

The Velveteen Rabbit – a musical comedy
Book, Lyrics, and Music by Simon Chan
Based on the book by Margery Williams
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This version was especially revised for the BroadHollow Theater in Elmont, New York. All characters are played by three adult singer-performers – a soprano, a baritone, and a mezzo-soprano, plus a children’s chorus. The roles to be cast from the children are:

*The Velveteen Rabbit
*The Boy
*A Country Rag Doll (A cross between Doris Day’s *Calamity Jane* and Carol Burnett)
*The Clockwork Mouse
Lionel, a cymbal-playing toy monkey
A Music Box Dancer
Timothy, the wooden lion on wheels
Tin Soldier
Teddy Bear

*Major speaking roles

The rest of the toys will depend on the individual children and the costumes and props available.

Scene 1: Prologue

The entire cast enters, dressed in black. They line up downstage. Everyone has a toy. This following speech is ad lib.

Soprano. Holding up a Dewdrop Fairy doll. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, this is our musical version of *The Velveteen Rabbit*, or how toys become real. Our actors play all the parts, while the toys are played by themselves. **All the players hold up their toys and move them to say “hi” to the audience.**

At the end, we’ll need some help from you, the audience. We’re going to need an audience of REAL rabbits – so we’re going to put on our rabbit ears (**she demonstrates with her hands over her head**) and show our rabbit teeth, and wiggle our rabbit tails. Can we do that? And then we’re going to sit and wait very quietly for the nursery magic to happen.

Waving the Fairy doll’s arm with the wand in it. See you later! **She vanishes and moves upstage to change into her fairy costume.**

Music starts. A boy comes downstage with the velveteen rabbit. He moves the rabbit to life. Everyone else moves around, changing and “becoming” their toy.

Boy 1. 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 satin. 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. **He puts a sprig of holly between the rabbit’s paws.**

SONG: “The Velveteen Rabbit”.

All. Sung. Long ago, in nursery land, there was a velveteen rabbit.
With satin ears, and spotty coat, he was the smartest of rabbits.
He was a toy for a lucky boy, who grew to love him so.
It was long ago, in nursery land, there was a velveteen rabbit.
One Christmas long ago.

All the performers play with their toys and dance, even as they change.

Girl 1. **Becoming the Rag Doll.** In the bleak midwinter time, he loved the velveteen rabbit.

Baritone. **Becoming Choo-Choo.** And throughout the playful summer time, he loved the velveteen rabbit.

Mezzo. **Becoming Steamy.** He was a toy for a lucky boy -

Boy 2. **Becoming The Boy.** Who grew to love him so.

All. It was long ago, in nursery land, there was a velveteen rabbit
One Christmas long ago.

Soprano. **Now as the actual Fairy.**

Hey and a ho, the high and the low,
A Christmas tale we’ll hear.
Sun after snow,
Joy after woe,
To fill our hearts with cheer.

Mouse. Long ago, in nursery land, there was **(spoken)** a clockwork mouse!
(sung) With a pointy head, and wind-up key, he ran throughout the house!
He was a toy for a lucky boy, who grew to love him so.

Boy 1. It was long ago, in nursery land, there was a velveteen rabbit.

All. One Christmas long ago! **All play with toys again.**

Scene 2: The Nursery

The Boy's bedroom. The set should be slightly oversized, to suggest things from a child's perspective.

All the toys are in their "normal" state without the Boy, doing their repetitive motions. Four toys approach the Rabbit, curiously: Rag Doll, the Music Box Dancer, Lionel the cymbal playing monkey, and the Clockwork Mouse.

Rag Doll. Howdy, stranger! Who are you?

Velveteen. I'm the Velveteen Rabbit.

Rag Doll. Welcome to the nursery, Vomiting Rabbit!

Velveteen. Er -

Rag Doll. Now, don't be shy. This here's Music Box Dancer, that there's Clockwork Mouse -

Clockwork. Pleased to make your acquaintance. **He spins. The Music Box Dancer also does a welcoming ballet dance.**

Rag Doll. And I'm Rag Doll. Proudly made in Kansas. **Lionel claps his cymbals.** Oh. And this is Lionel.

Lionel claps his cymbals, excitedly, right up near her ear.

Rag Doll. Shut up, Lionel. So what's up, Vomiting?

