



The Magic Mirror

Readers Theater Play Script and Performance Notes

AUTHORS: Angela Lee, COUNTRY: Spain, GENRE: Fairytales



CHARACTERS

GABRIELA, older village woman

LUCIA, older village woman

VALENTINA, older village woman

MESSENGER

BARBER

LUCAS, an older village man

SEBASTIAN, a younger village man

ANA, a younger village woman

MARIA, a younger village woman

FATHER

REGINA, a younger village woman

NIGHT WATCHMAN

LUCAS

SEBASTIAN

KING

SOFIA, a shepherdess

If there are performance notes, they can be found on the pages following the script

Scene 1 – Medieval Town

[**Stage set:** This is a one-set play. A backdrop is painted to depict a medieval town. Show a number of storefronts if you can, including a barbershop with a striped barber pole in the middle. Or set the stage with town shops made of cardboard, one of them a barbershop. (**See Performance Notes** for ideas on painting the backdrop or making shop fronts of cardboard.)]

[NARRATOR enters.]

NARRATOR:

Hello, everyone. This is a story from Spain, from a city named Grenada. The story is "The Magic Mirror," and it's brought to you by *Stories to Grow by*.

[BARBER enters and stands in front of his store sweeping.]

NARRATOR:

Once, there was a barber who was rumored to have a magic mirror. The barber kept his magic mirror covered, and no one ever saw it. Until one day.

[NARRATOR exits.]

[Three older village women – GABRIELA, LUCIA, and VALENTINA – enter and gather together.]

GABRIELA:

Valentina, Lucia, did you see the oranges at market today?

LUCIA:

I did - they're the best oranges I can remember!

VALENTINA:

I know, right? I bought a bushel of them.

GABRIELA:

Isn't that overdoing it?

VALENTINA:

It's no problem. Whatever's left over can be made into orange juice.

[MESSENGER enters and plays a fanfare on his trumpet. Everyone on the street stops what they are doing and gives their full attention to the MESSENGER.]

MESSENGER:

Hear ye! Hear ye! I have a message from the King! A message specially for the Barber of Granada!

[BARBER puts down broom and steps toward MESSENGER.]

BARBER:

(full of pride) That would be me, Good Sir! I am the Barber of Granada!

MESSENGER:

Then this is for YOU!

[MESSENGER takes out from under his coat a scroll tied with a ribbon. With a flourish, he gives the scroll to BARBER. MESSENGER plays another fanfare on his trumpet, and exits.]

[GABRIELA, LUCIA, and VALENTINA inch closer still until they are looking over BARBER's shoulder at the scroll. BARBER unties the scroll, rolls it open and reads aloud.]

BARBER:

"Dear Barber,

After careful consideration and at the recommendation of my most trusted staff, I have decided it's time that I take a bride. Please begin the interview process and let me know when you have found a suitable maiden to be my Queen. You know what I want.

Sincerely,

Your Royal Highness,
The King of Granada"

Well! I know exactly what the King means. I'm to help him find a bride! And I know HOW he means me to do it!

[GABRIELA, LUCIA, AND VALENTINA move to the far front of the stage, away from the Barber. While they hold the dialog below, Barber silently opens the scroll again, pretending to read it to himself, then rolls it up, smacking his lips in satisfaction.]

[Women all begin to chat excitedly. "I'm definitely queen material." "This is my lucky day." "I can't wait to see myself in a silver crown ... or should I choose gold?"]

GABRIELA:

There's something very odd here?

LUCIA:

You're telling me! Why would the King ask the Barber to find him a bride?

VALENTINA:

It makes no sense. Unless it has something to do with the mirror. You know - the magic mirror.

GABRIELA:

Of course, the magic mirror! What do you know about it?

VALENTINA:

Nothing.

[LUCIA shrugs. She also knows nothing.]

GABRIELA:

Let's find out whatever we can.

