

Drizzle for Dummies

A comprehensive guide to one of Nature's most exciting phenomena

Prologue – Imperial College

Narrator: Our story begins at Imperial College, London. Lucy, our plucky first year PhD student has been summoned for an emergency meeting with her supervisor, Professor Sir Brian Hoskins CBE PhD FRS FAMS BA Baracus ABC 123 do re me baby you and me.

Brian is sat at his desk (facing stage-right) polishing one of his trophies. Lucy knocks at the door.

Brian Come in.

Lucy comes enters stage-right.

Lucy You asked to see me, Professor?

Brian Yes Lucy. Please sit down. I'm afraid I have some bad news.

Lucy takes a seat at the desk.

Brian As I'm sure you've seen on the news, rioting has broken out in many parts of London.

Lucy Yes all those thugs in Tottenham and...

Brian (*interrupting*) Tottenham? No, no. I'm not talking about *those* riots. I'm talking about the posh riots.

Lucy Posh riots?

Brian stands up. The background changes to show a map of London.

Brian Yes. (*pointing to the map*) It all started in Piccadilly when Fortnum and Mason announced they would no longer be using English Willow in their seasonal hampers. The customers were furious and started tearing the place apart. From there, it then spread rapidly to other areas of the city. There have been reports of looting at Jack Wills in Chelsea, foie gras-related violence at delicatessens in Notting Hill, and in Mayfair riot police were pelted with pâté. Last night the trouble reached Knightsbridge – the knitwear section in Harrods has been completely overrun and the staff at Harvey Nichols have had to barricade themselves in the Tailoring department. South Kensington will surely be next and I cannot put you in that kind of danger. I have therefore arranged for you to leave Imperial College at once.

Lucy But professor, where will I study meteorology if not here?

Brian I am sending you to Reading. The University has an entire department devoted to meteorology, and while the people are a bit strange and unfathomably obsessed with croquet, they do know quite a lot about PV. And most importantly there aren't any posh people!

The phone rings

Brian (*answering*) Hello?

Security guard Professor. It's the rioters. They've breached the building. They're juiced-up on truffles and pimms and they're headed your way now. (*Pauses for a moment*) Uh oh. I think one of them has spotted me. Stay away from me! What are you doing with that Champagne bottle? No! NO! NOOOOOOO!!

There is the sound of a champagne bottle popping and then fizzing. Then the line goes dead.

Brian Hello? Hello?

There is a crashing noise from stage-right – the rioters are outside. Lucy stands up.

Rioter 1 (*in a very posh voice*) I say! Let us in or we'll jolly well break the door down!

Rioter 2 We've got polo mallets and we're not afraid to use them!

Rioter 3 I used to play rugger, you know?

Brian There's no time Lucy, you must go now!

Lucy How? They're blocking the exit!

Brian There's a secret passage – behind my trophy cabinet. Pull the Symons Gold Medal.

Lucy runs behind the desk towards stage-left. She pulls the Symons Gold Medal and the trophy cabinet swings open.

Brian Go! I'll hold them off.

Lucy runs off stage-left. At this point the rioters burst in stage-right. Brian rolls up his sleeves ready to take them on. As he does the music starts.

SONG: I PREDICT A (POSH) RIOT

All exit. Lights down.

Scene 1 – Met dept. coffee room

Narrator Having escaped from the rioters and their insatiable appetite for destruction and high quality organic produce, Lucy arrives at the Department of Meteorology in Reading for her first meeting with the postgraduate student coordinator.

Lucy is sitting on a chair toward the back of the stage looking nervous with an evacuee-style battered suitcase. The background is the coffee room. Christine MacFarlane enters stage-left.

Lucy Excuse me?

Christine Yes? Can I help you?

Lucy I'm here to meet The Professor, do you know when I can find him?

Christine Which Professor? We seem to have so many these days, I can't keep up!

Lucy Professor...erm (*checks notes*)...John Methven.

Christine *Dr* John Methven I think, you'll find. He's very busy I'm afraid, but to be honest you'd be better off talking to me anyway – I pretty much run things when it comes to the PhD students around here. What did you say your name was?

Lucy Lucy Pevensie.

Christine Now where have I heard that name before? Wait a minute! (*pause*) Were you on the X-factor?

Lucy No.

Christine Oh. Never mind. (*checking her notes*). Let's see...Ah yes, Lucy Pevensie. You're the evacuee from London aren't you?

Lucy nods

Christine Well don't you worry, you'll soon settle in here. Let me introduce you to your supervisors.

Robin Hogan, Janet Barlow and Pete Inness enter stage-left. Janet is followed by a small swarm of PhD students, holding relevant props (e.g. things made of lego, wind turbine, lidar, model buildings). They are trying to show her their work but she shoos them away.

Robin (*shaking Lucy's hand*) Hello Lucy, I'm Robin Hogan, but you can call me Edmund.

Janet (*shaking Lucy's hand*) I'm Janet Barlow, but you can call me Susan.

Pete (*shaking Lucy's hand*) I'm Peter Inness, but you can call me...Peter.

Robin Now about your project title...we've got some very promising data from Chilbolton which...

Janet (*interrupting*) No, no, no! My data from London is ACTUALLY much more interesting!

Pete And what about the Madden-Julian Oscillation?!

Bickering and shoving ensues over the title of Lucy's project.

Pete OK, OK. We've discussed your project in a mature and professional way, and we have settled on a title.

Lucy What is it?

Pete The effect of tropical convection...

Janet (*pushing Pete aside*) ...on urban boundary layers...

Robin (*jumping in front*) ...as measured from the World's Largest Fully Steerable Meteorological Radar at Chilbolton! (*jazz hands*)

Lucy That sounds...novel.

Pete It is!

Janet I'm sure you're keen to get started on your background reading...

Janet, Pete and Robin each give Lucy a pile of books so that eventually she is balancing a stack higher than her head. Lucy staggers about under the weight.

Robin Off you go then. Your office is just up the stairs and on the left.

Janet, Pete and Robin exit stage-left. Lucy makes her way carefully towards stage-right. The background changes to show the stairs. Stephen Gill enters stage-right.

Stephen Gill Sorry, you can't come this way.

Lucy Why not?

Stephen Gill We're doing some *crucial* safety work on this staircase. First we have to paint all the railings; then we're going to put glass over the gaps, and weld some very inconspicuous metal plates onto the corners of the railings; then paint the railings AGAIN to cover up the welds.

Lucy Is that really necessary?

Stephen Gill Necessary? Of course it's necessary! Do you know how many people each year are killed or seriously injured in stairway railing gap-related incidents?

Lucy Is it none?

Stephen Gill (*slightly annoyed*) Actually, yes it is. But that's only because of precautions like these!

Lucy looks sceptically at the audience

Stephen Gill The point is, you can't come past, it's far too dangerous.

Lucy OK...So how do I get to my office?

