Acting Edition

L. Frank Baum's

The Wizard of Oz

Adapted by Claude Townley

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SAMUEL FRENCH

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THE WIZARD OF OZ

A Full Length Play

For A Flexible Cast of Seventeen and Extras

CHARACTERS

THE WIZARD OF OZ
[Also ROYAL HISTORIAN & GUARDIAN OF GATES]

DOROTHY, a little girl from Kansas

TOTO, her toy dog [no lines]

UNCLE HENRY

AUNT EM

WITCH OF THE NORTH, a good one

THREE MUNCHKINS with blue beards

WITCH OF THE WEST, a wicked one

The SCARECROW

The TIN WOODMAN

The COWARDLY LION

KING of the WINGED MONKEYS

THREE OZITES with green beards

GLINDA, WITCH OF THE SOUTH
[May double with WITCH OF THE NORTH]

Assorted MUNCHKINS, OZITES & WINGED MONKEYS

TIME: A few years ago.

PLACE: The Wonderful Land of Oz.

THE WIZARD OF OZ

ACT ONE

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: A spotlight comes on at the DR proscenium to reveal a little old man with a bald head and a wrinkled face. He wears a frock coat, a cape and fancy vest, and carries a large book. He takes his place at a green lectern.

HISTORIAN: [Addressing audience] How do you do. I am the Royal Historian of Oz. It must be true that all healthy youngsters -- and grown-ups -- like to hear fantastic stories -- or you wouldn't keep calling me back to tell about Dorothy's adventures in the marvelous Land of Oz. I must have told the story a thousand times -- over and over again. All about her fabulous journey and the quaint and comical people she met in that magical wonderland. – Ahem! Are you **sure** you want to hear about it again? Just say yes or no, and clap your hands. [Pause for the audience reaction.] Very well. In that case, I'll start at the beginning and go on till I come to the end . . . and then stop. [He opens the big book and pretends to read. Dim lights illuminate the Center Stage area.] Now Dorothy was a little orphan girl who lived in the midst of the gray Kansas prairie with Uncle Henry, who was a farmer, and Aunt Em, who was the farmer's wife. .

[DOROTHY, AUNT EM and UNCLE HENRY enter from L as their names are mentioned. UNCLE HENRY goes URC and looks anxiously through an imaginary window. AUNT EM has brought a small rocking chair and sits LC, darning some white wool

socks. DOROTHY brings a work basket and a little footstool, sits at AUNT EM's feet and begins to knit industriously.]

HISTORIAN. That's Dorothy. She's knitting a sweater for her dog Toto. That's Aunt Em, mending socks for her husband, and that's Uncle Henry looking out the window. They loved each other dearly and lived happily together, although the house was very small. There was no attic and no cellar, except for a hole dug in the ground in the backyard called a cyclone cellar, where the family could go in case a great whirlwind came along. And one gray day that's exactly what happened . . . [SOUND EFFECTS: **Windstorm and thunder,** growing louder and louder.] They heard the wail of the wind and a sharp whistling in the air . .

UNCLE HENRY. [In alarm] It's a twister! There's a cyclone comin'! We'd better run for the cellar. I'll go open up the trap door.

[He crosses and hurries out L.]

AUNT EM. [Going to window URC] Oh, dear me! It's a great **big** cyclone, twistin' and turnin' and comin' this way.

DOROTHY. [Who has risen and gone to look over AUNT EM's shoulder] I'm scared, Aunt Em! Whatever shall we do?

AUNT EM. All we can do is stay in the cyclone cellar till it blows over. Quick, Dorothy! We've got to hurry!

[She crosses toward L, picks up the rocker in one hand and footstool in the other and exits. Her voice is heard calling from offstage.]

Dorothy!

DOROTHY. Yes, Aunt Em. [She grabs up her work basket and is about to follow, then stops and looks around.] But

where's Toto? I can't -- I mustn't go without Toto! Toto! Toto, where are you? Here, Toto! Here, Toto, Toto! . . .

[As she searches upstage and down, someone in the wings DR hands the shaggy stuffed clutch toy to the ROYAL HISTORIAN, who doesn't look at DOROTHY but extends his left arm holding the dog out toward her.]

DOROTHY. Oh, there you are, you naughty dog! [She goes DL and takes TOTO from the outstretched hand.]

UNCLE HENRY. [Offstage L] Come on . . . I'm gonna close the trap door . . .

AUNT EM. [Off L] Hurry, Dorothy! . . . Dorothy! . . .

