer new and lose their wonder. You and I can't compete with technology—nor do we want to. What you and I have, that some of the toys here seem to lack, is heart. It isn't how expensive you are or how many gears you have, but if you have the ability to make a child truly happy. I have seen lots and lots of toys come and go here.

VELVETEEN

How long have you been here?

HORSE

Do you remember the kid's uncle from this morning?

VELVETEEN

Yes.

HORSE

I was his when he was a little boy. Notice how worn and tattered I am? But I am still here!

VELVETEEN

There isn't a lot of others here who look like you.

HORSE

Nope, because not all the toys are loved as much. Another nice thing about toys, like you and me, we are pretty hard to break. I give that Robot until New Year's Eve and it will already be broken.

VELVETEEN

What did Tin Soldier mean by being "real"?

HORSE

Becoming "real" is very special and it doesn't happen to all toys. In fact, it has only happened to a couple while I've been here. You become "real" when a child loves you with all their heart.

VELVETEEN

Like they play with you all the time?

HORSE

More than that. Many toys in here get played with a lot, but after time the child moves onto something else. To be loved means not only are you with the child a lot, but the child shares their thoughts and feelings with you. They go to you for comfort when they are hurting. It starts as playing pretend but then becomes real.

VELVETEEN

Is it only for new toys?

HORSE

It can be any toy at any time. It does take a long time to happen though, and you certainly don't look new by the time it does happen. You might need to be patched up or lose your fur or even lose an eye.

VELVETEEN

We can still be loved even if we aren't perfect?

HORSE

Yes, and that is the best kind of love. You know it is "real" when the love sees past your flaws.

VELVETEEN

I would like that a lot, to be loved and be "real." Are you "real"? Oh, maybe I shouldn't ask that.

HORSE

I'm "real."

VELVETEEN

But his uncle is all grown up.

HORSE

Once you become "real," you stay that way forever.

TIN SOLDIER

Attention! Attention! I would like to introduce you all to the next in command. This is Lion. Though Lion is new here, I have checked its lineage and Lion is in fact a direct descendant of the lion on the family crest of the current king of England!

HORSE

How did you check that?

TIN SOLDIER

(Clearly making it up)

Through extensive research in that...one place... where I go... to find those important things that need to be checked and verified.

LION

I can certify that Tin Soldier is in fact correct!

TIN SOLDIER

And as the old saying goes, "lions can never tell a lie."

VELVETEEN

(Whispering to HORSE)

Really?

HORSE

(Whispering to VELVETEEN)

No one has ever said that.

TIN SOLDIER

Is there a question from the rabbit?!

VELVETEEN responds with a look of fear.

HORSE

Rabbit was just wondering if it was true that a lion can never tell a lie.

TIN SOLDIER

Have you ever heard a lion tell a lie?

ALL look at each other confirming and shaking their heads "no."

TIN SOLDIER *(Cont'd)*

See my point stands.

CAT

I've heard a dog lie; you can't trust a dog.

TIN SOLDIER

(Rather annoyed)

Thank you for that bit of wisdom, Cat. At ease everyone, you may return to your business.

ALL toys begin to mingle and VELVETEEN, looking rather anxious, makes its way to the three MONKEYS who are playing.

VELVETEEN

Hello.

HEAR NO EVIL MONKEY

(Covering its ears)

Did I hear someone? I don't think so.

VELVETEEN

(Louder, but not rudely)

Oh, I'm sorry, I said "hello."

SPEAK NO EVIL MONKEY

(Covering its mouth)

Our mom said we can't talk to strangers and I would certainly say you are strange. *(Pokes VELVETEEN)* What are you made of?

SEE NO EVIL MONKEY

(Touches VELVETEEN's fur then covers its eyes)

I can't even look at that fur! It isn't as soft as ours.

*MONKEYS begin to circle
VELVETEEN sniffing VELVETEEN
while maintaining their gestures of
HEAR NO EVIL MONKEY covering its
ears, SEE NO EVIL MONKEY covering
its eyes, and SPEAK NO EVIL
MONKEY covering its mouth.*

HEAR NO EVIL MONKEY

Why do you smell like wood?

SPEAK NO EVIL MONKEY

You don't smell right!

SEE NO EVIL MONKEY

What are you made of?

HEAR NO EVEIL MONKEY

Let's open the rabbit up!

VELVETEEN

No thank you. Sorry to...

