

LEGENDS IN A SNOWFALL

By Claudia Haas

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Winter tales from around the world come together to celebrate the joys and wonders of this dark and cold season. Ellisandra, a weather spirit who hopes to become Frost Queen, takes Faith, a frazzled mother, on a journey of imagination. They first meet the Snow Maiden, a beautiful woman who can only live during winter, in a legend from Russia. Tempesta, a stormy weather spirit who also seeks the title of Frost Queen, follows with her own Native American tale from Minnesota. It's about a young poet at odds with a warrior lifestyle and his encounter with a Great White Bear. The tales are threaded together with an Eskimo story about the Northern Lights. The characters are a wonderful mix of humans, spirits, mischievous snowflakes and sparkling northern lights. Suggested music adds a grace note to creating the perfect winter solstice program. This play promises winter enchantment for all.

Original cast

FAITH - Kris Snow
RADIO ANNOUNCER, FATHER, SPIRIT OF THE MIRROR,
HUSBAND - Mark Poolos
DASHER SNOWFLAKE - Nicholas Voss
DANCER SNOWFLAKE - Caitlin Rathburn
PRANCER SNOWFLAKE - Kirsten Haas
VIXEN SNOWFLAKE - Megan Harrington
COMET SNOWFLAKE - Tara Stefanson
ELLISANDRA - Brenda Hickman
SNOW MAIDEN, DAFFODILIA, GERDA, DAUGHTER - Jennelle
Marie Wax
MOTHER, ROSETTE, DUSTY - Kristine Wendt
FARMER, GOLDBER, ROBBER - Joshua Schlichting
TEMPESTA - Megan Juneau
NIGHTLIGHT - Meghann Scott
TWILIGHT - Jen Sokatch
STARBRIGHT - Katie Ventura
NIGHTLIGHT, SNOW QUEEN - Kara Mayer Josephson
SILVERN, GUARD - Jon Freeman
DAFFODILIA - Brittany Rosenbrook
KAY, DAUGHTER - Ariyl Pate
RIVER ECHO - Mary McKane
SETS, LIGHTS, COSTUMERS: Mel X. Springer, Jordan Vadnais,
Brigitte Heaney

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(10 m, 12 w, 11 flex)

FAITH: Over-committed modern day mother.

VOICE: Radio announcer.

HUSBAND: Of Faith.

SON: Of Faith.

DAUGHTER: Of Faith.

ELLISANDRA: Good weather spirit that can't get her spells right.

Basically kind but easily flustered.

SNOW MAIDEN: Made of snow and becomes the daughter of the Man and Woman.

SNOWFLAKE 1: Dasher.

SNOWFLAKE 2: Dancer.

SNOWFLAKE 3: Prancer.

SNOWFLAKE 4: Comet.

SNOWFLAKE 5: Vixen.

MAN: Becomes Snow Maiden's father.

WOMAN: Becomes Snow Maiden's mother.

FARMER: Marries Snow Maiden.

TEMPESTA: Sister of Ellisandra. Dark, stormy spirit, full of energy and full of herself.

STARLIGHT: One of the Northern Lights.

STARBRIGHT: Another.

NIGHTLIGHT: Another.

TWILIGHT: Another.

SILVERN: Looks menacing. Carries a spear.

GOLDER: A poet.

ROSETTE: A berry picker.

DAFFODILIA: Another.

LAVENDER: Another.

GREAT WHITE BEAR: A shadow. *See note on next page.

MIRROR SPIRIT: The evil spirit of the mirror.

KAI: He gets led away by the Mirror Spirit.

GERDA: A friend of Kai.

DUSTY: Dust from the mirror.

SNOW QUEEN: She is an icicle. *See note below.

RIVER ECHO: Tells Gerda where to find Kai. *See note below.

ROBBER: Aristocratic.

GUARD: Guards Snow Queens palace. *See note below.

Performance time: 70 minutes.

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PROPS

Bundle of groceries, keys, newspaper, mail, radio, answering machine, crayon, cape with spaces or black patches that snowflakes will fit in, large cape, hat, ax, veil, wedding rings, baskets, snowflakes, scepter, book, white ball, spear, quill, bark, cracked mirror, holly plant, pouch, map, satchel, garland, candles.