Stephen Gill Go down that corridor, down the fire escape, out the fire door, round the back of the building, through the other fire door, up the stairs and down the corridor.

Lucy Couldn't I just take the lift?

Stephen Gill The lift? Do you know how many people each year are maimed by...

Lucy (*cutting him off*) Alright, bye now!

Lucy staggers past Stephen Gill towards stage-right with her books, fumbles to press the button with her elbow and then waits for the doors to open. When they do (ding noise) she trips through them throwing all the books forward (offstage). Shortly after this Robin comes back on stage-left.

Robin (*to audience*) I almost forgot! I must give Lucy the Chilbolton User's Guide! (*holds up a huge book*). Lucy!

Robin too enters the lift (goes offstage). Janet appears next.

Janet (*following*) And we should really organise our first meeting. I can fit you in... (*flicks through diary*)... nope... nope... how about... no, that's when I'm at my other job, or is it my other, other job? (*ponders for a moment*)... How about January 5th...2013?

Janet exits stage-right. Pete comes on stage-left.

Pete (*To the audience*) I'd better go after them, otherwise those two will completely overload Lucy with work before she's even got to her office (*follows the others into the lift*)

Scene 2 – Outside the Met Dept. / Ross' Office (NARNIA)

The scene opens in NARNIA. The Met Department, covered in snow, is the backdrop. Sheila (a tree) is already on stage at the back. Lucy trips onto the stage from stage-right, dropping her books (continuation of exit from previous scene). As she gets to her feet she looks around baffled.

Lucy This isn't the met lift? Where am I?

Lucy walks around the stage looking around. Mr TunRoss comes on stage-left. He is looking at some papers he is holding and not really looking where he is going. Lucy backs into him while she is looking around and they both jump.

Ross Argh!

Lucy Eeek!

Ross Corr blimey, you scared the living daylight out of me. Who are you?

Lucy I'm Lucy. Where am I? And who are you?

Ross Well, I'm Mr TunRoss. And you're in NARNIA of course.

Lucy NARNIA? What's that? Not Another Really Naff Irrelevant Acronym?

Ross Well yes, that's exactly what it is.

Lucy But, what actually is it?

Ross Sshhhh, sshhhh, it's not safe here. The trees are watching... (*glances around nervously*)

Lucy The trees?

Ross Yes – ITreeMet. They're spies for...

Sheila moves in slightly, listening.

Ross No I can't say here. Come to my office, it's much safer.

Lucy and Ross exit stage-left. Lights go down and the PowerPoint changes to show Ross' office. Ross goes to his desk and starts shuffling around some papers. He takes a seat and gestures Lucy to do the same, talking the whole time...

Ross Yes, yes, do come in. I'm just back from (*sings*) Oooohklahoma. Haha! Very good food out there. Anyway, yes, you're in NARNIA, and I was saying this to our friends in Nyingnyang the other day – in Chinese of course, haha – NARNIA's not a place to be right now. You don't want to be sitting in a rubber dinghy out in the Narnian sea, that's for sure. I've got some charts here actually. So this is the Met Office forecast from midnight last night and what you can see is we've got this continuous cold spell that's been going on for donkeys' years. It's all because of the White Witch you see.

Lucy The White Witch?

Ross Yes. Or "Her Majesty The White Witch" I should say – Ellie Highwood. She loaded the stratosphere up with sulphate particles, you see. She said it was to reduce the impacts of global warming but all she really wanted to do was freeze everything and proclaimed herself ruler of NARNIA. She even froze my brothers, Tun-Giles and Tun-Remi. They used to call us the Three Tuns! Every Friday at 5.30 people from all over NARNIA would come and drink with us. But now it's just me. (*sighs*) It's enough to send one into a *polar low*.

Lucy This White Witch doesn't sound like an ice person!

Ross No indeed! There's *snow love* lost between us, I can tell you! Anyway, yes. So

it's been winter for years now with no Christmas. But I suppose now you're here that can all change, if the prophecy is true that is.

Lucy Prophecy?

Ross Yes indeed. Andrew Charlton-Perez has been predicting for years that a meteorology PhD student and her supervisors will come to NARNIA and end the winter. Something related to stratospheric sudden warmings – it all goes above my head to be honest. That's the stratosphere for you!

Lucy I'm not sure he's really *thawed* that theory through. How can I bring about the end of winter? I've only just started my PhD. I haven't even found my desk yet.

Ross Well it does sound a bit far-fetched. But then I suppose if people can get paid for researching the stratosphere anything is possible!

There is a knock at the door

Ross Oh hang on, that's probably one of my MSc students. Come in!

A student enters stage-left.

Student Hi Mr TunRoss. I was wondering: can I have a reference? I'm applying for a job in Germany you see...

Ross Hmm, I don't know...the going rate's a beer I think? Das bier? Ja?

Student (*laughs slightly awkwardly*) Ha. OK. I'll come back later...

The student exits stage-left.

Lucy Were you asking that student for a bribe?

Ross No! I've never accepted a bribe in my life. (*looks around nervously*)

Lucy So what's all this food on your desk labelled "bribe"? There's a big wedge of cheese, a curry and a selection of savoury turnovers!

Ross starts crying

Lucy What's wrong? Here dry your eyes on this.

Lucy picks up a tephigram from the desk and holds it up for the audience to see – it shows a very dry atmosphere.

Lucy This dry intrusion should soak up those tears. Perfect for when you're suffering with dew-point depression.

Ross blows his nose noisily on the tephigram and hands it back to Lucy. She holds it up again for the audience to see – it now shows a very moist atmosphere.

Lucy (*looking rather disgusted*) Saturated!

Ross It's just that you reminded me: Bath turned London Irish over so much in the last game...

Lucy I thought London Irish won?

Ross Oh yes, that's right...

A pause

Ross No, I can't lie to you. That food is a bribe...from Ellie! She said she'd supply me with a lifetime of free food if I gave her information about anyone who comes to NARNIA from the Department of Meteorology. But I don't want to do that now. I want the prophecy to come true and for it to be summer again. You must find the beavers. They can help you on your quest to defeat Ellie.

Lucy OK, but...

Ross Wait a minute!

Lucy What?

Ross I think I feel a song coming on!

Ross stands up and walks to the front of the stage. Several MSc students come on stage-left and join Ross ready to sing.

SONG: LAST CHRISTMAS

The MSc students exit stage-left. There is another knock at the door.

Lucy More MSc students?

Pete (*shouting from offstage*) Lucy are you in there?

Ross Friends of yours?

Lucy (*standing up*) It's my supervisors! Come in!

Janet and Pete come on stage-left.

Janet There you are, Lucy! What's going on? Where are we?

Lucy In NARNIA apparently!

Pete What's NARNIA? Not Another Really Naff Irrelevant Acronym?

Ross Precisely!

Lucy I'll explain more on the way to the beavers...