*VELVETEEN quickly moves away from
MONKEYS and over to BOAT. The
BOAT has worn off paint and has
clearly been played with a lot.*

VELVETEEN *(Cont'd)*

Hello.

BOAT

Hello! When do you set sail?

VELVETEEN

I am not sure what that means.

BOAT

When do you hit the water? I'm docked for now, as the pond is frozen. I'm hoping for a potential bathtub voyage again soon but those have been less and less.

VELVETEEN

I don't think I'm meant for water.

BOAT

Then what is your point?

VELVETEEN

What do you mean my "point"?

BOAT

What is your purpose? Do you wind up? Do you make noise? Can you be thrown and caught?

VELVETEEN

I um... I don't...

BOAT

Well, let's at least hope the kid knows what to do with you.

VELVETEEN

(Rather sad)

Yes, I guess... I hope so.

BOAT

I'd hire you for my crew, but you need naval experience.

VELVETEEN

I'm sorry, I don't think I have that.

BOAT

Well kid, it's getting late. You best find your spot for the night.

ALL the toys find a place in the room near other toys. VELVETEEN looks around and doesn't know where to go, so sets itself down by itself. VELVETEEN looks around with sadness and loneliness as lights fade out.

SCENE FOUR

AT RISE: *The Nursery; lights are very low and all the toys are back in their original toy form.*

CHILD (*Off*)
But, Nana, I need my dog to sleep? I can't sleep without my dog!

NANA enters.

NANA
Where is that stuffed dog? (*NANA looks around the nursery*) With all these other new toys I don't see why he needs that tattered up old dog.

NANA continues to look around, and eventually she comes upon the velveteen rabbit.

NANA (*Cont'd*)
(Picking up rabbit)
Well you aren't a dog, but I will tell him that you will just have to do.

As NANA exits with the toy rabbit, the lights go to black.

SCENE FIVE

AT RISE: *NANA is standing next to the CHILD'S BED. The toy rabbit is lying next to CHILD.*

NANA

We will just have to look for your toy dog tomorrow. Look how nice this new rabbit is!

CHILD

I hope my dog is okay. He will be scared all by himself.

NANA

Now's the time to get some sleep, both your parents are already asleep.

NANA turns off the light and exits. CHILD pretends to fall asleep. As he turns over, the rabbit falls to the floor on the upstage side of the bed. There is a change in lighting with a gentle glow now in the room. VELVETEEN stands up, next to the bed. It has magically transformed into its living version. CHILD looks at VELVETEEN.

CHILD

Hello. Have you seen my dog?

VELVETEEN

No, I'm sorry I haven't.

CHILD

I hope he's okay. It's not like him to disappear.

VELVETEEN

You heard me?!

CHILD

Of course, I did.

VELVETEEN

Earlier today, when I spoke under the Christmas tree, no one seemed to hear me.

CHILD

Sorry, it was very loud, I didn't hear you. Also, I'm sorry I couldn't spend time with you. Things always get so rushed Christmas morning. Then once my cousins got here and brought their toys...

VELVETEEN

That's okay.

CHILD

I really like your floppy ears and whiskers.

VELVETEEN

You don't mind my smell?

CHILD

Your smell?

VELVETEEN

Some of the other toys said I had saw dust in me and it made me smell bad.

CHILD

I think you smell just perfect. You smell like you should. Hey, do you want to burrow through tunnels?

VELVETEEN

Sure! (*Feeling embarrassed by its ignorance*) I don't know what that means though.

CHILD

I'm part rabbit and all good rabbits are good at burrowing! First, we've got to make some tunnels. (*Making tunnels using blankets and things*) Rabbits like tunnels because they can hide from the gardener. You will love the garden here, it has lots of flowers and vegetables. I don't usually like the taste of vegetables, but I know you will. The gardener won't want you eating her stuff so when she comes in we'll burrow into the tunnels. Let's practice. Come over to the garden and eat.

They pretend to be eating.

VELVETEEN

(Pretending to eat)

Yum, yum! What are these?

CHILD

They are radishes. Here, try some cabbage.

VELVETEEN

(Pretending to eat)

It is all so good! What else do you have for me?

CHILD

Here is something I know you'll like and it's good for your eyesight, too – carrots!

VELVETEEN

At this rate, I'm going to be full very soon!

CHILD

Oh no! The gardener!

They dive under the covers laughing and tumbling about. When they emerge, CHILD offers VELVETEEN more pretend carrots.

