

**THE BLANK THEATRE COMPANY
YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL 32**

LITTLE LION BEAR

****For the sake of this audition, please read the role of "CHILD"****

Synopsis

In the midst of war, a mother and child hide from danger. The child, scared and confused, just wants to understand why this is happening, so the mother tries to console the child by telling them a story; thus, creating the imaginary characters "Lion-Bear", "Fox", and "Deer", who are parallels to the child and their friends. The child uses this story as a brief respite, but then must face reality and learn deeper lessons of bravery, strength, love, and how to move forward.

Setting

The basement of a trustworthy friend's now-abandoned home, in one of the many towns that are being targeted for attack.

The scene opens in low lit basement. There is a gradual rise of a muffled cacophony of sounds. There are the sounds of rifles, faint screams, soldiers marching, people yelling orders, banging, stomps, and frantic voices. MAMA and CHILD run onstage; CHILD tries to lock the door behind them.

MAMA

No, leave it.

(MAMA grabs CHILD's hand and leads them into a hiding place. MAMA holds her child close, shielding and comforting them from the chaotic noises outside. CHILD is shaking in MAMA's arms. MAMA hums and vocalizes the beginnings of a quiet lullaby as the noises die down in intensity.)

Shhh it's okay... it's okay... it'll be okay...

CHILD

Mama... Mama what's happening?

MAMA

I know sweetie, I know. It'll be okay. Just stay with me, okay? Just listen to me and we'll be okay.

CHILD

Mama, they're going to find us. You stopped me from locking the door earlier. Why did you stop me from locking the door?

MAMA

It's okay my dear, please don't cry. We'll be safe. We just need to be very quiet, okay? If they come here and find a locked door, then they would know for sure that someone is hiding inside. If you were fleeing in a hurry, would you bother to lock the basement door?

CHILD

No...

MAMA

Then that's the reason.

CHILD

Mama, I'm scared... I don't want this. Why is this happening?

MAMA

Hush now, we need to be quiet, my dear.

(A boom is heard, and CHILD yelps. MAMA holds CHILD whispers words of comfort until there is silence.)

Are you alright now?

CHILD

Are they gone?

MAMA

...No... they'll come back.

(CHILD cries)

Oh love... it'll all be... it's going to be okay... I know it's scary...

CHILD

(tearfully)

Why? Why, Mama? Why?

MAMA

There are many questions... I understand... but I'm afraid I don't...

(CHILD's sobs get louder)

How about I tell you a story?

CHILD quiets.

CHILD

A story?

MAMA

Yes. You always love my stories, don't you? In fact, have a story right now that I made just for you.

CHILD

Just for me?

MAMA

Just for you. Only for you, my love. It's called...

(WOLF #1 and #2 and LION-BEAR enter. *All three are wearing plain masks.*)

"The Adventures of the Brave Little Lion Cub"!

WOLF #1 and #2 give LION-BEAR a lion mask and a lion's mane.

CHILD

Lions aren't my favorite animal anymore, it's bears now.

MAMA

Oh? And when did this happen? Lions were your favorite ever since you were little!

CHILD

Well, I like bears better now.

MAMA

Okay, then it will be called "The Adventures of the Brave Little Bear."

WOLF #1 and #2 take away the Lion mask and give LION-BEAR a bear mask instead. WOLF #1 and #2 take off the Lion mane and begin to take it offstage when CHILD interrupts them.

CHILD

Wait! I still want the lion mane though.

MAMA

But you said that—

CHILD

Lion manes are cool. And it means the bear's mama doesn't have to worry about them wearing a scarf in the winter.

MAMA sighs, chuckling softly.

MAMA

Alright, I suppose we can keep the mane.

CHILD

(quietly celebrating)

Yay!

WOLF #1 and #2 return the mane to masked LION-BEAR's neck.

MAMA

But manes are for big kid lions, so only a little bit.

WOLF #1 and #2 take away a layer of the mane.

Hey! I'm a big kid!

CHILD

I'm talking about the lion—

MAMA

—Bear—

CHILD

—The Lion-Bear. I'm talking about the Lion-Bear. Now, make sure to listen closely, okay?

MAMA

(CHILD nods. WOLF #1 and #2 exit.)