Janet Beavers? Where?

Ross (*handing a map to Lucy*) Here take this map; it will show you the way. And each of you take a coat – it's rather nippy outside!

Ross gives each of them a big winter coat and they put them on. Pete's is very girly compared with the other two.

Pete Err, could I maybe swap with one of you?

Janet Why?

Pete Well... Never mind.

Lucy Bye Mr TunRoss. Thanks for everything!

Ross Bye Lucy!

Ross waves as Lucy, Pete and Janet walk towards stage-left.

Lucy (*stopping*) Wait, where's Robin?

Pete You mean Edmund. We thought he would be with you. I wonder where he's got to...

Lucy, Pete and Janet exit stage-left. Lights down.

Scene 3 – Outside Met Dept. / Ross' Office, NARNIA

Narrator So Lucy has been reunited with two of her supervisors. But what has become of that evil bearded looking one. He looks like the sort of character who would betray his friends for a quick promotion. I'm not prejudice

against people with goatee beards – I'm sure there are some very good people in the world with them. I'm just saying I've never met one... Anyway! Meanwhile in the forest...

The scene opens in the forest behind the Met Department. The White Witch, Ellie Highwood, is stood next to her swan sled looking annoyed.

Ellie What's the use of being a white witch and queen of all I survey if my glorious swan sled keeps breaking down every mile. Minion!

No response.

Ellie Minion!... Minion!!... MANOJ!!!

Manoj appears from behind the sleigh. He is tiny.

Manoj What? Can't you see, I'm busy?

Ellie Have you fixed the sled yet?

Manoj I'm doing it...blimey anyone would think that the world was going to end. Or has that been put off for another 6 months now?

Ellie Enough of your lip minion. You do remember who I am don't you? You do remember that I could freeze you at any time with a simple program?

Manoj Yes your majesty, of course your imperial coldness. *(To audience)* It's enough to make you want to run away and go to another university!

Ellie Don't make me hand you over to the England Rugby team again!

Manoj *(To audience)* I was the only thing that they successfully threw and caught all year!

Robin enters stage-right, looking around in confusion.

Robin Where am I? And why is it so cold? It's worse than GU01! *(He spots the sled)* Finally someone to ask!

Robin approaches the sled

Robin Excuse me, can you tell me where I am?

Ellie Do you not know who I am? Are you not scared of me?

Robin Scared of you? Why would I be scared of you?

Ellie I demand that you tell me your name!

Robin I'm Robin...I mean, Edmund Hogan. I'm a Professor in the Meteorology Department at the University of Reading

Ellie Looks shocked.

Ellie The department of Meteorology, did you hear that Manoj.

Manoj Yes. I am stood right next him you know.

Ellie But the prophecy Manoj. He could be the one who ends my reign of terror!

Manoj *(sarcastically)* Well that *would* be terrible, wouldn't it?

Ellie turns back to Edmund and starts to put on the charm

Ellie Well dear child...

Robin I'm 38!

Ellie Well dear...man. You have found yourself in NARNIA.

Robin What's NARNIA? Not Another Really Naff Irrelevant Acronym?

Manoj I've heard worse. *(Coughs)* MATERHORN!

Ellie Tenuous or not, I am the all-powerful and wonderful ruler of this realm.

Robin How come you get to be ruler?

Ellie Because of all the wonderful things I do for my people. Tell me, what do you desire more than anything in the world?

Robin *(Thinks for a second)* Well, right now a nice hot cup of coffee would be good.

Ellie As you wish.

Ellie pulls out a coffee making machine from the sled. She sets it going and there follows a long awkward silence.

Robin Soooo...you come here often?

Manoj Awkward...

The coffee machine finally finishes.

Ellie Well here you are. You know it's a good one. It's a Tassimo.

Passes coffee to Robin who takes a swig.

Robin Ooh, that is good.

Ellie Yes it is. Twenty five pence please.

Edmund scowls and gives some money over

Robin Another thing. Why is it so cold here?

Ellie You do look cold. Would you like a nice coat to keep you warm?

Robin Yes, please.

Ellie Manoj, give the man your coat!

*Manoj grumbles and hands over his coat.
Edmund puts it on – it is too small.*

Ellie Well I can tell you that there's certainly no sinister reason why it's so cold. We've just had a persistent blocking event this winter.

Robin How long has that been going on?

Manoj About 100 years

Ellie *(with a laugh)* Oh Manoj. You are a wit. Cool yourself down *(turns menacing)* before I do it for you.

Manoj Flinches

Ellie Now then, Edmund. Tell me, are you here alone?

Robin No, I'm looking for my PhD student Lucy who came through this way. You haven't seen her have you?

Ellie No, I haven't. But I'll make sure to watch out for her. Are you her only supervisor?

Robin No. There's Janet... I mean Susan Barlow and Peter Inness as well. But I'm definitely the most important supervisor.

Ellie Well I'd love to meet them all. If you do find them make sure that you bring them to me won't you.

Robin What's in it for me?

Ellie As I said before, Edmund, I can do wonderful things for people who help me.

How would you like to be... Head of the Met Department, for example?

Robin *(Thinks about it for a moment)* Well that would give me a chance to put those other sanctimonious supervisors in their place.

Ellie Not only that but you whip those lazy PhD students into shape. My spies have shown me just how little work they all do. Allow me to show you. BLANCHONNET!

Neil Blanchonnet shuffles on from stage-left.

Neil Yes, Mistress?

Ellie Blanchonnet, tell Edmund here what you and the rest of ITreeMet have been up to?

Neil Yes Mistress. Thank you mistress. *(Turns to Robin)* I'm head of ITreeMet. We've got spies in your meteorology department – Oak, Pine and Coconut – and they've been recording everything that goes on in the PhD offices. Then I upload it onto my server.

Robin Your server? So you have computers here?

Neil Computers? No. I have a server. I have someone who serves under me and I load him up with the information. I'll show you. SERVER!

A shambolic server stumbles on from stage-right wearing one massive boot.

Neil Tell them your name server

Server *(in a loud and stupid voice)* Pru-frock!

Neil Very good, Prufrock.

Prufrock Pru-frock!

Neil Settle down, Prufrock. Now show Edmund here your videos.

Prufrock Pru-frock.

Prufrock stumbles over to the projector screen and bangs his head on it. A video starts showing the PhDs doing crazy things in their offices. Several clips in the video stops abruptly and Prufrock falls over.

Neil Oh no. The server's crashed. This server keeps going down.

Neil bends down and takes off Prufrock's massive boot and puts it back on again. Prufrock gets up.

Neil There we go. I've *rebooted* the sever and it seems to be up and running again.

Prufrock Pru-Frock.

Neil Just to let everybody know that Prufrock will be down at 5pm tonight for routine maintenance. Can everyone stop using him before then.

Ellie Enough Blanchonnet you snivelling worm!