CHILD

Here, have some more carrots!

Once again, they laugh, eat and share in the game until NANA is heard off.

NANA

What is all the ruckus in there?

CHILD

The gardener! Quick! Into the tunnels. Pretend to be asleep!

NANA

(Entering; pulling back the cover)

Nice try, I know you aren't asleep.

CHILD

(Pretending to be woken up)

What? I was having such a nice dream. What do you want?

NANA

(Sarcastically)

Remind me to sign you up for acting class soon. Now get to sleep.

CHILD

Sorry Nana, I'm still just so excited about the day.

NANA pulls the rabbit from under the covers, placing it next to CHILD.

NANA

I understand. Just close your eyes, lay there peacefully and you will fall asleep. *(Exits)*

CHILD

(Kisses toy on head as lights fade out)

Good night.

SCENE SIX

AT RISE: *Months later, springtime; the family's yard. VELVETEEN and CHILD outside playing. VELVETEEN shows some wear and tear from being loved and played with since Christmas.*

CHILD

It is finally warm enough to play outside! Oh, rabbit you will love it outside! There are so many better places to explore and see!

VELVETEEN

It smells so different. *(Taking some quick sniffs of the air)* It smells almost sweet.

CHILD

Those are flowers you smell. My mother and father are very proud of their flower gardens. It drives them crazy though when the rabbits get into them and eat the tops of the flowers off.

VELVETEEN

I don't do that.

CHILD

I hope not. *(Laughing)* I will still keep an eye on you, just in case.

VELVETEEN

There are other rabbits out here?

CHILD

Yes, and squirrels, racoons, birds, turtles and even an occasional deer and fox. Like in those books I read to you.

VELVETEEN

I hope we get to see them!

CHILD

Most the animals out here are pretty shy and afraid of people.

VELVETEEN

I'm pretty shy, but not around you.

CHILD

That's because you know me.

VELVETEEN

All the animals should get to know you as well as I do!

CHILD

I think Nana would lose her mind if I had all those animals playing with me in the nursery.

VELVETEEN

I think it would be a lot of fun!

CHILD

Let's see what we can do today. Maybe we will even make some new friends!

CHILD and VELVETEEN begin to explore the garden and outside area.

VELVETEEN

What is that?

CHILD

That is a bird bath.

VELVETEEN

Nana always says I need a bath.

CHILD

She says that about me too! But you don't need a bath. So what if you are a little dirty! Rabbits don't need baths. Plus, it would take you a very long time to dry. You'd soak up a lot of water. Let's see if we can find any worms.

VELVETEEN

What's a worm?

CHILD

They are brown and are like very tiny little snakes.

VELVETEEN

Like a cobra in your story book?

CHILD

(Laughing)

No, not at all. They are very small... *(Gestures with hand the typical length of an earth worm)* ...and harmless. They are great diggers! If we find enough, we could take them to go fishing!

VELVETEEN

That would be fun. I've never been fishing. Do worms like fishing?

CHILD

Probably not.

VELVETEEN

Maybe we should find a game they would like to play.

CHILD

Worms aren't very good at any games, other than digging holes games. I'm going to try and find something to gather the worms in. I'll be back soon.

*CHILD exits. After a few moments
RABBIT #1 and RABBIT #2 enter.
RABBIT #1 and RABBIT #2 make their
way to the flowers, then cautiously look
around.*

RABBIT #1

(Looking back to the flowers)

These look delicious!

RABBIT #2

I can't wait to taste the yellow ones.

RABBIT #1

There is nothing sweeter than fresh flowers!

RABBIT #2

Agreed!

VELVETEEN

Don't eat those!

RABBIT #2

What? Are you talking to us?

VELVETEEN

Yes. Please don't eat those flowers.

RABBIT #1

Why not?

VELVETEEN

Because they aren't yours to eat.

RABBIT #1

Whose are they to eat?

VELVETEEN

Not yours.

RABBIT #2

Are they yours to eat? There are more than enough flowers for all of us to share.

*RABBIT #1 and RABBIT #2 move
closer to VELVETEEN.*

RABBIT #2

What are you?

VELVETEEN

I'm a rabbit.

RABBIT #1

(Looking doubtful)

We are rabbits. If you were a rabbit, you'd be eating these too.

VELVETEEN

I'm not hungry.

RABBIT #2

I have never heard of a rabbit who wasn't hungry.

VELVETEEN

I just ate.

RABBIT #1

What did you just eat?