DOROTHY. I'm coming, Aunt Em! [She starts toward L, but when she gets LC, the SOUND EFFECTS come up to full volume, blowing her backward. She spins about several times. Terrific loud THUNDERCLAP. DOROTHY sits down suddenly on the floor C with TOTO and the basket under one arm, and propping herself up with the other hand, swaying back and forth.] Oh, what a dreadful cyclone! [A spotlight irises down on DOROTHY, and another pinwheel spot twirls about illuminating the rest of the stage in flashes of color.] Oh, my! I hope the barn doesn't blow away with the cows and horses . . . I feel as if I were going up in a balloon . . . Toto, I'm so glad you're with me! [SOUND fades slowly.]

HISTORIAN. The north and south winds met where the house stood and raised it up higher and higher to the top of the cyclone and carried it miles and miles away. Dorothy felt as if she were being rocked like a baby in a cradle. [DOROTHY rocks back and forth, then settles down to sleep.] Hour after hour went by, and in spite of the storm, Dorothy closed her eyes and fell fast asleep. [SOUND of windstorm fades out. A loud **thump** is heard.] She awoke with a cry of amazement --

DOROTHY. [Sits up, hugging TOTO] **Oh!!!** [Pinwheel stops.]

HISTORIAN. Because the cyclone had set the house down, very gently -- in the midst of a country of marvelous beauty . . .[As the curtain rises, bright amber lights illuminate the stage. NOTE: The first scene may also be played in the main playing area by opening the curtain when DOROTHY first appears and keeping the lights low and focused on DOROTHY, UNCLE HENRY and AUNT EM. SOUND of birds singing.] There were trees bearing rich and luscious fruit. There were gorgeous flowers in bloom, and the air was filled with singing birds . . . [DOROTHY has risen to her feet.]

DOROTHY. [Looking about in wonder] Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore.

HISTORIAN. [To audience] You may be puzzled because there is no scenery whatever on the stage, but you must use your imagination. Besides, that's what I'm here for: to provide bits and pieces of scenery when it's absolutely necessary. Now, on with the story . . .

[The light fades out on him as he closes the book and exits.]

DOROTHY. [Wandering back and forth] We must be far, far away from home -- somewhere you can't get to by a boat or train. Beyond the moon, beyond the rain, beyond the farthest rainbow.

[WITCH OF NORTH enters from L.]

WITCH OF NORTH. Welcome to Munchkin Land! Are you a good witch or a bad witch?

DOROTHY. [Surprised] Who, me? I'm Dorothy from Kansas. I'm not a witch at all. [Giggling and laughter is heard from offstage L.] What's that?

WITCH OF NORTH. The Munchkins are laughing, because I **am** a witch -- the Good Witch of the North.

DOROTHY. You are? But you're beautiful. I didn't know there were any witches who were beautiful and good. And who are the Munchkins?

WITCH OF NORTH. They're the little people who live here in this land of the East. You must be a noble and powerful Sorceress, and they're grateful to you for having killed the wicked old Witch of the East and setting them free from bondage.

DOROTHY. Which old witch?

WITCH OF NORTH. The wicked old witch.

DOROTHY. You're very kind, but there must be some mistake. I'm quite harmless, and I haven't killed anything.

WITCH OF NORTH. Your house did then. When you fell out of the sky, a miracle occurred. Your house hit the wicked witch and knocked her in the ditch. [She points off R.] See! There are her feet sticking out, still wearing her silver shoes. So you're a national heroine and the Munchkins will make you welcome. Come out, come out, wherever you are. Come out and thank her . . .

[The MUNCHKINS enter from UL and UR wearing their traditional blue costumes and peaked hats. A delegation of three MUNCHKINS steps forward ULC as a welcoming committee. They bow to DOROTHY.]

MUNCHKINS. [In unison] You are welcome. Thank you for setting us free! Our mothers thank you, our fathers thank you. We thank you!

DOROTHY. Don't mention it. [To WITCH] Are you a Munchkin?

WITCH OF NORTH. No, but I am their friend, although I live in the land of the North. When they saw the Witch of the East was dead, the Munchkins sent a swift messenger

and I came here at once. The people love me, but I am not very powerful, or I should have set the people free myself.

DOROTHY. I thought all witches were wicked.

WITCH OF NORTH. Oh, no. There were only four witches in the Land of Oz, and two of them, those who live in the North and South are good witches. I **know,** for I am one of them myself. Those who dwelt in the East and West were indeed wicked, but now that you've killed one of them, there's only one wicked witch left . . .

DOROTHY. But Aunt Em told me that witches were all dead -- years and years ago.

WITCH OF NORTH. Who is Aunt Em?

DOROTHY. She is my aunt who lives in Kansas, where I come from.

WITCH OF NORTH. I don't know where Kansas is. I've never heard of it before. But tell me, is it a civilized country?