[GABRIELA, LUCIA and VALENTINA approach BARBER.]

GABRIELA:

So, um... congratulations!

BARBER:

It is a great honor! First, I'd like to thank--

VALENTINA:

(cuts him off) Right. So about this magic mirror..?

LUCIA:

It's magic because..?

BARBER:

Well, I guess it won't hurt to tell you. My mirror IS magic because of its reflection. Yes, it's true! If anyone who is not thoroughly honorable person looks into my mirror, the blemishes on their character appear as so many spots on their faces.

LUCIA:

What?! Let me understand. The King wants a bride who can look into your magic mirror, who is completely and thoroughly good, whose reflection will have no spots at all?

[BARBER hooks his thumbs in his suspenders.]

BARBER:

Yes, ladies. That's why he called ME!

[Ladies look uncomfortable and chat among themselves worriedly.]

VALENTINA:

Hmm.. Is there an age limit?

BARBER:

Let me check the fine print at the bottom. *(re-opens scroll, peers closely for a moment, then quickly rolls it up again)* Nope! Any woman 18 years and up is eligible.

GABRIELA:

My, you'll have every woman in Granada lining up! I myself could be Queen!

LUCIA:

You have a husband!

GABRIELA:

Don't remind me!

VALENTINA:

I could be Queen!

LUCIA:

What would your nine children say about THAT?

VALENTINA:

Ah, so many children!

LUCIA:

You two aren't in the running, but I'm not married—just think, I could be Queen!

BARBER:

You could indeed, IF you are able to look into my magic mirror without having a single spot appear in your reflection. But I'M not sure that you can—CAN you?

LUCIA:

Are you trying to say that I'm not a good person? (*draws back a fist*) Why I'll give you a big red blemish on your eye right now!

[LUCIA starts swinging both arms wildly at BARBER as he backs away. BARBER is frightened and holds his hands up to keep LUCIA away from him. GABRIELA and VALENTINA grab her arms and try to pull her back from BARBER.]

GABRIELA:

STOP, Lucia!

VALENTINA:

I guess that settles the question of whether Lucia is good enough to be queen!

GABRIELA:

Let's get her home!

VALENTINA:

(*to Lucia*) Calm down! Let me take you to my place. Come on, I'll make you tea and tortillas (pronounce: tor-TEE-ah's).

[GABRIELA and VALENTINA pull LUCIA toward them.]

LUCIA:

I will NOT calm down! (*pauses*) Though I could use a tortilla.

[GABRIELA, VALENTINA and LUCIA exit. BARBER straightens his clothing and looks after the women with a sour look on his face, then exits himself.]

Scene 2 – Medieval town, the next day

[**Stage set:** Same as in Scene 1, except in front of the Barbershop there is now a large free-standing mirror (use an easel to construct). It is covered with a cloth. (**See Performance Notes** for ideas on how to create the effect of a mirror without glass.)]

[NARRATOR enters.]

[BARBER enters and paces outside his shop. LUCAS, SEBASTIAN, GABRIELA, LUCIA, and VALENTINA enter, talking excitedly. ANA, MARIA, REGINA, and REGINA'S FATHER enter.]

NARRATOR:

The next day, everyone gathered to watch the spectacle. Women had flocked to Grenada from all over, but it was a different story once they heard what they had to do.

[NARRATOR steps back.]

BARBER:

(loudly) Step right up! Step right up! Don't be shy! Have a look in the magic mirror. . The King feels sure there must be many women in his kingdom who could present a clear reflection, and the first woman to do so will become Queen of Grenada! It is absolutely free to look. No purchase necessary! YOU there! *(points to Ana)* Step up!

[ANA steps closer. BARBER pulls her to the front with him to face the audience.]

BARBER:

You seem like a fine young lady. Wouldn't you like to take a look in the magic mirror?

ANA:

(looks down at her feet) Well, uh...

BARBER:

This is your chance to be Queen!