VELVETEEN

A carrot.

RABBIT #2

I don't believe you.

VELVETEEN

I did.

RABBIT #1

Something's suspicious about you.

VELVETEEN

I don't know what that word means, but I don't have any "suspicious."

RABBIT #2

We will only eat a few flowers, then you can come jump and dance with us.

VELVETEEN, looking anxious, tries to jump but has no luck.

RABBIT #1

You can jump, can't you?

VELVETEEN

I don't want to.

RABBIT #2

You don't want to eat flowers and you don't want to jump around? Are you sure you are a rabbit?

VELVETEEN

Yes, I am a rabbit.

RABBIT #1

(Inspecting VELVETEEN closer)

You smell funny. What's wrong with your back legs?

RABBIT #2

You aren't a real rabbit!

VELVETEEN

Yes, I am!

RABBIT #2

Then run around like a real rabbit.

VELVETEEN

I told you I don't want to. I am real.

RABBIT #1 and RABBIT #2 look at each other unconvinced and begin to exit.

RABBIT #2

If you change your mind and want to run and jump with us, come look for us in the burrow by the big oak tree.

*RABBIT #1 and RABBIT #2 exit, then
RABBIT #1 quickly hops back and
snatches two flowers then exits again.*

VELVETEEN

Hey!

*VELVETEEN then gets sad thinking
about how it was just treated.*

CHILD

(Entering with container of worms)

Found something for them. *(Noticing VELVETEEN is sad)* What's wrong?

VELVETEEN

Aren't all rabbits stuffed with saw dust like me?

CHILD

No. They can be stuffed with different things.

VELVETEEN

I just met two rabbits in the garden. They wanted me to jump and play with them, but I couldn't move like them.

CHILD

That's okay. There are lots of other ways to play.

VELVETEEN

They said I smelled different than them too. It made me feel icky the way they talked about me.

CHILD

I think you smell just fine and look just fine and play just fine too! I love everything about you.

VELVETEEN

But I'm not like those rabbits.

CHILD

That's okay. I love you for you.

VELVETEEN

But some of my whiskers have fallen out, my fur is worn flat, and I can't jump like those rabbits.

CHILD

I love everything about what makes you – you. Even your worn-out spots. When we truly love someone, we love all of them—even the parts that are rough or broken.

VELVETEEN

They said I'm not "real." Am I "real"?

CHILD

You absolutely are "real".

VELVETEEN

Why can't Nana hear me when I talk? Or your parents?

CHILD

Sometimes certain grownups get so caught up in being grownups that they stop really listening. They also stop seeing and hearing all the magical things around them.

VELVETEEN

I hope that never happens to me.

CHILD

I don't want to get like that either.

CHILD hugs VELVETEEN as lights go out.

SCENE SEVEN

AT RISE: *Interior of nursery. CHILD enters with VELVETEEN who shows additional wear and tear from the previous scene. TOYS are visiting with each other.*

CHILD

Good morning, everyone!

ALL

Good morning!

CHILD

I hope you all had a good night and that the thunderstorm last night didn't scare you too much.

LION

I kept everyone safe.

TIN SOLDIER

As did I.

ROBOT

I assisted as well.

BOAT

I was ready to load everyone onboard if the nursery were to have flooded.

CHILD

If the nursery would have flooded the whole house would have been nearly underwater! I'm glad that didn't happen.

CAT

I hate water!

BOAT

I would have kept you safe and dry.

CHILD

Luckily that didn't happen.

TIN SOLDIER

I was trying to prepare everyone to defend the nursery. Those first thunder crashes sounded like cannon fire. I was concerned that we were being invaded. We must always be prepared!

ROBOT

Be prepared!

LION

Here! Here! I agree!

HORSE

Who would want to invade the nursery?

TIN SOLDIER

You never know! That is why we must all stay in tip top shape and on alert! Any chance you could order up a platoon of robots? I like them, they don't ask questions and move in whichever way we point them.

CHILD

Christmas isn't for a couple more months yet, so you'll have to wait. Plus, I'm not sure I could convince even Santa to get me enough robots for a platoon.

VELVETEEN

(Whispering to CHILD)

How many is a platoon?

CHILD

(Whispering to VELVETEEN)

I have no idea.

NANA *(Off)*

Are you almost ready? Both of your parents are already seated at the breakfast table.

CHILD

(To the TOYS)

I have to head downstairs to eat, then head off to school.