Velveteen. That's actually *Velveteen*. Which is what the Boy calls me, at least.

Rag Doll. Whatever. We're all friends here. Hey, you played with The Boy yet?

Velveteen. Yes. He played with me for three hours, and then he dropped me.

Rag Doll. **To the audience. Clucks.** Typical boy.

Lionel claps his cymbals again, excitedly, for a long time.

Rag Doll. Lionel. Lionel. Shut up! **Confidentially.** I'm sorry about the monkey, he ain't been quite the same since the dog tried to eat him. **The Dancer barks, and Lionel recoils. Rag Doll struts about the stage.** You know, I weren't always just a plaything for a kid.

Mouse. **Heard this before.** No, she used to be a star. **Bitchily.** In Kansas.

Rag Doll. Back out there, I had my own show.

Mouse. **Doing the inverted commas.** “*Dolly, Get Your Potato Gun.*”

Rag Doll. **Importantly.** Yes. I was – a prop. I got shot at every night.

Velveteen. That sounds really - interesting. What’s a prop?

Rag Doll. **Mouth drops.** You mean you never been to the the-a-ter?

Mouse. **Gasps.** Oh, dear! **All fake sympathy.** Probably an opera buff.

Velveteen. The-a-ter?

Rag Doll. The the-a-ter. It’s a special place where people come to gawk – just at you. **She strikes a dramatic pose.**

Velveteen. I’m not sure I’d like that. I think I’d rather be at home with The Boy.

Mouse. Very sensible.

Rag Doll. But it’s the best place in the world! When you’re not real. In the the-a-ter, the lights go down low. **They do.** And then suddenly there’s a spotlight - **There is, but it misses the Rag Doll and she has to sidle into it** - on you. And then, sometimes, some music starts. **Nothing happens. Pause. More forcefully.** And then, sometimes, some music starts. **Still nothing. Screams.** WHERE’S MY COTTON PICKIN’ MUSIC? **It starts.**

SONG: “Welcome To Our Little Show”

Rag Doll. **Straight to the audience.**

 Welcome to our little show!
 The doors are shut so you can’t go.
 So settle down, cause we’ve been locked in tight.

Mouse. Yee-har!

Rag Doll. Now, audience, please don’t be mean, or
 That monkey’s got some gasoline
 And we’ll all go down a flamin’ heap tonight!

Lionel clangs his cymbals, like he’s lighting flint.

Rag Doll. So loosen them thar britches,
 Let’s have a jamboree!
 Cause backstage there’s a shotgun
 For each gloomy face we see!

Tin Soldier aims his rifle at audience, prompted by Rag Doll.

So, kick right back and have some fun
Our story's only just begun
With music and adventure in a stack.

And if you don't like what you see
Well, you can take it up with me,
And with our twenty stagehands out the back!

So git up off your high horse
And ride our rodeo.
But if you want a refund,
Well, we'll tell you where to go!

The other toys do a barn dance.

So welcome to our little do
Yep, how you leave is up to you
Up on a cloud
Or knocked down on the floor.

All. **Spoken.** Yes-har!

Rag Doll. Youse settle down and savour it
We'll do a show, you won't forgit
You'll all be cryin', "Bravo" and fer more!

So git up off your high horse
And ride our rodeo.
But if you want a refund,
Well, we'll tell you where to go!

Rag Doll. **Spoken.** Everybody together!

Sung. A toy chorus line behind her, with kicks.

All. So! Welcome to our little show!
The doors are shut so you can't go
Let's clap our hands
And stomp down on the floor.

Everyone claps and stomps.

Rag Doll. **Spoken.** Land O'Goshen!

All. **Sung.** Youse settle down and savour it
We'll do a show, you won't forgit
You'll all be cryin', "Bravo" and fer more.

All. **Spoken.** More! More!

Rag Doll. You'll all be crying "Bravo" and fer – me!

She goes down on one knee, and takes off her hat, and bows.

All the toys. **Clapping.** Yee-har! **A shot from the gun. Rag Doll ducks, a toy bullet just missing her.**

Rag Doll. **To Velveteen.** Phew. Did yer like my song? Why're you still sittin' there? In the corner?

Velveteen. The Boy threw me down here, but that's okay, I always come down soft 'cause I'm stuffed. I'm going to stay right here, in case he needs me.