ANA:

I can't you see, because... I'm already engaged!

[ANA quickly steps down and hurries offstage.]

BARBER:

(to audience) That's funny! I didn't see a ring on her finger. *(scans the crowd to find a new prospect and points to Maria)*

BARBER:

You there! Miss! Please come forward! Who wouldn't want to wed our handsome and beloved King?

[MARIA steps forward to stand beside Barber.]

MARIA:

(in a haughty voice) You want me to look into the mirror of a lowly BARBER! This is a joke! This whole process is beneath me!

[MARIA flounces away.]

[REGINA'S FATHER pushes REGINA toward BARBER.]

REGINA'S FATHER:

My daughter is single! Let her look in your magic mirror!

[REGINA whirls toward her father.]

REGINA:

And single is how I plan to stay! I have no interest in marrying the King, or anyone else for that matter!

[REGINA charges away from the scene and exits. FATHER calls after REGINA.]

FATHER:

Since when are you not interested in getting married? *(to audience)* Before today, that's ALL she's been interested in!

[FATHER chases after REGINA and exits.]

[NIGHT WATCHMAN enters and rings a bell.]

NIGHT WATCHMAN:

(in a loud, droning voice) Eighhtt o'cllloooocckk and still no QUUEEENN!

BARBER:

Folks, it's going to be a long night if we don't find a Queen! I for one would really like to have a peaceful night's rest without hearing that announcement every hour on the hour! Absolutely NO maidens have looked in the mirror so far. None of you young ladies have the courage to step forward and reveal yoyur true nature?

[MESSENGER steps smartly onto the stage and plays a fanfare on his trumpet.]

MESSENGER:

THIS JUST IN! By royal decree, the King has declared that NO other citizen of Grenada shall be married until the King has found his bride!

TOWNSPEOPLE and VILLAGE WOMEN:

(groaning) AARRUUGGGGH!

[MESSENGER plays another fanfare and exits. TOWNSPEOPLE and VILLAGE WOMEN groan and mumble amongst themselves as they exit.]

LUCAS

This is SO unfair!

TOWNSPERSON#2

Stop the insanity!

GABRIELA:

Well, I never!

[BARBER is left alone.]

[KING enters. Everyone onstage bows.]

KING:

(to Barber) How are you doing?

BARBER:

Could be better.

KING:

How many maidens have looked in the mirror?

BARBER:

Uh.. *(looks down)*

KING:

YOu're saying none? Really?

[BARBER shrugs.]

KING:

(dramatically) Ah, Granada! Is there no maiden in this land fit to be the king's bride? Kings in other lands have no shortage of maidens lining up to marry them.

Barber! Keep trying! I have confidence you shall get me a wife as bright as day, pure as dew, and as good as gold – one who's not afraid to look into your magic mirror!

BARBER:

Your Majesty, (*clears throat*) Um... perhaps we might try thinking outside the box.

KING:

Go on.

BARBER:

There is a shepherdess who lives on the mountainside who might be willing to try. But would you marry one as lowly as she?

KING:

Bring her here tomorrow! Tell her about the magic mirror and we'll see what happens.

BARBER:

As you wish, Your Majesty. (*bows*)

[KING exits.]

[BARBER exits.]

Scene 3 – Medieval town, a few days later

[Stage set: Same as Scene 2.]

[BARBER enters and paces outside of his shop. His magic mirror is on the easel but we can't see it because a cloth is draped over it. The street is empty.]

[NARRATOR enters.]

NARRATOR:

A few days later, the barber brought the shepherdess, whose name was Sofia, to town.

[NARRATOR exits.]

[MESSENGER steps smartly onto the stage and plays a fanfare on his trumpet.]

MESSENGER:

HEAR YE!! HEAR YE! Three days and still no queen!

[MESSENGER remains in place onstage. BARBER enters with SOFIA and they stand by the magic mirror, still covered. TOWNSPEOPLE and VILLAGE WOMEN enter from both sides of the stage and gather in front the barber shop and the mirror.]

