

NARRATOR

***Please prepare both Narrator and Skin Horse**

Act One

START

NARRATOR There was once a Velveteen Rabbit. And in the beginning, he was really splendid. He was fat and bunched, as a rabbit should be. His coat was spotted brown and white, he had real thread whiskers and his ears were lined with pink sateen. On Christmas morning, when he sat wedged in the top of the Boy's stocking, with a sprig of holly between his paws, the effect was charming.

The effect is charming.

Music: #1 The Velveteen Rabbit

NARRATOR There were other things in the stocking: nuts and oranges and a toy engine, and chocolate almonds and a clockwork mouse, but the Rabbit was quite the best of all.

A moment as the Boy enjoys the Rabbit.

NARRATOR For at least two hours, the Boy loved him - and then Aunts and Uncles came to dinner, and there was a great rustling of tissue paper and unwrapping of parcels, and in the excitement of looking at all the new presents, the Velveteen Rabbit was forgotten.

Music #2: Toys

In the Nursery: The Nursery is full of wonderful toys – including a rocking horse, toy soldiers and a fort, mechanical toys, building blocks, a china dog, a wooden lion and a beautiful model boat. Whatever you can think of. Perhaps even a train set.

The Rabbit comes among them and looks around at all the toys. He feels shy and out of place.

NARRATOR For a long time the Rabbit lived in the toy cupboard or on the nursery floor, and no one thought very much about him. He was naturally shy, and being only made of velveteen, some of the more expensive toys quite snubbed him.

The mechanical toys were very superior and looked down upon everyone else; they were full of modern ideas, and pretended they were Real. The model boat, who had lived through two seasons and lost most of his paint, caught the tone from the mechanical toys and never missed an opportunity of referring to his rigging in technical terms.

The Rabbit could not claim to be a model of anything, for he didn't know that Real rabbits existed; he thought they were all stuffed with sawdust like himself, and he understood that sawdust was quite out-of-date and should never be mentioned in modern circles.

The Rabbit feels very inadequate.

NARRATOR Even Timothy, the wooden lion, who was made by the disabled soldiers, and should have had broader views, put on airs and pretended he was connected with Government.

Between them all the poor little Rabbit was made to feel himself very insignificant and commonplace, and the only person who was kind to him at all was the Skin Horse, who was old and wise, and had lived longer in the nursery than any of the others.

The Skin Horse enters, very old, very tired. He sits down near the Rabbit.

The Rabbit plucks up the courage to speak.

RABBIT What is "real"? Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?

HORSE Real isn't how you are made. It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but really loves you, then you become real.

RABBIT Does it hurt?

HORSE Sometimes. When you are real, you don't mind being hurt.

RABBIT Does it happen all at once, like being wound up, or bit by bit?

HORSE It doesn't happen all at once. You become. Generally, by the time you are real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out, and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand.

RABBIT I suppose you are real?

He immediately regrets saying it.

HORSE The boy's uncle made me real. That was a great many years ago; but once you are real you can't become unreal again. It lasts for always.

The Rabbit considers this. The Skin Horse leaves.

NARRATOR: The Rabbit sighed. He thought it would be a long time before this magic called "Real" happened to him.

END

~~RABBIT I wonder what it feels like, being real. Will i have to lose my whiskers? And my lovely coat?~~

~~*He thinks about this.*~~

~~Music: #3 – The Boy's Games~~

~~*The Boy comes into the Nursery and plays*~~

~~NARRATOR There was a person called Nanna, who ruled the nursery. Every now and then, for no reason whatever, she went swooping about like a great wind and hustled all the playthings away in cupboards. She called this 'tidying up' and the toys all hated it.~~

~~Music: #4 Tidying Up~~