Neil Sorry mistress. Did Blanchonnet not do good? Blanchonnet just wants some kindness. Last year, Blanchonnet specifically requested being in this year's pantomime. Blanchonnet is regretting asking now.

Ellie So Edmund. Do we have a deal? Do you think you can be the one to get your department running smoothly again?

Robin Absolutely.

Ellie Now some people may say nasty things about me. They may make up stories about how I have done bad things or are responsible for the cold weather. But you wouldn't believe what they say would you? You and I are friends, aren't we?

Robin Too right we are. *(to audience)* Anybody who offers me power is alright in my book!

Ellie Excellent. Now you go find your student and the other two and I'll see you later.

Robin leaves. Prufrock falls over again.

Neil Oh no! The server's down again...

Lights down.

Scene 4 – Met Dept. Coffee Room, NARNIA

Narrator So, Robin...I mean Edmund, has decided to betray Lucy and turn her and the other supervisors over to the White Witch. I hate to say I told you so, but...I told you so! What an evil beardy git! Anyway, we now re-

join Lucy, Peter and Susan as they search for the beavers...

Scene opens in the Met Dept. Coffee room. The PowerPoint shows a snow-covered version of the coffee room with the JCMM sat round their normal table, frozen. Lucy, Pete and Janet enter stage-left.

Lucy ...and that's everything that Mr TunRoss could tell me. If we find Mr and Mrs Beaver they will tell us more.

Pete Thanks for explaining everything Lucy. It's a good thing we hadn't heard that all already otherwise we could've got quite bored... *(winks at the audience)*

Lucy I did like that Mr TunRoss. I wonder if he keeps up that patter all day long... Hey look! *(gesturing to the frozen JCMM people on the projector)* Those people have been frozen solid! Probably the work of that nasty White Witch. It looks like they were having a coffee break when it happened.

Janet How long do you reckon they've been there?

Pete Years by the look of it. Imagine them just being stuck in that position, day after day year after year...

Lucy Yes, it's strange to think that every time you walked past here they'd be sat there, silently, in that same pose...

There is a long silence broken only by the whistling of the wind. Suddenly there is the sound of sleigh-bells approaching.

Janet Listen. That sounds like sleigh-bells...very appropriate for this season.

Lucy No that can't be right. Mr TunRoss said it was always winter here but never Christmas.

Father Christmas (Anthony Illingworth) comes on stage-right with a bag of presents.

Anthony Ho ho ho!

Janet Are you...Anthony Illingworth?

Anthony Who? No, no, no. I'm Santa Claussius-Claperrrron of course. Ho ho ho!

Lucy But where have you been? It hasn't been Christmas here for years.

Anthony Oh, keeping busy with the usual stuff. Rrrreading about rradarr, rresearching rradarr, wrrriting about rradarr. And, of course, trying to figure out where all the fog has gone. Have you seen it?

All three shake their heads. At this point someone dressed up as fog comes on stage on tip toes around in the background.

Anthony (to the audience) What about you people, have you seen the fog?

Audience It's behind you!

The fog hides as Anthony looks behind him, but then reappears as he turns back to the audience.

Anthony Oh no it isn't!

Audience Oh yes it is!

Pete Errr... So why are you back now?

Anthony Tell me, have you heard about the prrrrrprophecy?

Lucy The one about people from the Met Department coming and ending the reign of the White Witch?

Anthony That's the one.

Lucy Do you think it's about us?

Anthony That would make sense wouldn't it? And it might mean that the White Witch's hold over the weather is weakening?

Janet Yes, perhaps the turbulence caused by us entering NARNIA has disrupted the flow of sulphate aerosol to the stratosphere. I always knew that the boundary layer was important!

Pete Or maybe we caused some eastward propagating Kelvin Waves and westward propagating Rossby waves and changed the Madden Julien Oscillation!

Lucy The what?

Pete The Madden Julien Oscillation. The main source of intra-seasonal variation in tropical weather systems. You must have heard of it.

Lucy looks blank.

Pete (Angry) I can't believe you've not heard of the MJO!

Janet To be honest Peter I hadn't heard of it until you started going on about it when we were looking for Lucy earlier.

Pete sulks.

Lucy I don't suppose that there are any presents in that bag for us, are there?

Anthony Well let's see... Oh, here we are. For Peter I have a powerful weapon that can only be wielded by the most worthy of warriors...

Anthony produces the Golden Mallet from his sack and gives it to Pete.

Pete The Golden Mallet. Wow! That's amazing. I've been trying to get my hands on this for years now. Thank you!

Anthony And for you Susan I have some things that you can use in times of great need...

Anthony produces a portable weather station and a horn from his sack and gives them to Janet.

Janet (sceptically) A horn and a weather station. Errr...thanks.

Anthony And for Lucy I have a magic potion that will help you defeat the White Witch and get through your PhD...

Anthony produces a giant can of red bull and gives it to Lucy.

Lucy Red bull? Thanks, I guess.

Anthony Well I have to go now.

Anthony exits stage-right. In the backdrop the ice is starting to melt.

Lucy Look. The ice is melting. The thaw is coming. Maybe the witch's power is actually waning like Father Christmas said.

Edmund comes on stage-left, looking sneaky.

Robin Lucy. Peter! Janet...I mean, Susan! I found you at last.

Lucy Oh Edmund, there you are. Where have you been? You must have so many questions about this place – let me explain...

Robin It's OK, I've been told all about it by somebody else...somebody wonderful who I want you all to meet. (*Laughs an evil laugh*)

Janet Yes...well I bet you don't know that we've just met Father Christmas and he's given us all presents.

Robin Presents? I like presents? Aww man! (*to audience*) Well, I'm definitely going to shop them in now!

Pete (*looking at the map*) Come on guys I think we need to go this way.

Lucy, Peter, Susan and Edmund walk off stage-left. Andrew Charlton-Perez comes on stage-right.

ACP Yes. Yes. Check it Fools. I am ACP and I am the greatest weather forecaster in the history of the universe. I predicted the thaw would come and it has. BOOM! Expect a big flood soon because all this ice is going to melt. Yes. My skill score is through the roof. My forecast beats persistence hands down. All those other times when persistence beat my forecast can be ignored as anomalies; there was only a couple of thousands of those anyway. People will sing songs of this day in years to come.

In the background snow starts to fall as ACP is talking.

ACP (*Noticing the snow falling*) Oh. It's snowing again. I don't understand why this keeps happening! Surely my forecasts have to be perfect: they're based on the stratosphere!

SONG: HERE IT SNOWS AGAIN

ACP exits stage-right. Lucy, Peter, Susan and Edmund come back on stage-left.

Pete Like I said before: this way.

Lucy (*noticing the falling snow*) Hey look, it's snowing again!

Pete Hmm. I guess that means the White Witch's powers haven't completely gone yet.