LUCAS:

I hear the King is so anxious to get married, he's giving a shepherdess a chance to be his wife.

GABRIELA:

(points) That's her over there. She's going to look in the mirror.

ANA:

Well, I don't see the big deal. I could have looked in the magic mirror ... I just didn't want to.

MARIA:

I could have, too!

REGINA:

I TOTALLY could have looked in the magic mirror!

SOFIA:

(looking around with concern, then to Barber) My goodness, will you look at this crowd? You didn't tell me there would be such a fuss.

MESSENGER:

What of it? Pay no heed.

SOFIA:

Look at all the village maidens - they're so elegant. My dress is shabby, and I smell like sheep! There's no way someone like me can be Queen. What was I thinking?

[BARBER pats SOFIA'S hand that is still clutching his arm.]

BARBER:

(whispers loudly) Calm down, young lady! Anyway, it's too late to turn back now. You must go through with the mirror test. The King desires it!

[KING enters.]

BARBER:

Speaking of the King...

MESSENGER:

(in the voice of a TV announcer) LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I GIVE YOU HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE KING OF GRENADA!

[MESSENGER plays his most elaborate fanfare and moves to the end of the stage.]

[KING joins BARBER at the magic mirror. Everyone onstage bows to the KING.]

KING:

Barber, I have been most anxious! Please introduce me to the maid you have found who is willing to accept the mirror challenge.

BARBER:

Good Sofia. Come here and meet the King.

[KING nudges BARBER away to the left so he can face SOFIA.]

KING:

So this is the shepherdess.

SOFIA:

(bows) Your Majesty.

KING:

Don't be shy. I came in person to witness the only woman in the land willing to look in the mirror, come what may.

[KING leads SOFIA to the magic mirror.]

KING:

(gestures to the mirror, still veiled) Now, look. If your character is free from stains and blemishes, your reflection shall be pure.

SOFIA:

(hesitates) Your Majesty, no one is ALL pure. Everyone makes mistakes! My goodness, when I think of all the mistakes I've made watching my sheep! But they must forgive me because I do my best to take care of them. So what of it? I will look into your magic mirror, Your Majesty. With blemishes and all, it's the best I can be. I'm content with whatever is reflected there.

[BARBER unveils the cover and reveals the mirror. SOFIA turns away from KING and goes to in front of the mirror.]

[As SOFIA looks into the mirror, the crowd pushes forward to see.]

SOFIA:

Ahhh!

SEBASTIAN:

Would you look at that!

LUCAS:

I can't believe it!

SEBASTIAN:

Not a single stain or a blemish!

[LUCIA moves up so that she can see herself in the mirror.]

LUCIA:

Hey, wait a minute! My reflection is just as clear as Sofia's! *(to audience)* And I know there are plenty of blemishes on MY character!

GABRIELA:

Tell me about it! Let me see for myself. Hey! My reflection is perfectly clear too!

VALENTINA:

Sisters, if I may? *(steps up to mirror)* Mine's perfect, too!

[VALENTINA lifts the mirror from the easel and turns it toward the TOWNSPEOPLE. The TOWNSPEOPLE all cry out with shouts of surprise.]

LUCAS:

Everyone here has a clear reflection!

ANA:

There's no magic in that mirror!

MARIA:

Everyone looks just the same as in every other mirror. We've all been tricked!

REGINA:

That magic mirror is a fake!

TOWNSPEOPLE:

(together, in anger)

BARBER:

No ladies, you have only yourselves to thank. No one's perfect! If you had been willing to see your own reflection in the mirror, blemishes and all as the shepherdess was, then you'd be standing in her place now.

KING:

(takes Sofia's hand and places it over his forearm) No one's perfect, just as you say. But you were willing to see yourself entirely as you are, and that makes you beautiful for me to behold.