VELVETEEN

School? I didn't think you had school anymore.

CHILD

That is only during the summer. It's fall now and that means back to school. *(Beginning to exit)* You have fun today and I'll see you when I get home.

HORSE

I'm eager to hear about what you learned on your first day!

CHILD

I'll make sure to let you know. *(Gives VELVETEEN a gentle kiss on one of his rabbit ears)* Love you. *(Exits)*

The TOYS begin to visit with each other while the following dialogue continues.

CAT

(To VELVETEEN)

You got a "love you."

VELVETEEN

You know he loves you too.

CAT

Yes, but he said it to you and you even got a kiss on your ear.

VELVETEEN

I've been told I have cute ears. Maybe it was just more about my big ears.

HORSE

(To CAT)

There is more than enough love for all of us in the nursery. One of the great things about people is there are no limits to how much and how many people they can love.

CAT

It is pretty special that he likes you so much.

CAT goes off to visit with other TOYS.

HORSE

The kid sure does like you though.

TIN SOLDIER, LION and ROBOT come over to speak to VELVETEEN.

TIN SOLDIER

(Sternly to VELVETEEN)

We have missed you at boot camp.

VELVETEEN

I don't wear boots.

LION

It's a training camp where we train you to defend the nursery.

ROBOT

Defend the nursery.

VELVETEEN

Sorry I have been gone so much.

TIN SOLDIER

We all need to be in tiptop shape and ready for battle.

ROBOT

Tip top shape.

HORSE

(To TIN SOLDIER)

I have been here since you were still a soup can, there is no worry about us having to defend ourselves against attack.

VELVETEEN

I'm not really interested in fighting anyone.

TIN SOLDIERS

Oh, are you one of those pacifiers?!

*VELVETEEN looks to HORSE
confused.*

HORSE

I think he means "pacifist," someone who doesn't believe in violence to resolve conflict.

TIN SOLDIER

I'm pretty sure it is pronounced "pacifier."

ROBOT

Pacifier!

TIN SOLDIER

See even Robot agrees.

HORSE

(Shaking head in disbelief and then with deep sarcasm speaks)

I must say, I feel much safer knowing our nursery is protected under the leadership of those like yourselves.

VELVETEEN

(To TIN SOLDIER)

I will try my best to get to more of your boot camps.

TIN SOLDIER

There is hope for you yet.

ROBOT

Hope for you yet.

TIN SOLDIER

(To ROBOT)

If I could just have an entire platoon of soldiers as obedient as you.

HORSE

Maybe you should write a letter to Santa.

TIN SOLDIER

Great idea! Lion we have a mission! (*LION, TIN SOLDIER and ROBOT begin to walk away from VELVETEEN and HORSE*) We need to find a pencil and paper...

LION

And learn to write.

ROBOT

Learn to write!

TIN SOLDIER

Maybe the monkeys know how to write.

ROBOT, TIN SOLDIER and LION go off on their mission.

HORSE

Don't worry about those three and their "boot camps." Hopefully the kid will ask Santa for some additional tin soldiers and that will make them happy. You and the kid sure are close. I'm so happy for you. Reminds me of years ago with his uncle. You are so lucky to get to play outside, not all the toys get to do that.

VELVETEEN

I love it outside. The air, the grass, the flowers—all of it!

HORSE

This is your first fall season too. Wait until you see all the trees change colors; browns, yellows, reds and oranges.

VELVETEEN

I can't wait to see it all. I bet it's beautiful!

HORSE

(Remembering when he could go outside)

It is absolutely a breathtaking sight to see.

Lights out.

SCENE EIGHT

AT RISE: *The following Christmas; interior of living room. The first Christmas since VELVETEEN came to live with CHILD. NANA, MOTHER and FATHER are placing gifts and doing some last moment preparations for the Christmas morning reveal. But something is wrong: MOTHER seems rather sad.*

NANA

Let me know if you need anything else, Miss. I'm all done in the kitchen already. I'm just so used to having to prepare so much more food. (*FATHER looks at NANA as if saying "Let's not talk about this."*) Sorry Miss, I didn't mean to...

MOTHER

It's fine. It's not your fault. It's just hard to get excited knowing the rest of our family can't come.

FATHER

With scarlet fever as bad as it is getting, we just can't risk it.

MOTHER

I know, but it doesn't mean I have to like it.

FATHER

True, but at least we still have each other, a roof over our heads, food on the table and gifts under the tree.