Rag Doll. I call that passive-aggressive. **She stalks off and sulks.**

Mouse. Well. **Coming up the Rabbit.** At least you're not a snob. **Looking around.** Unlike some of the other toys around here.

Velveteen. What other toys?

Mouse. Oh, Timothy the wooden lion thinks he's sooo grand. **Timothy sails past, majestically, pulled along by the Tin Soldier. The Dancer dances behind him, mocking him.** Just because he's a lion and made by disabled soldiers he thinks he's connected to Government. And let's not forget a certain mechanical boat and steam train, who think they run the place.

Velveteen. **Whispers.** Is that them over there? **The boat and train cackle, near the wings.**

Rag Doll. **Coming back.** Ugh! Yep.

Mouse. They like to pretend they're "real".

Rag Doll. The only real thing about those two is the hot air they blow out from their be-hinds.

Velveteen. I miss the Boy.

Mouse. **Confidentially.** Hey. Do you know what I do while I'm waiting for the Boy to come back to play?

Velveteen. What?

Mouse. Wind me up and I'll tell you.

The Velveteen Rabbit does so. Ratchet sound.

Mouse. **SONG: "Round and Around"**

Wind me up with a key
And we'll spin merrily
Round and around.

There is no need to be
Sitting unhappily
Down on the ground.

Life can be boring if you're just a toy
Waiting all morning to be with the Boy

Come with me and we'll be
Spinning here happily
Round and around.

All the other toys are getting interested in this by now, and they gather around.

Mouse. **Spoken.** Come on! Spin with us!

Velveteen. I don't know. I get dizzy.

Rag Doll. Come on, it's fun. Get a head spin. Get up and spin!

Velveteen. Well, I suppose... **Sung. The Mouse tries to wind then Rabbit up with his key, but can't find a key hole.**

I haven't got a key
But I'll spin merrily.
Round and around.

Rag Doll. There is no need to be
Sitting unhappily
Down on the ground.

All. You might be grieving if you're just a toy
Waiting all evening to be with the Boy

Come with me and we'll be
Spinning here happily
Round and around.

Rag Doll. **Spoken to the audience, especially the kids.** Come on everyone!
Spin with us? Come on! Stand up and spin! **Ad lib.** Go on!

Lionel claps his cymbals along.

All. Wind me up with a key
And we'll spin merrily
Round and around.

There is no need to be
Sitting unhappily
Down on the ground.
Life can be boring if you're just a toy
Waiting all morning to be with the boy

Come with me and we'll be
Spinning here happily
Round and around.

Mouse. More! More! More! **Ratchet noises.** Faster! Faster! Faster!

Wind me up with a key
And we'll spin merrily
Round and around.

There is no need to be
Sitting unhappily
Here on the ground.

Life can be boring if you're just a toy
Waiting all morning to be with the boy

Spoken, dizzily. Wow. I can see a rainbow.

Come with me and we'll be
Spinning here happily, dizzily, busily, hazily, crazily, dazedly, fazedly,
noisily, goisily –

Rag Doll. *Goisily?* That's not a word!

Mouse. I mean, *joyfully!*

All. **Sung.** Round and around!

Mouse. **Spoken.** What a pain. Now I'm all wound up.

Rag Doll. Is it toilet time?

Mouse. **Meekly.** I think so.

Rag Doll. **Nodding.** Let's go.

Velveteen. Hey, wait. What's 'real'?

Rag Doll. How would he know? He's a toy mouse!

Mouse. The Skin Horse might know.

Rag Doll. **Smacking her forehead.** Yes, of course, the Skin Horse!

Lionel claps his cymbals again, near her ear.

Rag Doll. Lionel. I'm warning you.

Velveteen. Who's the Skin Horse?

Rag Doll. **Sweetly.** Are you auditioning for a quiz show?

Mouse. He's an old leather horse who's been around here forever. Now, they say *he's* real. See ya later. **They all exit, the Dancer taking her time, dancing off, waving goodbye.**

Rag Doll. Come on! We're busting.

Velveteen. Have fun in the bathroom.

Scene 3: Steamy and Choo-choo

SONG: "The Choo-Choo Cha-Cha"

Mezzo and Baritone enter as toy boat and train.