Janet No. We need to get to the Beavers soon to see if they know what is going on.

Lucy Yes. It's all getting a bit weird here anyway.

Lucy, Janet, Pete and Robin exit stage-right.

Narrator: So Lucy and her multinominal supervisors continue their epic journey in search of the elusive beavers. Will they find the answers they are looking for? Will they bring an end to this eternal winter? Or, will Edmund turn the others over to the White Witch and become an evil bearded head of department? Will Anthony finally figure out where all the fog has gone? Will this rash I've got ever clear up? Find out the answers to some of these questions after the interval!

END OF ACT 1

Scene 5 – Maarten’s Office, NARNIA

Narrator Welcome back. We hope you are all pleasantly refreshed and ready for more fantastical adventures in the land of NARNIA. When we last saw our heroes, and Robin – or Edmund...whatever – they were searching for Mr and Mrs Beaver who they are hoping will shed more light on the White Witch, the Prophecy, and how they could bring this long winter to an end. Before we re-join our story let us go to a more idyllic part of the forest where Dale Cunningham is being...wooden.

Dale Cunningham (a tree) in standing in the centre of the stage, gently swaying...

Dale Oh it’s a good life as a member of ITreeMet. Rustle a few leaves, spy on a few PhDs, ignore a few requests for tech support. Oh yes it’s a good life!

A student comes on stage-left and speaks to Dale directly.

Student Hi. Can I have some help please. I think my windows need updating – I can’t see outside.

Dale OK I’ll get on that right away.

Dale does nothing. The student stands around expectantly.

Student Hi. Sorry, but I still need my windows looking at...

Dale I’m on it.

Nothing happens

Student Oh Forget it

Student exits stage-left.

Dale Oh yes, it’s a good life!

Maarten Ambaum (Mr Beaver) comes on stage-right carrying a bundle of sticks. He surveys the stage before seeing the tree. He scurries up to it.

Maarten Yum yum!

Dale (*shakes branches*) Get away from me you nasty beaver. Don’t even think about it!

Maarten (*starts gnawing*) Mmmmm...

Dale Stop chewing on me you crazy fool! You’ve far exceeded your *bite* quota!

Sue (*from offstage*) Maarten!!!

Maarten (*stops chewing*) Uh oh.

Sue Gray (Mrs Beaver) comes on stage-right.

Sue What are you doing? You know no one’s buying your book anymore – you don’t need to keep pulping every tree you find!

Dale That’s it I’m *logging* off!

Dale runs off stage-left.

Maarten (*Shouting after Dale*) It was nice *gnawing* you! (*To Sue*) What’s the matter now Sue?

Sue The dam’s got a leak.

Maarten Well don’t tell Julian Assange or the whole world will know!

Sue It’s those natural logs you keep using...you should have got those new base-10 logs!

Maarten Don’t be absurd. You can’t measure changes in entropy with base-10 logs.

Sue Don’t start another argument about entropy – you know you can’t take it back. Just fix that leak!

Maarten OK, OK. I’m on my way.

Maarten and Sue exit stage-right and the lights briefly go down. When they come back on the PowerPoint shows the inside of Maarten’s office.

Maarten I see what you mean; this really is severe *dam-age*.

Sue I thought it was pretty significant too...

Maarten We’ll have no talk about significance in this dam!

Sue I think the problem is the dam is meant to flex a bit under the strain, (*picking up some sticks and flexing them*) but your sticks are too static...

Maarten There’s nothing wrong with my static-sticks! (*Picking up a broken log*) The real trouble is this *dire-log*!

Sue You know, my mother warned me about you. She wanted me to marry that nice Rowan Sutton...but I had to go for the bad boy who was taking on the scientific world and their *t*-tests.

There is a knock at the door.

Maarten It's open – my door is always open.

Lucy, Pete, Janet and Robin enter stage-right.

Sue We should really close that door.

Maarten Alright then, close the dam door!

Sue Maarten, don't swear! We've got company!

Lucy Are you Mr and Mrs Beaver?

Sue Yes we are dear, who might you be?

Lucy I'm Lucy, and these are my supervisors Edmund Hogan, Susan Barlow and Peter Inness. We're from the Department of Meteorology. We were sent to you by Mr TunRoss – he said you might be able to tell us more about what's going on in NARNIA and how we can stop it.

Maarten Well we certainly do know a lot more than Mr TunRoss, don't we dear?

Sue Yes, *significantly* more.

Maarten Don't say significant!

Sue Not in front of the guests dear.

Maarten Sorry. I'll put the dam kettle on.

Sue Maarten, I've told you before, don't swear! (*Gesturing towards the table*) Please, sit down.

The group sit down around the table as Maarten gets tea for everyone.

Lucy What can you tell us about what's going on? Is there anything we can do to make this winter end? ACP seems to think that it'll end soon...

Maarten I wouldn't listen to that clown. We're trapped in the White Witch's evil geoengineering project and Aslan is the only one who can get us out of it.

Janet What's an Aslan?

Robin Maybe, it's 'Another Silly Long Acronym Name' (*looks around clearly pleased with himself*)

Pete Shut up Robin.

Robin looks dejected.

Sue (*shocked*) You've never heard of Aslan? Have you been stuck in some sort of void of normal social interaction?!

Janet Well, actually...

Maarten Aslan is the true ruler of this land. With his flowing shining mane he used to lead us all in our peaceful and happy lives. He was the only person who fought the Evil Witch's rise to power, but he couldn't stand against her and her minions, so he's spent the last century on sabbatical and hidden his old name.

Pete Which was?

Maarten Keith Shine.

Sue It is said that he will return to us when our need is greatest. He has the knowledge to end the Witch's project, but he cannot do it alone. He needs allies.

Lucy We can be his allies! Where is he?

Maarten He's at the atmospheric observatory.

Pete And how do we get there?

Maarten I'll get the dam map...

Sue For the last time Maarten, don't swear!

Maarten fetches a large map and spreads it across the table. The group stand up and lean over the table as Maarten traces out the route. Robin steps towards the edge of the stage and addresses the audience.

Robin Now that I've heard their plans, I'd better go tell the white witch. I can feel that promotion already!

Robin sneaks off stage-right, the rest finish looking at the map and then notice Robin's absence.

Lucy Where's Edmund gone?

Pete I bet he's just gone on a random walk.

Maarten I'm not so sure about that. Tell me, how would you describe this Edmund Hogan?

Lucy Well he does seem a bit sneaky and sly I guess.

Janet I'd go further and say he was downright evil.

Pete Frankly he is the most diabolical person I've ever met.

Maarten I thought so. It's that beard!

Sue The White Witch must have got to him already, he might be telling her our plans...

Maarten There's no time to lose. We must leave immediately to reach Aslan. Are you coming dear?

Sue No Maarten. I need to go pick the kids up from Helen's Day-care. Honestly, it's been on the calendar for ages. Just make sure you're back in time for little Justin's singing contest.