MOTHER

We do all still have each other. I just worry about the rest of my family and miss them. This is the one time of year that traditionally we are all together.

FATHER

Then it gives us an excuse to plan a special event once it is safe for us all to be together again. That will make it even more special.

CHILD (*Off*)

Can I come down yet?

MOTHER

Yes, you may!

CHILD enters with toy rabbit. And sees the tree and the presents.

CHILD

It is so pretty! (*Hugs FATHER and MOTHER*)

FATHER

Sorry that there are fewer gifts this Christmas; it has been a tough year.

CHILD

That's okay – really it is.

MOTHER

Let's open presents!

MOTHER hands a gift to NANA and one to FATHER. She hands three gifts to CHILD.

NANA

(Gesturing to MOTHER)

You open first.

MOTHER

(Opening a gift. It is a silk wrap)

I love it and it's my favorite color. Nana, you go next.

NANA

(Opens it. It is a party dress)

I love it but are you trying to tell me something?

MOTHER

Yes! You need to go out more often and have fun. (*To FATHER*) Honey, you open yours.

FATHER

(Opens his gift. It is a ship in a bottle)

Ha, ha.

MOTHER

I know it isn't a real boat, but it's a start!

FATHER

I've actually always been fascinated by how they get the ship inside.

CHILD

Can I open mine?

FATHER

Yes, of course!

CHILD

(Opens first gift. It is a ball)

Dad, now we can play catch!

NANA

I know some other games that I can teach you, too.

CHILD

(Opens second gift. It is a set of small soldiers)

More soldiers! Perfect! I needed to expand the platoon.

MOTHER

And one more!

MOTHER hands CHILD the last gift.

CHILD

(Opening package; it is a wind-up toy)

Wow!

FATHER

Wind it up.

CHILD

(Winds up the toy and it moves on its own)

That is even neater than Robot!

CHILD hugs FATHER and MOTHER.

FATHER

I hope you had a nice Christmas morning.

MOTHER

Sorry your cousins can't come over this year.

CHILD

That's okay, they usually end up breaking a few of my toys anyway.

FATHER

Your mother and I are going to go have a cup of coffee. You can stay and play with your toys until Nana calls you to breakfast.

CHILD

I want to introduce rabbit to my new toys.

MOTHER

Excellent idea!

FATHER and MOTHER exit.

CHILD

Now where did – (*Looks behind tree*) – Oh, there you are! (*Pulls live VELVETEEN from behind the tree*) Come meet your new friends!

VELVETEEN

That was fun to watch you open all those packages. Tearing the wrapping paper looked like so much fun!

CHILD

It is!

VELVETEEN

(*Getting sad*)

Which of your new toys will replace me?

CHILD

What do you mean?

VELVETEEN

You got me last Christmas and now it's a new Christmas.

CHILD

So?

VELVETEEN

The toys are all brand new and I'm not. Don't I just have to live in the nursery all the time now and a new toy will get to cuddle up with you at night?

CHILD

No. Where did you get that idea? You are my family. Just because we add a new family member doesn't mean we have to get rid of an old one. If my mom and dad had another kid, it doesn't mean they'd love me any less or get rid of me. I can love as many people as I want and have as many family members as I want. There are no limits when it comes to love.

VELVETEEN

Really?

CHILD

Really! You don't need to worry. And even if I spend less time with you than before, it doesn't mean I love you any less.

VELVETEEN

I was worried.

CHILD

That is the nice thing about when you love someone, even when you are separated from each other, for any reason, that doesn't mean we have to love each other any less.

VELVETEEN

That makes me happy.

THEY hug as lights fade out.

SCENE NINE

AT RISE: *Daytime, Child's bedroom. NANA enters with CHILD who doesn't look well. NANA carries the CHILD's Easter basket.*

NANA

I want you to lie down.

CHILD

Nana, I'm fine.

NANA

You aren't fine. I found you sleeping under a bush and you are burning up.

CHILD

I was looking for Easter eggs.

NANA

With your eyes closed? I think not.

CHILD

But I haven't found all the eggs yet.

NANA

Your father is hunting for the rest of them. I haven't seen him be that excited in a long time. I think he is having more fun hunting eggs than even you when you feel well. Now let's get you into bed. Go get into your pajamas while I turn down the bed. (*CHILD exits to change into pajamas*) I will take your Easter basket downstairs and put it in the kitchen, I don't think your stomach will appreciate all those sweets today and I don't wish to have to scrub chocolate out of your blankets later. I'll hide it from your father too, so he won't eat all your jellybeans.