Mezzo. **As Steamy.** I sail from a long line of steam battleships.

Baritone. **As Choo-choo.** My tracks are a long line as well.

Steamy. We're happy and glorious.

Choo-Choo. In battle victorious.

Steamy. We're royalty as you can tell.

Choo-Choo. My ancestors played with Prince Edward the Third.

Steamy. Mother belonged to a Duke.

Choo-Choo. We're bearers of standard

Steamy. Both worshipped and pandered

Both. And anything crass makes us puke.

Velveteen. I'm just a velveteen rabbit.
I'm nothing special to see.
But if you are feeling lonely too,
Maybe you'll come play with me?

Steamy. My rigging is fashioned with mother-of-pearl

Choo-Choo. My engine's electrical cell

Steamy. We're perfection incarnate

Choo-Choo. We're so good, God darn it

Both. That everyone knows it as well.

Velveteen. I'm just a velveteen rabbit.

Steamy. Look at my nose.

Velveteen. I'm nothing special to see.

Choo-Choo. Look at my bell.

Velveteen. But if you are feeling lonely too

Both. Look at our pose.

Velveteen. Maybe you'll come play with me?

Both. Aren't we just swell?

We've travelled together for many a year
Our loyalty shows through and through.
And if we seem snobby
Well, that's just our jobby

To make sure we're better than
So much more better than -

They cackle hysterically.

You!

Steamy. **Spoken.** Here's the new toy, Choo-Choo, right here.

Choo-Choo. Er! Looks like some sort of *animal*, Steamy darling.

Steamy. Oh, how *disgusting*.

Choo-Choo. I wonder if it talks?

Steamy. And what are you a model of?

Velveteen. Pardon?

Choo-Choo. What – are – you - a – model – of?

Velveteen. I don't know if I'm a model of anything.

Steamy. Obviously a soft toy.

Choo-Choo. Made in China, perhaps?

Both. **As if to an idiot.** Do you know what you are?

Velveteen. I know I'm stuffed with sawdust.

Both. *Sawdust?*

Choo-Choo. Sawdust is never mentioned in modern circles.

Steamy. It's quite out-of-date.

Choo-Choo. It's terrible what toys they're letting in these days.

Steamy. Yes. There goes the nursery.

Choo-Choo. In my day, they would have thrown a thing like you straight into the rubbish.

Steamy. And burnt you.

Velveteen. I don't want to be burnt!

Steamy. Well, maybe if you're very quiet -

Choo-Choo. Very quiet -

Steamy. - and lie very still in a dark corner somewhere,

Choo-Choo. Very dark -

Steamy. - the Boy won't notice you, and you won't get thrown into the fire.

Choo-Choo. Problem solved!

Steamy. Oh, look at it trembling. It must be sick! Come on, Steamy, let's clear out before we catch something off this thing.

Choo-Choo. Indeed. Sawdust. Hmph.

Steamy. Not even real. **They exit.**

SONG: "Real."

The Music Box Dancer, feeling sorry, comes to the Rabbit with her music box. She opens it and shows the Rabbit what is inside. Music starts, and she dances mechanically to the music (like in *Coppelia*). She becomes more real and natural as the music progresses.

Velveteen. What is real?
Is it something small?
Is it something I could be?
Does it tick?
Does it spin around?
Do you wind it with a key?

Is it something wonderful?
It is something bad?
Would I be unhappy if
Real is what I had?

The other toys slowly gather around the Rabbit, as the song progresses.

What is real?
Is it something big?
Is it something I can see?
When I'm real,
Maybe I'll be loved,
If real is something I can be.
If real is something I can be.

All the toys. Is it something wonderful?
Is it something bad?
Would we be unhappy if
Real is what we had?

Velveteen. What is real?
Is it on the ground?
Is it high above a tree?
I'll be real,
If it can be found,
If real is something I can be –
Then maybe I'll be really me.

Scene 4: The Skin Horse and Nana

Baritone. **A booming voice from off stage. Don't worry about the other toys, little rabbit. The other toys all scatter. A large shadow of an old rocking horse is projected up.**

Velveteen. **Nervous.** Who are you?

Baritone. I'm the Skin Horse. I've seen a succession of toys arrive to boast and swagger, and by-and-by they break their mainsprings and pass away.

They're only toys – they'll never turn into anything else.