Lucy Is that your son?

Sue Yes, Justin Beaver. He wants to be a singer. Maarten says it will never happen but I told Justin Never Say Never. (*Addressing anyone in the audience who laughs at this*) Shame on you! (*Turning back to the others*) Anyway, have a nice trip everyone. I hope you succeed in defeating the White Witch and put an end to this endless winter.

The group exits stage-right. Lights down.

Scene 6 – The atmospheric observatory (NARNIA)

Narrator So our heroes leave the dam...

Sue (*from off stage*) Don't swear!

Narrator ...in search of Aslan. But that rotter Edmund is stitching them up with the wicked White Witch. Curse him and his evil beard!

Maarten, Lucy, Janet and Pete enter from stage-right.

Lucy We've been walking for ages! Where is this Aslan?

Maarten (*Holding up a stick*) Stop giving me so much stick – he said he'd always be ready to meet me here at the atmospheric observatory.

Janet Look at all these instruments! Wow, is that an A100 Porton Anemometer? Cool!

Janet exits stage-left. Music starts.

Pete Do you guys hear music?

Aslan's minstrel walks on from stage-left and begins singing. When the song gets going Keith Shine walks on looking please with himself. Part way through the music stops so Keith can cough up a hairball.

SONG: HERE COMES ASLAN

Aslan's minstrel exits stage-left.

Lucy Aslan!

Keith That's me. And you must be Lucy.

Lucy Yes, but how did you know that?

Keith Your coming was foretold...

Pete In the prophecy?

Keith Prophecy? No. Mrs Beaver called and told me you were on your way. She also said to tell Maarten that he forgot his dam keys.

Maarten Damn!

Keith ...keys, that's right. Oo, I'm thirsty. Has anyone got a drink?

Maarten (*producing a bowl of milk*) Here you go.

Maarten puts the bowl of milk on the floor and Keith bends down and starts lapping it up.

Maarten Fascinating. Cats are clearly more aware of the fluid dynamics of lapping than dogs. I must go publish these results...

Maarten exits stage-right.

Lucy Aslan, we're here to help you defeat the White Witch and put an end to this winter.

Keith Yes the time has come. I have already assembled my army at the croquet lawn. We will strike immediately!

Suddenly the White Witch enters from stage-right, accompanied by Edmund.

Ellie Not so fast you overgrown moggy!

Lucy Oh no, it's the White Witch! And Edmund – how could you sell us out like that?

Robin I'm Edmund Hogan – I'd sell out my own grandmother if it meant a faster promotion! Hahaha! (*strokes evil beard*)

Ellie Keith Shine, we meet again at last. The circle is now complete: when I left you I was but the learner, now I am the master.

Keith Only a master of evil, Ellie. I am the true leader of Radiation group and you know it. It's time to put your reign of mismanagement to an end.

Ellie Don't make me laugh. You can't take me on. You're past it. You're an anachronism. Outdated! Just like radar.

Robin What was that about radar?

Ellie I said that Shiny is out of date, just like radar. Hahaha!

Robin But... but, radar is beautiful. I love to work under the radar, basking in its rays. I can't work with someone who views the world through such a narrow aperture!

Ellie You would turn your back on *me*? On the power I offer you?

Robin What use is power without radar?

Ellie I find your lack of faith disturbing. Are you saying that you are now betraying me?

Robin As I say, I'm Edmund Hogan and that's how I roll.

Ellie In that case you've signed your own fate. Under article 3, sub-regulation 14c of the department handbook, 'proper management of betrayals', your future is now in my hands.

Keith Don't do this Ellie...

Ellie Look into your heart Keith, you know it to be true.

Robin Can everybody stop quoting Star Wars and tell me what is going on?

Ellie Edmund, you are hereby banished from this land. You will spend the rest of your life at Chilbolten!

Lucy No!

Janet You can't!

Pete I mean I never liked the guy, but I guess that is a bit harsh.

Ellie Hahahahaha!

Robin That doesn't sound so bad. In fact it might be quite nice.

Keith No Ellie. I will not let this happen. Edmund may be a two-faced, back-stabbing beardy so-and-so, but no one deserves to spend eternity at Chilbolten.

Robin Really, Keith, I wouldn't mind it...

Keith (*ignoring Robin completely*) Punish me instead Ellie!

Robin Seriously, I want to go – don't take this away from me!

Ellie Very well Keith. I banish you from this realm. You... are...RETIRED!

Keith You realise, if you fire me now, I shall become more powerful than you could possibly imagine.

Ellie Not without your mighty main!

Ellie pulls out an electric razor and holds it up menacingly.

Lucy No!!!

Keith It's OK Lucy. You must be brave now.

Robin Seriously, why don't you just let me go to Chilbolton?!

Ellie leads Keith off stage-right to big "Awwwws". There is the sound of razor and Ellie cackling as big chunks of hair fly out from the side of the stage. When she is done Ellie comes back onstage with bits of hair on her.

Ellie There we go: much better. Come and show your friends Keith.

Keith slouches back on stage sorrowfully. His hair is now in some crazy style. Lucy, Pete and Janet gasp in horror.

Ellie Hahahahaha! Now leave, and never return!

Lucy Aslan no!

Aslan slouches off stage-right. Aslan's Minstrel enters from stage-left and begins to sing sorrowfully.

SONG: AIN'T NO ASLAN

Ellie Well, that's the *mane* source of my problems dealt with. As for the rest of you, you shall have your battle, and you shall lose. I am going to get my minions. We will meet where all great battles are held: on the croquet lawn.

Ellie exits stage-right.

Janet What are we going to do? We can't possibly defeat the White Witch without Aslan!

Lucy Yes we can! In the few minutes that I've known Aslan he's given me such a belief in myself that now I feel that I can accomplish anything.

Maarten sticks his head back on stage holding his book.

Maarten Even atmospheric physics?

Lucy OK, almost anything. Come on you guys! Let's go to the croquet lawn, gather Aslan's army and finish this!

Pete Yeah. Yeah! You're right Lucy. After all, I still have the Golden Mallet.

Janet And I have the horn!

Lucy That's the spirit! What about you Edmund? Are you with us or against us?

Robin To be honest I don't even know what side I'm on. Based on typical pantomime narratives I reckon you guys will win, so I guess I'm with you.

Lucy Then let's go!

All exit stage-left.

Scene 7 – Croquet Lawn, NARNIA

Narrator So, Lucy and the others make their way to the croquet lawn to join Aslan's army and battle the White Witch and her minions for NARNIA's future. How exciting!

Scene opens at the croquet lawn. Tim Woolings, Bob Plant and Dan Kirshbaum are there, decked out in 'battle' gear. Lucy, Janet, Pete and Robin enter from stage-left.

Tim Greetings, future Kings and Queens of whom the prophecies foretold! We are Aslan's vast and mighty army.