*NANA continues to prep the bed as
MOTHER enters.*

MOTHER

I managed to get a hold of the doctor and he is on his way here.

NANA

You managed to get a doctor on Easter?

MOTHER

I felt terrible reaching out on Easter, but I am so worried. The doctor said she expected to be having to do house calls today. (*To CHILD offstage*) How are you doing, honey?

NANA

Are you in your pajamas yet? We need to get you into bed.

*CHILD enters and climbs into bed.
MOTHER puts her hand on CHILD's
forehead, checking his temperature.*

MOTHER

You are burning up!

CHILD

(Realizing he doesn't have Velveteen Rabbit)

Mom! Where's rabbit?! Where's rabbit?!

NANA and MOTHER look around room.

MOTHER

Lay down, we will look.

CHILD

Nana, I think I left rabbit outside! I hope rabbit's okay!

NANA

Your father is out there still, so if rabbit is there, I'm sure it's safe. I'll check outside.
Calm yourself.

NANA exits.

MOTHER

Shh. Lay down and rest. Nana will find rabbit.

*MOTHER sits next to CHILD and
gently sings a lullaby as CHILD drifts
off to sleep.*

MOTHER *(Singing)*

*Lullaby, my lovely boy,
Close thy eyes so bright.
While the moon pours o'er your bed
All its silvery light,
I tell the tales of fairies
Lull thee with a song while the moon,
Heaven's lonely wandr'er,
Creeps the sky along.*

Lights out.

SCENE TEN

AT RISE: *Later, another place in the house. [It could be back in the Livingroom or another location simply established by an isolated spot light.] FATHER and MOTHER are clearly worried. After a moment the DOCTOR enters.*

FATHER
What is it?

DOCTOR
It is what I was afraid of, scarlet fever.

MOTHER
Oh no!

DOCTOR
I'm just glad that you chose not to have your relatives over today to celebrate Easter.

MOTHER
Now what do we do?

DOCTOR
We need to give him lots of liquids, lots of rest and use cold towels to try to keep his fever down. *This* should help move the process along.

MOTHER
We can do that.

DOCTOR
And no visitors. In general, we really need to limit who he is interacting with.

FATHER
Yes, doctor.

MOTHER
Is he going to be okay?

DOCTOR
Follow the directions I gave you and pray. That is all we can do at this point.

MOTHER, grief stricken, hugs FATHER.

DOCTOR

I wish I had a more concrete answer, but this fever can have very different effects on different people.

FATHER

We understand.

DOCTOR

I'll see my way out.

DOCTOR exits. MOTHER and FATHER comfort each other.

SCENE ELEVEN

AT RISE: *Evening, CHILD's bedroom;
VELVETEEN next to CHILD. CHILD
looks even sicker than earlier.*

VELVETEEN

Your skin is so hot, I wish I could help you feel better.

CHILD

I wish you could too.

VELVETEEN

Maybe if I just snuggle you more. (*Snuggles closer to CHILD*) Is this better?

CHILD

Yes.

VELVETEEN

Can I get sick like this too?

CHILD

No, luckily you are a rabbit. This is a people sickness.

VELVETEEN

Good because I'm not as brave and strong as you are.

CHILD

You are brave and strong, just in a different way.

VELVETEEN

Do you want to play burrow in the tunnels?

CHILD

I do, but I just don't have the energy.

VELVETEEN

Let's just lay here then and get some sleep. There will be plenty of time for tunneling when you get better.

CHILD

Yes, there will be.

CHILD falls asleep as lights fade out.

SCENE TWELVE

AT RISE: *Morning; CHILD's bedroom.
DOCTOR, FATHER and MOTHER
stand near the bed. DOCTOR is looking
at the thermometer.*

DOCTOR

I was afraid of this. It looks like it is getting worse before it gets better.

MOTHER

(To CHILD)

Hang in there, honey. You will get better.

FATHER

(To CHILD)

Yes, you will. *(To DOCTOR)* What else can we do?

DOCTOR

Once he shows signs of improving, I recommend you spend a few days seaside. The sun and fresh air will help immensely.

FATHER

We can make that happen.

MOTHER

(To CHILD)

You hear that? We will go to the seaside. You love it there! *(CHILD is so weak that he doesn't respond)*

DOCTOR

Let him have his rest.