Velveteen. Do you know nursery magic? Can you make me real?

Baritone. **Laughs.** I know of it, but I can't do it. But there is someone who comes along and makes toys real.

Velveteen. What *is* real? Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a handle that sticks out?

Baritone. No. Real isn't how you're made, it just happens. When a child loves you for a long, long, time, I mean, REALLY loves you, then you become real.

Velveteen. Does it hurt?

Baritone. Sometimes, but when you're real, you don't mind. That's why it doesn't happen to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to carefully kept. By the time you're real, most of your hair has been loved off, your eyes drop out, you get loose in the joints and very shabby.

Velveteen. Oh, how sad.

Baritone. But that doesn't matter, because when you're real, you're never ugly.

Velveteen. Are you real?

Baritone. The Boy's uncle made me real. That was many years ago. But, once you're real, it lasts forever.

Rag Doll. **Enters, hysterically.** Nana's coming! Nana's coming!

All the toys panic, and try to hide.

Velveteen. What's happening?

Rag Doll. **Yelling into the Rabbit's face.** Nana's coming! **She flees, diving under the boy's bed.**

Velveteen. What does that mean?

Baritone. It means it's time for us toys to be put away. **He vanishes.**

SONGS: "Hail Nana!" and "Velveteen Rabbit reprise"

Nana (Mezzo) enters. Sung. The remaining toys line up respectfully for inspection, as if for an army major.

Toys. All hail to Nana!

All hail the nursery queen!
All hail to the tidiest one that's ever, ever been!

Nana walks up and down the line of toys and inspects each one. She is critical of a couple, and marches them straight into a cupboard or a box, dusting them with a cloth. Most of the toys are ordered off stage, put on a shelf, or shoved under the bed, except for the Velveteen Rabbit.

The Boy enters, running in, looking for something.

Nana. **Spoken.** Come on, young master. It's way past your bedtime.

The Boy. But I can't find my china dog.

Nana. Now, it's too late, we haven't got time to look for china dogs.

The Boy. I want my china dog, you silly old goose!

Nana. I beg your pardon! Rudeness!

The Boy. I'm sorry, Nana.

Nana. It's too much trouble trying to look for him now. We'll do it in the morning.

The Boy. But I can't sleep without my china dog.

Nana. Well, what about this bunny? He can sleep with you. Poor wee thing. Looks a bit lonely. Have you played with him much?

The Boy. No.

Nana. I think it's time you two got re-acquainted, don't you?

The Boy takes the Rabbit.

Good night, young master. Sweet dreams.

Scene change to the wood outside. This might be something simple, like a lighting effect.

Rag Doll. **Sneaking out from under the bed. Sung.**

Long ago, in nursery land, there was a velveteen rabbit.
With satin ears, and spotty coat, he was the smartest of rabbits.
He was a toy for a lucky boy, who grew to love him so.
It was long ago, in nursery land, there was a velveteen rabbit.
One Christmas long ago.

She vanishes back under the bed.

Scene 5: The wood outside.

SONG: "One Perfect Day."

The Boy is now playing with the rabbit outside in the wood. Birdsong.

Soprano. Enters as the Dewdrop Fairy. Sung.

Winter
Melts into springtime
Blooms into summer
And how soon, the days fly away
Till one perfect day comes
And you're playing in the grass,
With someone you've grown to love
Summer
Falls into autumn
Turns back into winter
And it's gone, that one perfect day
But you'll always remember
You were playing in the grass
With someone you'd grown to love.

Nana. Calling from the wings. Young master, it's tea-time!

The Boy. Spoken. Now you stay here.

Nana. Leave that toy alone!

The Boy. He's not a toy! He's real! See you soon, rabbit. I love you. He exits.

The children's chorus enter as bunnies. Humorous rabbit movement work. Music: Dance of the wild rabbits. They suddenly all dance around the wood together, playfully.

They exit, a bit nervous, when the two wild rabbits enter.

The Baritone and Soprano enter as Norm and Gwen, two wild rabbits. Their accents, dress, and demeanour suggest they've escaped from the Bronx Zoo or *Guys and Dolls*.

Baritone. Hey, Gwen, check this out.

Soprano. What is it, Norm?

Norm. Looks like another rabbit to me.

Gwen. That rabbit looks queer, Norm.

