



The Long Winter

Readers Theater Play Script and Performance Notes

AUTHORS: Elaine Lindy & Lindsay Parker, COUNTRY: Canada, GENRE: Adventure



CHARACTERS

NARRATOR or NARRATORS (one person or more than one person)

LYNX

FOX

WOLF

WOLVERINE

MOUSE

PIKE

DOGFISH

BEAR CUB 1

BEAR CUB 2

MOTHER BEAR

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

Scene 1

[Stage set is a backdrop painted to show ice-topped hills.]

NARRATOR:

This play is "The Long Winter," a folktale from the people of Canada. It is brought to you by Stories to Grow By.

A long time ago, no people lived on earth. The world was a land of animals. There came a time when the sun did not come out for three years. Day after day, snow fell. It was cold all the time. Where did the lost heat go? One day, the animals called a big meeting.

[LYNX, FOX, WOLF, WOLVERINE, MOUSE, PIKE, DOGFISH and any other ANIMALS enter.]

LYNX:

All right everybody, come around.

FOX:

Is everyone here?

WOLVERINE:

I think so.

MOUSE:

Wait, where is Bear?

PIKE:

She has not been by the river for a long time.

DOGFISH:

Not for years, come to think of it.

FOX:

How many years?

DOGFISH:

Three?

LYNX:

We will have to start the meeting without her. Now everyone, you all know why we are here.

WOLF:

Yes, we must find the heat! Even for a wolf, three years with no heat is too cold.

MOUSE:

Tell me about it!

FOX:

The question is – where did the heat go?

WOLVERINE:

We must look for it!

LYNX:

Yes, we must all look. Who will come?

WOLF, WOLVERINE, MOUSE, PIKE, and DOGFISH:

They say: "I will!" "Me too!" "Count me in!" "We will come with you!" "Let's go!"

MOUSE:

I guess all of us are going. Um, I have one question.

WOLVERINE:

What?

MOUSE:

WHERE are we going?

PIKE:

I know where to look!

[ALL spin around and look at PIKE.]

PIKE:

In the Upper World!

DOGFISH:

Of course! And I know where the door is that goes to the Upper World!

[LYNX, WOLF, WOLVERINE, MOUSE, PIKE, and DOGFISH exit. If there are any other ANIMALS on the stage, they wave goodbye.]

SCENE 2

[Stage set is a backdrop painted one to show a forest, a lake, and a tipi by the shore. BEAR CUB #1 and BEAR CUB #2 sit in front of the tipi.]

[LYNX, FOX, WOLF, WOLVERINE, MOUSE, PIKE and DOGFISH enter.]

LYNX:

Wow! I have never been to the Upper World before. It is not the same at all.

FOX:

For one, it is warm!

WOLVERINE:

Look! I see two bear cubs over there by the lake.

MOUSE:

Maybe they know where the heat is.

[LYNX, FOX, WOLF, WOLVERINE, MOUSE, PIKE and DOGFISH walk over to BEAR CUB 1 and BEAR CUB 2.]

MOUSE:

Hello, bear cubs! What a great fire!

BEAR CUB #1:

Thanks!

PIKE:

Say, where did you get the fire?

BEAR CUB #2:

(shrugs shoulders) Our mother takes care of it.

DOGFISH:

Tell us, what do you have inside the tipi?

BEAR CUB #1:

Not much. Our mother keeps three bags in there.

LYNX:

What is in the first bag?

BEAR CUB #2:

That is where she keeps the rain.

FOX:

And in the second bag?

BEAR CUB #2:

That is where she keeps the wind.

WOLF:

And what is in the third bag?

BEAR CUB #1:

We cannot tell you that.

BEAR CUB #2:

Our mother said it is a great secret. If we tell anyone, she will bop us on the head!

MOUSE:

Oh, you can tell us.

BEAR CUB #2:

Well, okay then. (*leans forward*) That is where our mother keeps the heat. It came from the Lower World.

PIKE:

Oh! It DID, did it?

LYNX:

Um, well, I think I hear our mother calling us.

ALL TOGETHER:

See you later!

[LYNX, WOLF, WOVERINE, MOUSE, PIKE and DOGFISH go to the other side of the stage.]

DOGFISH:

Can you believe it? Mother Bear took our heat!

MOUSE:

No wonder she has not been by the river for a long time.

PIKE:

How are we going to get it back? Mother Bear will come back to her tipi any time!

WOLVERINE:

We need to keep her away from the tipi.

LYNX:

I know! I will turn into a deer on the other side of the lake.

WOLF:

Good idea! When Mother Bear comes back, she will want to chase you.

WOLVERINE:

Then we will have time to take back the heat!

MOUSE:

I can chew a hole in the paddle. That will slow down Mother Bear in her canoe.

WOLF:

Yes! Do that!

[MOTHER BEAR enters.]

BEAR CUB #1:

Mother, look! A deer on the other side of the lake!

MOTHER BEAR:

So it is! My cubs must be hungry. And I could use a bite to eat, too. I will get that deer! Where is my canoe?

[MOTHER BEAR pretends to get in a canoe and starts to paddle.]

[All the ANIMALS run to the tipi except MOTHER BEAR and LYNX.]

FOX:

Quick, get the bag of heat!

BEAR CUB #1:

Hey, wait!

BEAR CUB #2:

You cannot take that!

MOUSE:

Yes, we can! It is ours. We are taking it back to the Lower World.

[FOX takes the bag.]

DOGFISH:

Hurry! Mother Bear fell out of her canoe. She looks mad! And she is coming this way!

FOX:

Oh no, she will catch us!

PIKE:

Did you chew that hole in her paddle, Mouse?

MOUSE:

Yes!

FOX:

Good, but it may not be enough! The bag is too heavy. I cannot carry it.

WOLF:

I will take a turn!

WOLVERINE:

I will help you!

MOUSE:

I may be a mouse, but I can help, too!

DOGFISH:

Me, too!

FOX:

Hurry, we are almost there!

WOLF:

All we have to do is get this bag through the door to the Lower World.

WOLVERINE:

Then the bag will break!

PIKE:

The heat will melt the snow. We will be warm again!

LYNX:

I can almost see the green grass!

FOX:

Quick! Mother Bear is catching up! Push this bag over now!

[LYNX, FOX, WOLF, WOLVERINE, MOUSE, PIKE and DOGFISH pretend to push the bag through the door.]

FOX:

Jump in, everyone!

MOUSE:

HELLO, springtime!

[All the ANIMALS except the BEARS exit.]

MOTHER BEAR:

Cubs, it looks like it is back to the Lower World for us!

[MOTHER BEAR, BEAR CUB #1 and BEAR CUB #2 exit.]