Lucy Um...army?

Tim (*gesturing to Dan Kirshbaum*) Behold! This is Dan Kirshbaum, wielder of a wit as dry as the stratosphere.

Dan Hey.

Tim And this is Bob Plant, the beast with the strength of a hundred men!

Bob (*with a nervous laugh*) Hi.

Tim And behold! Me! I am Tim Woolings, Aslan's loyal and unquestioning yes-man. I'm the Adam Wheritty to his Liam Fox!

Pete We were rather hoping there would be more of you, but I guess we'll have to make do.

Tim (*while Pete is talking*) Yep. Yep. Yep. Mhm. Yep yep.

Pete and Tim look at each other. Pete is clearly annoyed by Tim's non-stop 'yep-ing' but attempts to continue.

Pete I guess we still make quite a fearsome bunch. Now...

Tim (*while Pete is talking*) Yep yep yep. Mhm. Yep.

Pete (*frustrated*) Blocking is really boring isn't it?

Tim Yep yep yep – oh wait. NO! No it isn't!

Lucy Do you really think we can win this battle?

Tim Yep.

Janet Anything more to add?

Tim Yep. *(long pause)* Oh right, well this PV, or 'potential victory' chart shows that conditions are perfect for us winning.

A PV chart on screen with the title: 'last week's chart'. This is then overlain with Charlie Sheen's face with the word Winning underneath.

Lucy I guess that makes sense. Let's get ready for battle.

The 'goodies' exit stage-left. The 'baddies' then enter stage-right. There is Ellie, Manoj, Jon Wereshonk, Rob Thompson, accompanied by his two children who are both considerably taller than him, and Valerio. The minions line up in front of Ellie – from left to right: Manoj, Valerio, Rob Thompson (with kids), and Jon.

Ellie Ah, my followers are assembled!

Ellie walks along the line inspecting the troops. As she names each one she prods them.

Ellie Manoj...

Manoj Hey, watch it!

Ellie Valerio...

Valerio Mamma mia!

Ellie Rob Thompson...wait. Have you brought your children to this battle?!

Rob Well, they've got so used to running around the Department I can't really help it.

Ellie Right...anyway...and finally, my most fearsome, terrifying and moving-like-Jagger-some minion, Jon Wereshonk!

Ellie prods Jon Wereshonk a couple of times but he does not react. Ellie switches to a feather duster and tickles him. Jon breaks down into a fit of giggles.

Ellie *(noticing the PV chart)* That's last week's chart! Let's get this up to date.

Ellie waves her wand at the screen and the PV chart changes to 'this week's chart', showing a prediction of the baddies winning.

Jon Oh, look, it's time for a coffee break. The Shonkettes are waiting!

Jon dashes offstage.

Ellie Well perhaps we'll have time for a quick coffee break before the battle. Round 1 is a LIDAR battle. Tiny Thompson, you're up first.

The others exit stage-right, leaving Rob Thompson who picks up his LIDAR which is actually just a cricket bat with 'LIDAR' written on it. The PowerPoint shows the names of the combatants and the name of contest 'Lidar battle' in Tekken style. Robin comes back on from stage-left carrying a giant comedy 'LIDAR'.

Narrator *(in Tekken style)* Round 1: fight!

PowerPoint now shows ACP's swing-o-meter: ACP's face with a big swinging arrow indicating which side is winning.

Robin Prepare to feel the power of my LIDAR!

Rob Prepare to feel the power of my LIDAR!

Both brandish their LIDARs. There is an anticlimactic pause.

Rob *(confused, inspecting his LIDAR)* Hmm, it's not working.

Robin That's because it's a cricket bat.

Rob I see... well this is just as good at observing the boundary layer!

Robin Prepare to meet your doom!

Nothing happens.

Robin Damn! LIDARs really are useless.

Rob Haha!

Robin Eek!

Rob runs at Robin with his cricket bat and chases Robin off stage-left. ACP's swing-o-meter swings slightly towards the baddies.

Narrator First round to the Witch's minions! The next round is a dance contest.

Enter Jon Wereshonk (right) and Bob Plant (left). Bob Plant is carrying a boom-box.

Narrator Round 2: fight!

Bob Plant showcases his breakdancing skills.

Bob Beat that, Shonk!

Jon That's nothing, Robert. Observe!

Wereshonk unleashes his ballroom brilliance using Bob Plant as his dance partner. Shonk sets him up for a big spin and spins him off stage.

Jon Boom!

The swing-o-meter swings slightly more towards the baddies. Jon leaves.

Narrator Things aren't looking good for the good guys! The next round is an equation off.

Enter Valerio and Dan.

Narrator Round 3: fight!

Dan What is the equation for the first law of thermodynamics?

Valerio Easy peasy! $q = c_v \frac{dT}{dt} + p \frac{d\alpha}{dt}$.

Correct 'ding' noise from Family Fortunes.

Valerio What is the vector form of the momentum equation?

Dan $\frac{dv}{dt} = -2\Omega \times \mathbf{v} - \frac{1}{\rho} \nabla p + \mathbf{g} + \mathbf{F}$.

Ding.

Dan Ha! Now, tell me the equation for equivalent potential temperature!

Valerio (*yawns*) $\theta_e = T \left(\frac{p_0}{p_d} \right)^{R_d / (c_{pd} + r_t c_l)} \times \exp \left[\frac{l_v r_v}{(c_p + r_t c_l) T} \right]$.

Ding.

Valerio Tell me Einstein's energy-mass equivalence equation, for whatever the speed of light is nowadays.

Dan Err... err. E=mc hammer?

Incorrect 'eh-eh' noise from Family Fortunes.

Dan Damn!

Narrator If Valerio gets this equation victory is his!

Valerio's phone rings. He answers and has a conversation while Dan stands around awkwardly.

Valerio Hello? Ah, Ciao Berlusconi, come stai? Sì, sì! (*puts the phone down*)... Oh Berli, you're-a so crazy with your money! Silvio Berlusconi has just invited me to a party in Sardinia. I guess he wants to celebrate my research. Arrivederci departamento!

Valerio exits stage-left. Dan is left looking awkward. He makes a ringing noise as if his phone is ringing.

Dan Oh, what d'ya know, my phone is ringing now. I'll just answer it. (*Answers phone*) Oh hello, people from Montreal. So good hear that you're interested in what I do. Yes I'd love to come and work in Canada. OK. Au revoir to you too. (*puts phone down*). I guess I'd better get going. Bye guys.

The other goodies (*dismissively, from offstage*) Yeah, bye Dan.

Dan trudges off stage-right dejectedly.

Narrator Now it's time for the next round which will be a conker contest.

Enter Manoj (right) and Tim (left), carrying conkers. Manoj's conker is much bigger than Tim's.

Narrator Round 4: fight!

Tim You've got a big conker for such a small man. Yep.