DOROTHY. Oh, yes.

WITCH OF NORTH. Then that accounts for it. I believe that in civilized countries there are no witches left. Nor wizards, nor sorceresses, nor magicians. But you see, the Land of Oz has never been civilized. We're cut off from the rest of the world by a vast desert. Therefore we still have witches and wizards amongst us.

DOROTHY. Who are the Wizards?

WITCH OF NORTH. Oz himself is the Great Wizard. He is more powerful than all the rest of us together. He lives in the City of Emeralds. [All the MUNCHKINS shout and point offstage R. They laugh and giggle with glee.]

MUNCHKINS. [The three delegates, in unison] Look what has happened to the Wicked Witch!

WITCH OF NORTH. What is it? [Goes UL, looks and begins to laugh. To DOROTHY.] She's disappeared. Nothing is left of her but her silver shoes.

DOROTHY. [Going UL] Why is that?

WITCH OF NORTH. She was so old that she dried up quickly in the sun. That's the end of **her**. But the silver shoes are

yours, and you shall have them to wear.

[One of the MUNCHKINS runs off and comes back with the silver shoes, handing them to the WITCH OF THE NORTH, who shakes the dust out of them and hands them to DOROTHY.]

WITCH OF NORTH. The Witch of the East was proud of these shoes. There is some charm connected with them.

MUNCHKINS. [The three, in unison] What it is, we never knew. But they are magic through and through.

DOROTHY. I wonder if they will fit me. [She sits on the ground, takes off her leather shoes and puts on the silver ones. She stands and walks about.]

WITCH OF NORTH. Magic shoes always fit -- [she pauses] almost always.

DOROTHY. They're very comfortable. They'd be just the thing to take a long walk in, for they couldn't wear out.

MUNCHKINS. [The three leaders, in unison] Ring the bells in celebration. We are **now** an independent nation. Let the joyous news be spread. Hooray, the Wicked Witch is dead! [Church **BELLS** ring. A **DRUM** is heard in march time. The MUNCHKINS put a garland of blue flowers around DOROTHY's neck, then line up two-by-two and march triumphantly upstage and downstage in a weaving line. Some carry little blue flags and others blue balloons on sticks. In the midst of the excitement, the lights flash on and off rapidly. SOUND: **Thunder and Lightning** effects.]

[THE WITCH OF THE WEST appears in a green spotlight UR, and lights on the rest of the stage dim down almost to darkness, though DOROTHY can be seen DLC, hiding fearfully behind the WITCH OF THE NORTH. The MUNCHKINS cower and scream.]

DOROTHY. I thought you said she was dead?

WITCH OF NORTH. That was her sister, the Witch of the **East.** This is the Wicked Witch of the **West.** She's worse than the other one.

WITCH OF WEST. [Making dreadful faces and clawing gestures with her long fingernails] Who killed my sister? Who killed my sister? [Pointing at DOROTHY] Did **you** do it?

DOROTHY. No -- it was an accident. I didn't mean to kill anybody. I'm sorry it happened. Please don't be angry! I beg your pardon, believe me!

WITCH OF WEST. [Scornfully] Beg my pardon! I'll get you for this, you foolish girl! I'll make you suffer! I'll have you torn to bits! And your little dog too!

DOROTHY. [Protecting him] No, no! Don't hurt Toto!

WITCH OF NORTH. [Laughing] Nonsense! You have no power here in Munchkinland! Go back where you came from before somebody drops a house on you too! Be off with you! Begone!

WITCH OF WEST. Very well. I'll wait my time, but I'll destroy you, little girl. I'll get you yet. You'll see! I can cause accidents too! You haven't seen the last of me!

[With a hideous cackling laugh, she lifts her cape in front of her face and spins about. The lights flash on and off. SOUND: **Thunder.** The WITCH OF THE WEST disappears UR. Bright lights up. The MUNCHKINS chatter excitedly among themselves.]

WITCH OF NORTH. I'm afraid you've made an enemy of the Wicked Witch of the West. The sooner you leave Oz altogether the safer you'll be, my dear.

DOROTHY. I'd **like** to leave Oz altogether, but how do I get back to Kansas from here? I can't go home the way I came.

WITCH OF NORTH. [Thoughtfully] That's true. The **only** person who could help you would be the Great and Power-

ful Wizard of Oz himself, and he lives a long, long way from here in the Emerald City. Did you bring your broomstick?

DOROTHY. Just Toto and my sewing basket, and some bread and cheese.

WITCH OF NORTH. Then you'll have to walk.

DOROTHY. Is Mister Oz a good wizard or a bad wizard?