SETTING

The play opens with a “representational” kitchen of communication gadgets. This part of the set should be easily turned around to form the basis of the woodsy snow scene that is the setting for most of the play. An alternative would be light Styrofoam cabinets which are easily struck.

SOUND EFFECTS

Wind, several answering machine beeps, taped voices, drums, rustling, bell, wind chime, thunder, music.

***Note** - *The Great White Bear should be representational - not an actor in a bear suit. A large shadow does well or perhaps an actor could carry a pole with a bear face and claws - or a group of actors could represent the bear wearing masks. The Snow Queen is white, lovely, regal and silent. River Echo has seaweed for hair and is quite disheveled with fishes and river creatures all over her. The Guard is an older chap that has spent many hours alone talking to himself. He doesn't need to look old; he is well preserved from living among ice.*

See additional director's notes at the end of the script.

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(In BLACKOUT we hear WIND noises. AT RISE: FAITH comes bursting into the kitchen. She is frazzled and in bad need of some time for herself. She is carrying a bundle of groceries, keys, a newspaper and mail in her mouth. She turns on the radio and answering machine.)

FAITH: Stop snowing ... stop snowing ... oh, please, stop snowing.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: The forecast is snow.

FAITH: Oh, no!

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Oh, yes! A winter whiteout has meteorologists scratching their heads and looking for clues to the strange winter pattern that is engulfing much of the country.

HUSBAND'S VOICE: *(Beep.)* Honey, I'm snowed in at the airport. The meeting is canceled but I can't get a flight out.

FAITH: This can't be happening!

HUSBAND'S VOICE: But it is. Now, put down your groceries and take notes. *(SHE empties her groceries to use the bag as paper and grabs a crayon, lipstick or something equally unsuitable.)* The centerpiece for the party will be ready at noon, then pick up the turkey at 1 p.m. and don't forget to bake that luscious layer cake for my mom.

FAITH: That cake is so complicated. I'll never have the time.

HUSBAND'S VOICE: Now, I know the cake is time consuming, but I'm sure you can do it. It's Mom's favorite. Have to go. Love ya, bye.

BOY'S VOICE: *(Beep.)* Mom, I'm still at school. The busses aren't running. Can you come get me after band?

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Driving is dangerous. Do not drive!

BOY'S VOICE: Oh! I need my dress clothes cleaned for tomorrow's concert. Can you find them? I think they're at the bottom of my closet ... somewhere. See ya. Oh, yeah, thanks, Mom.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: We repeat, stay home.

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GIRL'S VOICE: *(Beep.)* I'm still at Susie's. Her mother's afraid to drive. Can you come? Oh! And there's a cookie exchange tomorrow for charity. Can you bake ... oh ... six dozen or so?

FAITH: Oh, no!

GIRL'S VOICE: Please! I have a lot of homework and I just won't have the time. Thanks, love ya, bye. *(Beep.)*

(FAITH gets her car keys.)

RADIO ANNOUNCER: I said, no driving!

FAITH: Listen, radio person - things need to get done! I have to pick up my kids and ... *(WIND noises pick up as the radio goes dead.)* Radio person? Radio person? This is too much! How will I get everything done? I just need a little time! Someone please find me some time!

(WIND noises increase and THREE to SIX SNOWFLAKES come in and pull apart the set. Two of the snowflakes with large snowflake garlands twirl FAITH center with the garlands. After being dropped by the winter wind, Faith now finds herself in a wonderland of snow. Suddenly, ELLISANDRA, a weather spirit, "blows" in and crashes into Faith. They fall down in opposite directions. As they start to get up, they turn and spy each other. They both yell out a scream and fall again. Ellisandra wears a cape with three spaces or black patches that some special snowflakes will fit into. Ellisandra is basically kind, but easily flustered and not as adept at being a spirit as she might have been had she paid attention to her lessons. Faith quickly gets up and recovers as she looks at Ellisandra, who is still trying to get her bearings.)

FAITH: *(Continued.)* Oh, are you all right?

ELLISANDRA: Sorry, dear. So sorry. I didn't mean to do this at all. I must look like something your cat dragged in. I really must get a better entrance.

FAITH: I hate to be rude, but if you're okay, I must get going. I have a lot to do.

End of Freeview

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