Manoj Yep. Yep. Yep.

Tim Are you mocking me?

Manoj Yep.

Tim Stop it!

Manoj Yep.

Tim I've had it with you!

The two begin a comedy conker battle. Manoj is victorious.

Manoj Didn't block that did you Tim?

Tim Nope. Nope. Nope.

Tim crawls off stage-left. The swing-o-meter sings further towards the bad guys.

Narrator The White Witch's minions are storming to victory! Now for an epic game of croquet.

Rob's children and Pete come on. Pete is proudly carrying the Golden Mallet.

Narrator Round 5: fight!

Pete hits a perfect first shot.

Pete Ha! Beat that kiddies!

The kids look at each other, then one hits Pete in the shins with their mallet.

Pete Ow!!

Pete hops off stage-right. Rob Thompson's kids high five and exit stage-right. The swing-o-meters swings further towards the bad guys. Lucy and Janet come on stage-left.

Lucy Things aren't looking good for us.

Janet It's OK, I've got the horn!

Susan blows her horn. Ben Miller comes on from stage-left, riding Daisy.

Lucy Oh my God, it's Ben Miller!

Ben Miller (To Janet) I hear you've got the horn. Perhaps I can help.

Janet giggles.

Ben Miller So...are you going to show me your weather station?

Ben whisks Susan off stage-right. Ellie comes back on stage-right accompanied by Manoj, Rob Thompson + kids, and Jon Shonk.

Ellie Looks like it's over for you! My minions have defeated your friends and now I will defeat you.

Lucy Oh no, now we have no hope!

Keith runs on from stage-left. His hair is back to normal.

Lucy Aslan! But you were retired!

Keith Ha! Academic retirements are meaningless. Just look at Anthony!

Lucy But your hair, it's back.

Keith holds up a large bottle labelled 'Loreal miracle fro-regrow'.

Keith Because I'm worth it. (*swings his hair dramatically*) Now to deal with these miscreants.

Keith chases the White Witch's followers off with lots of camp roaring.

Ellie You may scare my cowardly minions but you don't scare me! I'm solid as ice, bitter as winter, and biting as an Arctic blast! I AM INVINCIBLE!

It looks as though Aslan and the Witch are about to have an epic battle. Suddenly the UARS satellite lands on the Witch and squashes her. Pete runs on from stage-right and Robin from stage-left.

Pete Oh my god! What happened?

Lucy Aslan's saved us!

Keith You know you can always *re-lion* me! (*claw hand gesture*)

Robin Wait, he didn't defeat the White Witch; that satellite landed on her!

Keith No, it was me!

Robin It was not! It was UARS, not you, arse!

Lucy It doesn't matter. The important thing is we won! And now winter can finally end.

In the background the PowerPoint changes so that the snow is gone and the swing-o-meter swings fully over to the goodies.

Lucy So what now Aslan?

Keith Now we can return NARNIA to its former glory and I will lead us all in the greatest era of meteorological research the world has ever...

Suddenly a ball of string rolls across the stage, from left to right.

Keith Ooooo! String! Hehe!

Keith chases the string off stage-right giggling.

Lucy Aslan wait!

Janet and Ben Miller come back on stage with tussled hair and clothes on back-to-front.

Janet Did we miss anything?

Lights down.

Narrator And so the White Witch's evil geoengineering plans were foiled. NARNIA returned to a balmy 13 degrees and there were barbecues for all. In the spring, there was a royal wedding for Susan and Ben Miller, with coffee-break parties held all over the land. In the JCMM the celebrations went on for weeks. Robin shaved his beard off and instantly became a much better person. He, Peter, and Susan supervised Lucy over a long and successful research career. And as for Aslan? He had a nice bowl of milk and a snooze in front of the fire.

Scene 8 – Outside the Met lift

Narrator: Forty years later, Lucy, Peter, Edmund and Susan are senior members of Department. They have grown old, wise and famous. Here they are coming out of WCD.

Enter Lucy, Pete, Robin and Janet from stage-left. They are a lot older and look it! (walking sticks, beards etc.)

Pete Ugh, I don't think I can take another word about Mike's weekly spreadsheet!

Janet You'd think by now Anthony would have figured out where the fog has gone.

Lucy Well, we've had our WCD nap so I suppose it's time to get back to work.

Janet My knees aren't what they once were. Let's take the lift.

The four exit stage-right (enter the lift). Lights down. When the lights come back on and they step back onto stage, they are back in the normal Met Department and are young again. Robin also has his beard back. They all look confused.

Lucy Oh my goodness. I think we're back in the real Meteorology Department!

John Methven comes on from stage-left.

John Oh hello there!

Lucy Er, hello.

John You must be Lucy, our new PhD student. Christine has just told me that you were looking for me – I'm Dr John Methven, but you can call me The Professor.

Lucy shakes John's hand clearly still in shock about being back.

John So, I see the lift's working. Madness!

Lucy Yes, and there's a whole parallel Met Department in there. Everyone's some kind of animal! There was a faun called Mr TunRoss and a couple of argumentative beavers, and giants, and the Department was under the control of an evil white witch who was holding it in perpetual winter using her geoengineering powers. We fought her on the croquet lawn and Aslan, the greatest meteorologist there ever was, helped us defeat her. We've been living there for 40 years!

John Oh, right. Yes, well I've had quite a busy day myself...I've been assigning PhD demonstrators.

Lucy looks incredulous at John's total lack of surprise at what she's just said.

Lucy Why aren't you more surprised by this? Do you not think it sounds totally crazy? Hey, wait a minute. You know about this already don't you? You've been to NARNIA yourself and met Aslan and everything! Haven't you?

There is a pause.

John Sorry, what were you saying? I was miles away?

Lucy Oh, never mind.

John Well, I must be off. I'm going to London. Brian Hoskins is being knighted – again – for single-handedly stopping the rioters. I'm not too fussed about the ceremony but apparently there's a free buffet afterwards. See you later!

John exits stage-left and Lucy looks dejected.

Lucy Now what?

Janet Well, I'm going to get my weather station and find Ben Miller!

Janet leaves.

Pete And I'm going to try and win the Golden Mallet for real!

Pete leaves.

Robin And I'm going to get back to what I do best: being the department's evil bearded radar genius. Hahaha! (*To Lucy*) And you should get on with your PhD. Come on, chop chop!

Robin leaves. Lucy exits and the lights briefly go down. The PowerPoint changes to show the inside of a PhD office and the lights come back up. Lucy walks back onstage and goes and sits at her desk.

Lucy Well, at least I've still got my can of Red Bull. (*she takes a big swig and starts typing at her computer*)

Lucy Aww, dammit! Prufrock's down again!

Prufrock (*from offstage*) Pru-frock!

Everyone who's not in the band comes back onstage ready for the final song.

SONG: NARNIA

END OF ACT 2