WITCH OF NORTH. Oh, very good, but very mysterious. And very powerful. [DOROTHY feels lonely and homesick and begins to cry. Her tears grieve the MUNCHKINS, who all take out their blue pocket handkerchiefs and begin to weep also.]

DOROTHY. I want to be back with my Aunt Em and Uncle Henry. Can't you help me?

WITCH OF NORTH. Don't cry, little girl. It isn't very difficult. The Munchkins will escort you to the border of Munchkinland and put you on the right path to the Emerald City. All you have to do is follow the yellow brick road.

DOROTHY. The yellow brick road?

MUNCHKINS. [All of them, in unison] Follow the yellow brick road! Follow the yellow brick road!

WITCH OF NORTH. Of course it's a long journey, through a country that is sometimes pleasant and [ominously] sometimes dark and terrible. However, I will use all the magic arts I know to keep you from harm.

DOROTHY. [Pleading] Won't you go with me?

WITCH OF NORTH. No, I cannot, but I will give you my kiss, and no one will dare injure a person who has been kissed by the Witch of the North. [She kisses DOROTHY gently on the forehead, leaving a mark. After observing it dubiously for a moment, she touches it up a bit with her lipstick - preferably a vivid lavender or blue.] When you get to Oz, don't be afraid of him, but tell your story and ask his help. Goodbye, my dear.

[She curtsies, whirls around on her heel and exits DL. The three MUNCHKIN gentlemen bow low

and indicate the way. They lead DOROTHY, beckoning and bowing, and the other MUNCHKINS march two-by-two in a procession.]

MUNCHKINS. [Chanting in unison] Follow the yellow brick road! Follow the yellow brick road! You're bound to reach the Wizard's abode, if you follow the yellow brick road! Follow, follow, follow! You will come to the Wizard's pagoda, when you follow the yellow brick road-a! All your troubles you'll unload, when you get to the end of the yellow brick road! Follow the yellow brick road!

[Repeating their chant, the MUNCHKINS make a serpentine march crisscrossing the front of the stage. As they do so, the ROYAL HISTORIAN pulls a length of rail fence into view upstage, then goes out and brings on the SCARECROW and props him up behind it. The MUNCHKINS lead DOROTHY to UC and bow or curtsy ceremoniously and make their goodbyes, as the march comes to a halt.]

MUNCHKINS. [Three] We thank you again for setting us free. We hope your trip will be happy as can be. All us Munchkins are happy to have met you. And we trust the bad witch doesn't get you. Goodbye!

ALL MUNCHKINS. Goodbye, goodbye, goodbye, goodbye . .

[They keep repeating 'Goodbye' with every step, as they march off to R. The ROYAL HISTORIAN marches off with them at the end of the line. DOROTHY is alone facing front.]

DOROTHY. I don't feel nearly as bad as you might think a little girl would who's been whisked away from her own country and set down in a strange land. [SOUND: **Crows cawing.** Spotlight brightens on SCARECROW.] Come along, Toto, we must follow the yellow brick road. Well,

this is it. Now which way do we go?

SCARECROW. Pardon me! That way is a very nice way to go. [His arm is pointing toward L.]

DOROTHY. [Looks curiously at SCARECROW, then faces front.] Who said that? [The SCARECROW twists about and points R with his other arm. DOROTHY looks at him again.] That's funny. Wasn't he pointing the other way?

SCARECROW. Of course, people **do** go both ways.

DOROTHY. Are you doing that on purpose? Or can't you make up your mind?

SCARECROW. That's the trouble. I **can't** make up my mind. I haven't got a brain. Only straw.

DOROTHY. What would you do with a brain if you had one?

SCARECROW. Do? I'd do lots of things.

DOROTHY. [Shaking her head] I believe it. I never met a Scarecrow who could talk. You really speak!

SCARECROW. Certainly. [Speaking slowly and formally.] How-do-you-do?

DOROTHY. [Also quite politely] I'm quite well, thank you. How do **you** do?

SCARECROW. [Reverting to his normal manner] I'm not feeling well at all. It's dull perched up here night and day to scare away crows.

DOROTHY. Can't you get down?

SCARECROW. There's a pole stuck in the back of my belt. If you'd please take away the pole, I'd be greatly obliged. [DOROTHY puts down TOTO and basket, then goes behind the fence. She pantomimes lifting the SCARECROW off the pole. She comes back to DC, as the SCARECROW totters beside her, patting his tummy and adjusting his hat.] Thank you very much. I feel like a new man. [DOROTHY stares at him, puzzled to see him bowing and walking about. He stretches himself and yawns.]

DOROTHY. Now I've seen everything. You could **really** scare crows in Kansas. [SOUND: Crows caw in agitation.]

SCARECROW. Who are **you** and where are you going?

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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