DOCTOR and PARENTS exit.

VELVETEEN

The seaside? That sounds really fun! Boat has told me a lot about the sea. Won't that be exciting for us to go there? *(CHILD does not respond and is falling asleep)* Do rabbits swim? I know they run and jump. Next time we see those rabbits in the garden, I'll ask them if they swim or have even been to the sea. *(Looks at CHILD, who is now asleep)* I really want you to get better. I wish there was something I could do to make you get better. *(Silence)* I will just stay with you then and keep you safe. Maybe just knowing that I'll stay by your side will be enough to make you feel better. *(Snuggles closer to CHILD)* I wish more than anything for you to get better.

*VELVETEEN, snuggles even closer as
CHILD drifts off to sleep. Lights out.*

SCENE THIRTEEN

AT RISE: *Evening, CHILD's bedroom. NANA is wiping CHILD's sleeping face with a cloth while MOTHER watches over.*

NANA

Finally, some color is coming back into his face.

MOTHER

I'm so ready to see him bouncing around and running up and down the stairs again.

NANA

I could do without the "running" part.

MOTHER

The doctor said at this point we are past the worst of it. He had a real tum around after the doctor's last visit. He still is sleeping so hard though.

NANA

That's what he needs, Miss.

MOTHER

That is what the doctor said too.

NANA looks at toy rabbit cuddled up tight with CHILD.

NANA

That rabbit is so beat up. Should we get him a new one and switch it out when he is asleep?

MOTHER

Goodluck with that. He has been clutching that rabbit so tight these last couple days. It is so cute how those two seem to protect each other, even if it is just a toy.

CHILD

(Quietly)

He is real.

MOTHER

Nana, did you say something?

CHILD

(Weakly)

Rabbit is real.

MOTHER

Oh, honey! You're awake!

CHILD

(Weakly)

Rabbit isn't just a toy, he is real.

MOTHER

Yes dear. How are you feeling?

CHILD

Tired.

MOTHER

But you are talking, that's very good. Nana, please get a message to the doctor and also please let his father know.

NANA

Yes ma'am.

NANA hands the washcloth to MOTHER and exits.

MOTHER

I'm so glad you are finally starting to feel better.

CHILD

Me too. *(Silence for a moment)* Mom?

MOTHER

Yes, dear.

CHILD

Rabbit's real you know.

MOTHER

Yes, if you say so dear.

Lights fade out.

SCENE FOURTEEN

AT RISE: *Later; elsewhere in the home.
DOCTOR, NANA, MOTHER and
FATHER stand talking.*

DOCTOR

The worst of it is over for certain. I'm not going to lie, I was really starting to worry. It is going to take him time to get all his energy back and be back 100%. You should make arrangements to get him seaside soon.

FATHER

I'll make arrangements for the day after tomorrow to get us there.

DOCTOR

While the family is gone you will need to prep his bedroom.

NANA

Certainly.

DOCTOR

That means you must burn all his bedding, books and toys that he might have played with while he had scarlet fever.

NANA

I can do that.

MOTHER

He will want to take his rabbit with him.

DOCTOR

I am sorry to tell you, but he can't. The rabbit will have to be destroyed with the rest of his bedroom things. You will need to find an excuse to tell him why rabbit can't go. Then when you are seaside take him to a toy store to pick out an even better rabbit.

MOTHER

He'll say there isn't a "better rabbit."

DOCTOR

I'm sorry, but the rabbit needs to be burned. We simply can't risk re-infecting him.

FATHER

We understand.

MOTHER

(As lights fade, not happy to have to tell CHILD the news about rabbit)
Yes, yes we do.

SCENE FIFTEEN

AT RISE: *Daytime, CHILD's bedroom. CHILD looks much healthier and is sitting up in the bed next to the toy rabbit.*

NANA (*Off*)
Are you almost ready? I'll be in to help you in a moment.

CHILD
Are you sure I shouldn't pack anything?

NANA
Your mom and dad plan to buy you all new clothes.

CHILD
(*Confused*)
Okay? That seems odd. My clothes seem good and still fit me. (*To Rabbit*) Are you ready to see the sea? (*Laughs*) "See the Sea." That's funny! You will love it especially the seagulls! (*In such better state*) Do you have your clothes packed? (*Laughs at himself*) Just kidding!

MOTHER and NANA enter.

CHILD
(*Holding Rabbit*)
We are ready to go.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes