A Wrinkle in Time

Adapted by John Glore

From the book by Madeleine L’Engle

A Wrinkle In Time ©1962 Madeleine L’Engle
Cast

Six actors play:

Meg

Actor 1: Charles Wallace, Ensemble
Actor 2: Mother, Mrs. Who, Camazotz Woman, Aunt Beast, Ensemble
Actor 3: Mrs. Whatsit, Man With Red Eyes, Ensemble
Actor 4: Calvin, Ensemble
Actor 5: Father, Mrs. Which, Camazotz Man, Ensemble

Ideally Mrs. Which’s dialogue will be electronically altered to create the vibratory effect indicated in the script. If not, then it’s probably best for the actor not to try to render the vibration in a literal way: just go for something slightly strange and full of authority.

IT’s voice may be pre-recorded; or, to create the sense that IT’s mind contains multitudes, IT’s dialogue could be voiced in unison by Actors 2 & 3 (live, but electronically altered, if possible).

A note about staging: The play should be approached as an event that actively engages the audience’s imagination to fill in the details. Very little in the play should be realized in a fully literal way. So, for example, Mrs. Whatsit’s transformation to the winged-horse creature, which the movies would render by means of an amazing CGI effect, needs more of a theatrical-make-believe approach here. Maybe puppets/dolls. Maybe nothing more than the narration accompanied by skillful movement work. Projections may be useful. But low-tech solutions can be just as effective.
Darkness. A roll of distant thunder. Then another. Beat. Then a sudden LOUD thunderclap, and at the same time, in lieu of lightning, a large word flashes brightly.

**IT**

The word flickers, then fades away and we're back in darkness. Then, with another loud thunder clap, a second word appears:

**dark**

Then a third:

**night**

Perhaps one or more of these words flashes again, like lightning -- but the last word in the sequence is a return to **IT**

A moment of darkness. Then an entire sentence materializes:

**It was a dark and stormy night.**

The sentence flickers and fades. Lights up on an attic, where Meg Murry sits huddled in her bed. In another area, Actor 1 sits at a kitchen table. The rest of the cast is also present, but separate.

**ACTOR 3**

It was a dark and stormy night.
ACTOR 1
In her attic bedroom Margaret Murry, wrapped in an old patchwork quilt, sat at the foot of her bed, wide awake.

ACTOR 2
Meg trembled as she watched the clouds scuttle frantically across the sky.

ACTOR 4
She wasn’t usually afraid of the weather.

MEG
It isn’t just the weather. It’s the weather on top of everything else. My life is falling apart -- (a shutter bangs loudly) -- and now the house is going to fall apart too. Which is perfect.

ACTOR 5
As the wind rattled the windows, Meg Murry composed a letter in her head.

*Actor 5 seems to listen to the letter.*

MEG
Dear Dad. They say a hurricane is coming. If you were here you’d tell me not to worry, but you’re not here. So I’m worried. I wonder what the weather’s like where you are. I wonder where you are. I wonder if you’re even . . . Today was another crummy day, just like every day since you left. I got a D on my English test and the teacher said --

ACTOR 3
“Really Meg, how can you be such a poor student with such brilliant parents?”

MEG
And then I ran into that horrible Tommy Henderson on the way home from school and he made a crack about Charles Wallace --

ACTOR 4
“What’s wrong with your little brother? Why’s he so stupid, anyway?”

MEG
Which is why I had to give him a black eye, the big creep. And now I’m stuck in my bedroom on a dark and stormy night, and I’m all alone, and I . . . I miss you, Daddy.

ACTOR 5
I miss you too.
MEG
Please come home. Yours, truly -- (loud storm noises) Aggh! How can everyone else be sleeping in this storm? Why isn’t Charles Wallace up here keeping me company? He always seems to know when I’m awake and unhappy, so why --

(A loud crack of thunder causes Meg to jump out of bed.)

Okay, that’s it!

Meg jumps out of bed and makes her way downstairs. She hears a loud noise, followed by the bark of a dog.

ACTOR 3
The noise from outside reminded Meg of something she’d heard at school that morning.

MEG
Some tramp stole twelve sheets from Mrs. Buncombe’s clothesline. What if that tramp is out there? And what if he has a knife? We live so far away from everybody no one would ever hear us scream.

ACTOR 3
Meg forced herself to think of something else.

MEG
Cocoa. I’ll make myself some cocoa. That’ll cheer me up.

Lights shift as Meg walks to the table where Actor 1 sits.

ACTOR 1
But when she got to the kitchen, the light was already on, and her little brother was sitting at the table. (as Charles:) Hi. I’ve been waiting for you.

MEG
Charles Wallace, why didn’t you come up to the attic? I was scared stiff.

CHARLES WALLACE
I knew you’d come down. I made you some cocoa.

(reading Meg’s puzzled look)
You’re wondering how I always know what you’re thinking.

MEG
It’s weird the way you read my mind.
CHARLES WALLACE
I don’t, really. More like I read your feelings. I can’t explain it.

MEG
I just wish . . .

CHARLES WALLACE
You wish I’d act more like a normal kid brother.

MEG
No! Well, yes. You know -- people say things about you.

ACTOR 5
“That little boy just isn’t right. He never talks.”

CHARLES WALLACE
It’s true. I don’t talk much when other people are around.

ACTOR 5
“And the girl -- well . . . Those children just aren’t normal.”

MEG
But it makes me mad when people feel sorry for us -- for you, I mean.

CHARLES WALLACE
Don’t worry about me. Drink your cocoa before it gets cold.

MEG
Why’d you make two cups?

CHARLES WALLACE
I thought Mother might like some.

Wrapping herself in a robe, Actor 2 steps into the kitchen.

MOTHER
Might like some what?

CHARLES WALLACE
Cocoa. I made you a liverwurst and cream cheese sandwich to go with it.

MOTHER
Perfect.
I made you a sandwich too, Meg.

You know I don’t like liverwurst.

It’s ham.

With -- ?

-- swiss --

-- and -- ?

-- tomato.

Meg shakes her head as Charles Wallace hands her the sandwich.

MOTHER
Why are you worried about Charles Wallace, Meg?

MEG
Because he’s weird. I mean, you know -- people think he’s weird. Or stupid, or . . .

MOTHER
They recognize he’s special. That confuses some people.

MEG
(running fingers through her unkempt hair)
What confuses them is how you can be so smart and beautiful and your kids are just repulsive-looking oddballs.

CHARLES WALLACE
Speak for yourself.

MOTHER
You are neither odd nor repulsive, Meg. But you can be impulsive. I got a call from the mother of that little boy whose eye you blackened this afternoon.
MEG
Little boy? Tommy Henderson is twice my size, Mom.

MOTHER
Well his mother insisted the fight was your fault.

MEG
It’s always my fault.

MOTHER
Meg. I know this is a confusing time for you. And I know it’s hard not to have your father here to say the right thing and make everything better. But he and I both love you with all our hearts. You know that, right? (Meg remains silent.) And I for one wouldn’t change a thing about you. You’re going to grow up to be an extraordinary young woman, Meg Murry. Megaparsec.

MEG
(glum)
Nobody calls me that any more.

MOTHER
How’s the rest of it go, that little routine you and Dad used to have?

MEG
I don’t remember.

CHARLES WALLACE
I think I’ll talk to Mrs. Whatsit about you, Meg.

MEG
Who’s Mrs. Whatsit?

CHARLES WALLACE
Just someone I met the other day.

MOTHER
Her name is Mrs. Whatsit?

CHARLES WALLACE
You know the old shingled house back in the woods, the one all the kids say is haunted? That’s where they live.

MOTHER
They?
CHARLES WALLACE
Mrs. Whatsit and her two friends. I was out walking Fortinbras and he just took off, headed straight for the haunted house. It was like he wanted me to follow him, and when I got there they were waiting for me.

MEG
Nobody lives in that house.

CHARLES WALLACE
Mrs. Whatsit and her friends do. They told me I’m a special child and they have a special job for me, but when I asked them what it was --

(Wind, rattling windows. Sound of a dog growling, barking.)

What’s he barking at?

MOTHER
And why is he in my lab?

MEG
It’s the tramp. It’s the tramp, and he has a knife.

CHARLES WALLACE
What are you talking about?

MEG
A tramp stole Mrs. Buncombe’s sheets yesterday.

MOTHER
Well not even a tramp would be out on a night like this. I’ll go see what’s upsetting Fort.

MEG
I’ll go with you.

MOTHER
Just stay here and eat your sandwich.

Meg lets out an exasperated groan as Mother exits into shadows, where Actor 3 has been listening.

CHARLES WALLACE
Don’t worry, Mother can take care of herself. Physically anyway.
Actor 3 moves forward, out of the shadows -- wearing a ratty overcoat and multiple layers of ragged clothes, with scarves of various colors tied around the head, a man’s hat perched on top, and rubber boots. Seeing the intruder, Meg jumps up with a shriek. Charles Wallace knows who it is without looking.