Norm. Yeah. Hey, you! Git out of our territory! It's breedin' season, ya know. Gwennie and I wanna get on with it.

Gwen. We're hopings for sextuplets, ain't we Norm?

Norm. It's secret rabbit business.

Gwen. So rack off.

Velveteen. I - can't.

Norm. Whaddaya mean you can't? Just get on your hind legs and hop on outa here. Ain't ya got hind legs?

Big silence.

Norm and

Gwen. Oooo-aaah!

Gwen. **Sniffs. Gasps.** He don't *smell* right, Norm.

Norm. No! And no hind legs! Fancy a damn rabbit with no hind legs!

Velveteen. I have! I have got hind legs – I'm just sitting on them.

Norm. Oh, yeah?

SONG: "This Ain't No Rabbit."

Norm. Well, I've seen a hare, without any hair

Gwen. And I've seen a bunny that's blind.

Norm. I've seen a rabbit with a pesticide habit.
But standing before me I find –

This ain't no rabbit
This ain't no rabbit
Not any rabbit I'd call
This ain't no rabbit
This ain't no rabbit
Look at its ears
Look at its fur
This ain't no rabbit at all.

Velveteen. **Spoken.** I am a rabbit.

Norm. Then why dontcha come out and dance with us?

Velveteen. I don't like dancing. I'd rather sit still.

Norm. Oh, really?

Sung.

I once saw a rat, that looked like a cat.

Gwen. I once saw a weird-lookin' cow!

Silence.

Norm. **Spoken.** Did ya?

Gwen. Yeah.

Norm. **Sung.** I once knew a parrot, shaped like a carrot

Gwen. But never a rabbit like now!

Both. This ain't no rabbit
This ain't no rabbit
Not any rabbit you'd call.
This ain't no rabbit
This ain't no rabbit

Look at its ears
Look at its fur
This ain't no rabbit at all.

They dance a sand dance. Norm offers Velveteen a carrot, which he refuses, to Norm's disgust.

This ain't no rabbit
This ain't no rabbit
Not any rabbit you'd call.
This ain't no rabbit
This ain't no rabbit

Look at its ears
Look at its fur
This ain't no rabbit at –

Gwen. That's some funny bunny, honey!

Both. This ain't no rabbit at all! **They exit.**

Velveteen. Wait! I am a real rabbit, the Boy said so! Why did they run away?

The Boy. **Enters.** Come on, bunny. Let's go home. **He takes him.**

Scene 6: Thunderstorm.

Scene change back into the nursery.

The sound of rain and thunder. Music underscore. The Boy is getting drenched in the rain as he walks home. He arrives in the nursery.

The Boy gets in his bed under a blanket, coughing. Nana enters, feeling his forehead for a temperature.

Nana. How is he, Doctor?

Baritone. As Doctor. The fever is getting worse, I'm afraid.

Nana. Is there anything we can do?

Doctor. Not much. Let the thing run its course, I suppose.

The Boy. Where's my rabbit?

Nana. Here's right here with you, my dear.

Doctor. Right, young master, you try to get some sleep now, do you hear?

The Boy. But I can't sleep. I'm too hot.

Nana. Just imagine you're outside in the garden again, playing with that old bunny of yours. And before you know it, you will be.

The Boy. Promise?

Nana. Promise.

Doctor. I've left a sleeping draught for him – some valerian – you'll have to let the parents know.

Nana. Yes, of course, Doctor. **They exit.**

Velveteen. I'm sorry, but I've been hiding. There have been so many people here today, I was afraid someone might take me away from you. But don't worry, they're all gone now. And I promise to be patient until you get better.

SONG: "All Through The Night."

Velveteen. All through the night
I will be with you
I will there
All through the night
Here while you sleep

I will be with you
Just hold me tight
All through the night.

The chorus enter as toys again, in the background. They ooh-aah to the song in the background.

If love can make you better
Then it will.
So be still, my dear friend, be still.

All through the night
I will be with you
Here in your arms
Wishing you from harm
All through the night
All through the night.

Nana enters again and gives The Boy the sleeping medicine. He grimaces.

Nana. If love can make you better
Then it will.
So be still, my dear boy, be still.

**Nana,
Velveteen,
And chorus.** All through the night
I will be with you
Here in your arms
Wishing you from harm
All through the night
All through the night.

Dawn. Enter Doctor. The toy chorus vanishes.

Nana. His fever's gone down.

The Boy. I can sit up now. See?

Doctor. Splendid! Well, you'll be able to go to the seaside tomorrow, won't you? That will help you get better.

The Boy. Can I take some toys to the beach?

Nana. Yes, of course you can, dear.

The Boy. Did you hear that, rabbit? We're going to the seaside! Like I promised.

Nana. Go downstairs, dear, and get some fresh air.

- The Boy.** I'm going to build the biggest sandcastle ever! **He leaves, leaving the rabbit behind.**
- Nana.** Is there anything else we should do?
- Doctor.** Well, boil the things he's taking to the beach. Anything he's touched. Then you'll have to burn all these blankets and pillows. The whole room needs disinfecting.
- Nana.** The whole room, Doctor?
- Doctor.** Yes, books, toys, anything he's played with in bed.
- Nana.** What about that old bunny?
- Doctor.** That? Why it's a mass of scarlet fever germs. Burn it at once.
- Nana.** Oh dear, he loves that poor thing.
- Doctor.** Nonsense. Buy him a new one. He can't have that any more.

Scene 7: The garden outside

During the scene change to the garden outside. The Soprano enters, dressed as the Dewdrop Fairy.

- Mezzo.** **Still dressed as Nana.**
- And so the rabbit was put into a sack with the old picture books and a lot of rubbish, and carried out to the end of the garden. The gardener was going to come back in the morning and make a bonfire.
- Baritone.** **Still dressed as Doctor.**
- And while the Boy slept, dreaming of the seaside, the little rabbit lay among the old picture books and the rubbish, feeling very lonely.
- Soprano.** He thought of those long sunlit hours in the garden – how happy they were – and a great sadness came over him.
- The Rabbit is now in the corner of the garden, downstage. The three adults look over him, upstage.**
- Velveteen.** Hello? Is anyone there? Hello? Skin horse? Has anyone seen the boy? Anyone? So I am going to be burnt, after all.

SONG: "The Use Of Love."

What's the use of love

If it ends like this?
What's the use of love
If it ends like this?
What's the good of joy?
Or the beauty of a springtime day?
Or the arms of a loving boy
If he has to go away?
What's the use of love
If it ends like this?
What's the use of love?
What's the use of love?

Instrumental. A single shooting star lights up the night sky.

What's the point of real?
Whatever being that is anyway?
I'm another broken toy
And we just get thrown away.

What's the use of love
If it ends like this?
What's the use of love
What's the use of – **cries.**

Baritone and Mezzo narrate. Some lighting or other effect to represent the flower bloom. And where the rabbit's teardrop fell, a strange thing happened. A flower grew out of the ground, a mysterious flower, not like any other in the garden. It had green leaves the colour of emeralds, and in the centre of the leaves was a blossom like a golden cup. It was so beautiful the little rabbit forgot to cry, and just lay there watching it. And then the blossom opened, and out of it stepped a fairy.

Music: "Real – reprise". The Soprano steps forward as the Fairy.

Fairy. **Sung.** Rabbit, little rabbit, don't you know who I am?
I'm the Nursery Magic Fairy -

Velveteen. **Sung.** Yes, I've seen you somewhere before.

Fairy. **Sung.** I've come to take you out of here, someplace safe and far.
Where other real rabbits live, for real is what you are!

Velveteen. **Spoken.** Wasn't I real before?

Fairy. **Spoken.** You were real to the Boy, because he loved you. Now you'll be real to everyone! **Fairy and Velveteen exit. Music continues. In the original production, three follow spots moved up slowly heaven-ward throughout the theatre auditorium to simulate the flight.**

Scene 8: Rabbitland

Everyone in the audience is encouraged to become rabbits, with the Baritone and Mezzo as real rabbits encouraging them, as in panto. They put on their rabbit ears, and a cotton tail. This is completely ad lib, and depends on the performers – please see the DVD of the Brisbane Libraries performance for an excellent example of this. The Soprano as Fairy and Boy 1 enter. The children’s chorus (except the Rag Doll and Mouse) enter as real rabbits in fur coats and bunny ears. Boy 1 is now wearing rabbit ears and a neat fur jacket.

Fairy. Real rabbits of Rabbitland, I’ve brought you a new playfellow. Because he’s new here, please be kind to him and teach him all he needs to know about being a real rabbit.

Velveteen. **Shyly, to the audience.** Hi.

Fairy. **Laughing.** Run and play, little rabbit! **She vanishes.**

One of the chorus bunnies nuzzles Velveteen. She stays with him until the end.

Velveteen. Hey! That tickles! Ha! Ha! I’m sorry I can’t play with you but I haven’t got any –

He stretches a leg out.

Hind legs! I’ve got hind legs! I’ve got real hind legs. And real fur, and real ears, and real whiskers . . . I’m real!

Sung. REPRISE: “I’m Just Some Rabbit.”

At last, at last, at last!

I’m just some rabbit
I’m just some rabbit
Just any rabbit that’s new
I’m just some rabbit
I’m just some rabbit
Look at my tail
Look at my fur
I’m just some rabbit like you.

He goes down into the audience, and greets them. All the other rabbits in the chorus follow suit, except the Baritone and Mezzo, who take off their Rabbit ears on stage to narrate again.

The Boy. **Enters, alone, playing with a ball. Sung. REPRISE: “One Perfect Day.”**

Winter

Melts into springtime
Blooms into summer
And how soon, the days fly away
Till one perfect day comes
And you're playing in the grass,
With someone you've grown to love.

Baritone. **Spoken.** It was Christmas again the next year, and the Boy went out to play in the wood behind the house. **He exits.**

Mezzo. **Spoken.** And as he was playing, two rabbits crept out from the bracken and peeped at him. One of them was brown all over, but the other had strange markings under his fur, as though long ago he had been spotted, and the spots still showed through. **She exits.**

The Boy sees Velveteen in the front row of the audience. The chorus as rabbits freeze.

REPRISE: "The Use Of Love".

The Boy. **Sung.**

Once I had a friend
Whom I played with on a summer's day
And I knew that I'd lost him
When I had to go away.
He looked just like you.
He was once my friend.
He looked just like you.
He looked just like you.

Velveteen. **Coming slowly back on stage with his new rabbit friend, during the previous reprise.**

Long ago, in nursery land, I was a velveteen rabbit.
With satin ears, and spotty coat, I was the smartest of rabbits.
I was a toy for a lucky boy, who grew to love me so.

The Boy. It was long ago, in nursery land, I had a velveteen rabbit.

Velveteen. Oh so long – my friend. **He exits, with his rabbit friend.**

Mezzo

(as Nana). **From off-stage.** Tea-time, young master! **The Boy exits also, happily.**

All the rabbits, who should still be in the audience, to the audience.

All. The end! **The Rabbits hop off. Slow curtain.**

Scene 9: Epilogue.

A spot in front of the curtain comes up. The Rag Doll and Clockwork Mouse appear through a part in the curtain, into the spot.

Rag Doll. Some of youse folk are hopefully wondrin' what happened to the rest of us toys after. **She smiles down at the audience.**

Mouse. **Smiles too. Hopefully. Pause. They look around, pointedly.** Are you? **They look at each other, shocked.**

Both. Oh, dear / tarnation / I'm appalled / call the police, *ad lib.*

Rag Doll. Well, just before The Boy got ill, I got donated to the Salvation Army Thrift Shop. **She puts on an Army hat, whisks out a tamborine, and rattles it.** Praise the Lord!

Mouse. **Pause.** They recycled me into a watch. **He turns around to show a large clockface stuck on his back.**

Rag Doll. But *then*, I got bought by this the-a-ter producer from New York!

Mouse. **Sighs.** And now she's got her own Broadway musical. **Does the inverted commas. "Farewell, Dolly!" Doll strikes pose. Some lights, music, ad lib.**

We hear Lionel's loud chattering and screeching from offstage.

Mouse. Oh, and Lionel got turned into a real monkey and resides in Central Park. He's composing a volume of existential poetry, mostly with poo.

Rag Doll. Hey, what's the time, Mr Mouse? **Ribbing him.** Geddit? **Laughs.** Land O'Goshen!

Mouse. I think it's time we said goodbye.

Both. **To audience.** Goodbye! **They wave, bow, and leave.**

Blackout, then bows from the whole company.