[KING gets down on one knee, takes SOFIA's hand, and holds out a ring.]

SOFIA:

(to King) Your Majesty, if you take me for who I am, then I shall do the same for you.

[KING and SOFIA embrace and move to beside the mirror and stand hand in hand near MESSENGER.]

MESSENGER:

(in the voice of a TV announcer) LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I GIVE YOU THE ROYAL COUPLE, THE KING AND SOON-TO-BE QUEEN OF GRENADA!

[KING and SOFIA bow.]

KING:

(to Sofia) So, my dear, do you prefer a crown made of silver, or one made entirely of gold?

ALL FEMALES on STAGE:

(throw up arms in despair) AAAAUGHH!

[KING takes SOFIA's arm to escort her from the stage. MESSENGER begins to play a fanfare and he follows KING and SOFIA through the center of the audience if there is a center aisle. All remaining actors onstage turn toward the procession and bow.]



Performance Notes for The Magic Mirror

THREE WAYS THAT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS CAN UTILIZE THIS PLAY

1. Students can read the play aloud while sitting in the classroom. Ask the readers to skip all bracketed stage directions. You may prefer to rotate your actors to give all students a chance to read the speaking parts.
2. Students can perform the play in the classroom. Clear an area that can be used as the stage. Have the audience sit on the floor in front of the stage. Students in the play can make simple costumes and/or sets as described below. When the scene change, the characters "on stage" simply walk to the back of the room where they wait until their next appearance "on stage."
3. Students can perform the play on stage. Refer to the production notes that follow. Ask the actors to enter from the back of the room and move through the audience as they approach the stage.



COSTUMES

- NARRTOR— Simple, nice clothing.
- MEN— Dark colored clothing, button up shirts, suit jackets, pants, and dark dress shoes.
- WOMEN— Dark and drab clothing, floor length skirts, bonnets and aprons.



- **BARBER**—Suspenders over his button up shirt, long pants, and dark dress shoes.
- **SHEPHERDESS**— Same as the other women, but her costume should be tattered and dirty.
- **MESSENGER** and **NIGHT WATCHMAN**— Black shirt, black pants, a nice dark colored blazer or jacket, black shoes.
- **KING**— A crown, red robe, dark pants, and dark shoes.



PROPS

Scene 1

- A broom for the **BARBER**.
- A trumpet for **MESSENGER**. This can be real, plastic, or made from paper. (The “fan fare” can actually be played, or the actor can make a noise with their mouth.)
- A scroll for **MESSENGER**. This can be a piece of beige or tan colored paper, rolled up and tied with a ribbon. You can write the actual message on the paper.

Scene 2

- A trumpet for **MESSENGER**. This is the same one from Scene 1.

Scene 3

- A trumpet for **MESSENGER**. This is the same one from Scene 1.



SETS

Note: This is a one-set play. The same stage set remains throughout the play.

If you want to make a backdrop, you can paint it to show a medieval town scene with different shops and the Barbershop in the middle. If you have no backdrop, you can just rely on set pieces to set the stage.

Make a few shops from large cardboard boxes, such as refrigerator boxes, to place on stage. Paint cardboard to look like store fronts, with windows, doors, and sign that say things such as “Baker”, “Blacksmith”, “Candy”, etc. One should say “barbershop” and show a red-and-white barber pole. The Barbershop should be in the middle of the stage.

In front of the Barbershop there is an easel. On one side is a large mirror. You can make the mirror by covering one side with aluminum foil.

In Scene 2, the easel is brought out, but there is a cloth is draped over the mirror, so that the audience cannot see it.

Note: In Scene 1, you can have the easel onstage already, and use it as a sign holder. Attach a sign that reads “Village Barbershop” to the side that doesn’t have the mirror on it. Then, in Scene 2, you can flip the easel around.

Optional: In order to give the set a little more Barbershop flare, you can make a separate red and white barbershop pole out of cardboard and attach it to a second easel.

