

The Velveteen Rabbit

AUDITION SIDES

VELVETEEN RABBIT and SKIN HORSE

Velveteen Rabbit: What is REAL? Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?

Skin 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.

Velveteen Rabbit: Does it hurt?

Skin Horse: Sometimes. When you are Real you don't mind being hurt.

Velveteen Rabbit: Does it happen all at once, like being wound up, or bit by bit?

Skin Horse: It doesn't happen all at once. You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. 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.

Velveteen Rabbit: (*cautious*) I suppose you are Real?

Skin Horse: (*smiling*) 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.

VELVETEEN RABBIT and WILD RABBITS

Wild Rabbit 1: Why don't you get up and play with us?

Velveteen Rabbit: (*shy*) I don't feel like it.

Wild Rabbit 2: Ho! It's as easy as anything! (*gives a big hop sideways and stands on his hind legs*) See? I don't believe you can!

Velveteen Rabbit: I can! I can jump higher than anything!

Narrator: He meant when the Boy threw him, but of course he didn't want to say so.

Wild Rabbit 1: Can you hop on your hind legs?

Velveteen Rabbit: I don't want to!

Wild Rabbit 2: (*takes a closer look*) Hey! He hasn't got any hind legs! Fancy a rabbit without any hind legs! (*laughs*)

Velveteen Rabbit: I have! I have got hind legs! I am sitting on them!

Wild Rabbit 1: Then stretch them out and show me, like this!

Velveteen Rabbit: (*amazed*) I don't like dancing. I'd rather sit still!

Wild Rabbit 1: Hey! He doesn't smell right! He isn't a rabbit at all! He isn't real!

Velveteen Rabbit: (*hurt, about to cry*) I am Real! I am Real! The Boy said so!

NANA and DOCTOR

Doctor: He has scarlet fever, I'm afraid. This is a very serious illness. Very serious, indeed.

Nana: Oh my goodness! Sleep well. You'll need your rest. I hope you get better soon. Dear, oh dear.

(Later, when the boy is better.)

Doctor: *(to the Boy)* You are going to the seaside to-morrow for a holiday. Everything has been arranged.

Doctor: *(to Nana)* Now this room will have to be completely disinfected, and all the books and toys that the Boy has played with in bed must be burnt.

Nana: How about his old Bunny?

Doctor: That? Why, it's a mass of scarlet fever germs!—Burn it at once. What? Nonsense! Get him a new one. He mustn't have that any more!

VELVETEEN RABBIT and NURSERY MAGIC FAIRY

Nursery Fairy: Little Rabbit, don't you know who I am?

Velveteen Rabbit: *(confused)* No, I don't.

Nursery Fairy: I am the nursery magic Fairy. I take care of all the playthings that the children have loved. When they are old and worn out and the children don't need them any more, then I come and take them away with me and turn them into Real.

Velveteen Rabbit: *(confused)* Wasn't I Real before?

Nursery Fairy: You were Real to the Boy, because he loved you. Now you shall be Real to every one.

VELVETEEN RABBIT and BOY

Velveteen Rabbit: (*shy, nervous*) Hello.

Boy: (*reassuring*) Hello. I'm very pleased to meet you. (*giggles*) Your ears tickle my nose. Well, we'd better get to sleep. Goodnight.

Velveteen Rabbit: Goodnight.

(*Later, in the garden*)

Velveteen Rabbit: (*laughing*) That was fun! I love riding all over the garden in the wheelbarrow!

Boy: I'm glad you liked it. It's time for lunch. Let's have a picnic. It's such a nice day.

Velveteen Rabbit: Do you think we'll always be friends?

Boy: I know we'll be best friends forever. I love you, Bunny. I always will.

BOY and NANA

Nana: This room is always a mess. Tidying up the toys, putting them back into the cupboard every day. Well, at least this room is tidy.

Boy: Nana?

Nana: What is it?

Boy: I can't find my china dog. He always sleeps in my bed with me. I get scared if he's not there.

Nana: I'm in a hurry. I don't have time to hunt for china dogs at night. Here, take your old Bunny! He'll do to sleep with you!

Boy: All right. Thank you, Nana.

Nana: You're welcome. Good night. Pleasant dreams.

(*Later, when Nana brings the rabbit from outside the garden.*)

Boy: I can't find my bunny. I can't sleep if he's not there.

Nana: You must have your old Bunny! Fancy all that fuss for a toy!

Boy: (*clearly offended*) Give me my Bunny! You mustn't say that. He isn't a toy. He's REAL!

Nana: (*thoughtfully*) Well, well, I declare if that old Bunny hasn't got quite a knowing expression!

**TIMOTHY LION, WIND UP BALLERINA, MODEL BOAT, TRAIN SET, TOY
SOLIDER and JACK-IN-THE-BOX**

Toy Solider: Hut-two-three-four! Hut-two-three-four!

Train Set: All aboard! Chugga-chugga-choo-choo! Coming through! Clear the tracks.

Model Boat: Arrgh! A sailor's life is the life for me! Hard to port. Land ho!

Wind Up Ballerina: Step, spin, twirl. Leap, jump, stretch.

Timothy Lion: I'm the King of the Beasts! Hear me roar!

Jack-in-the-Box: Wind me up and out I spring! Pop goes the weasel!

Toy Solider: Rubbish! No springs! Can't stand up straight without clockwork, solider!

Train Set: Cheap! No wheels! No tracks! Call yourself a toy?

Model Boat: Old-fashioned! Not seaworthy, me hearty!

Wind Up Ballerina: Boring! No clockwork! You can't move!

Timothy Lion: Common thing! No joints! You're a disgrace!

Jack-in-the-Box: Ugly! Stupid thing! No wind up keys! Disgusting!

Toy Solider: Disgraceful!

Train Set: Unreliable!

Model Boat: Silly!

Wind Up Ballerina: Useless!

Timothy Lion: Incompetent!

Jack-in-the-Box: Despicable!