CHARLES WALLACE
Mrs. Whatsit, what are you doing here? It’s the middle of the night.

MRS. WHATSIT (3)
And what a night it is!

MOTHER
(apparing behind Mrs. Whatsit)
She says she lost her way. Would you like some hot chocolate, Mrs. Whatsit?

MRS. WHATSIT
Lovely. (beginning to unwrap herself) Wild nights are my glory, don’t you know, but I got caught in a wicked downdraft and blown off course. And when I realized I was at little Charles Wallace’s house I thought I’d come in and rest a bit before proceeding.

MEG
How did you know this was Charles Wallace’s house?

MRS. WHATSIT
By the smell. My, but it’s lovely and warm in here.

MOTHER
Are you hungry? Charles could make you a --

MRS. WHATSIT
I’m passionately fond of Russian caviar -- there’s some in the cupboard.

CHARLES WALLACE
We’re saving that for Mother’s birthday!

(Mrs. Whatsit gives a deep, pathetic sigh.)
No! You may have a cheese sandwich.

MRS. WHATSIT
(meekly)
All right.
MEG

I’ll get it. (to herself, as she slaps together the sandwich:) For crying out loud, this crazy lady comes barging in, in the middle of the night, and everyone acts like there’s nothing unusual about it. I bet she is the tramp. I bet she stole those sheets.

CHARLES WALLACE

Mrs. Whatsit, why did you take Mrs. Buncombe’s sheets?

Meg coolly hands sandwich to Mrs. Whatsit.

MRS WHATSIT

Well I needed them, Charles dear. Now tell your sister that my intentions are good.

CHARLES WALLACE

The road to hell is paved with good intentions.

MRS. WHATSIT

(beaming)

My, but isn’t he cunning. It’s lucky he has someone who understands him.

MOTHER

We don’t, really. None of us is quite up to Charles.

MRS. WHATSIT

(using the sandwich to punctuate her pronouncement)

Yes, but at least you’re not trying to straighten him out, make him “normal.” You’re letting him be himself. Now would you mind if I take off my boot? Listen. (squish) I sprang a leak.

MOTHER

Let me help you.

Mother yanks on the boot, which comes off suddenly, causing her to sit down with a thump, while Mrs. Whatsit goes tumbling backward with the chair, onto the floor, her sandwich held high.

MOTHER

Are you all right?

MRS. WHATSIT

The sandwich is intact, but I think I’ve sprained my dignity.

She begins munching on her sandwich while still flat on her back.

Mother pours water out of the boot.
CHARLES WALLACE

Please get up. You look ridiculous.

MRS. WHATSIT

That’s what comes of a sprained dignity. Now then, my boot is empty, my tummy is full, I’m warm inside and out, and I think it’s time I go home.

MOTHER

Don’t you think you should stay here till morning?

MRS. WHATSIT

Thank you, but there’s so much to do, no time to sit around frivoling. I’ll just pop my boot back on and be on my way. *(Taking a big bite of sandwich, then speaking with her mouth full.)* By the way, lamb, there is such a thing as a tesseract.

*Distant thunder.*

MOTHER

What did you say?!

MRS. WHATSIT

*(tugging on her boot)*

I said *(grunt)* there is *(ooph)* such a thing *(grunt)* as a tesseract. *(Throwing her overcoat back on and tucking the sandwich in a pocket;)* Thank you so much for the sandwich. Toodles.

*She’s gone before anyone can say anything.*

MEG

Mom? What’s wrong? What did she say?

MOTHER

How could she know about the tesseract?

*Thunder. Lights shift.*

ACTOR 5

The next day, the skies cleared, but all through school Meg’s mind stormed with questions. Who was Mrs. Whatsit --

MEG

-- and why did she come to our house in the middle of the night?
ACTOR 5

What was a tesseract --

MEG

-- and what does it have to do with my mother?

ACTOR 5

Meg was so distracted her teacher sent her to the principal’s office, but Principal Jenkins only made things worse. *(As Principal:) “Meg, what’s troubling you? Are you unhappy at home? I know it must be hard to lose your -- well, to have your father be gone all this time. But you need to move on now.”*

MEG

Thanks, I’ll keep that in mind.

ACTOR 5

When Meg got home from school, Charles Wallace was waiting for her.

CHARLES WALLACE

Come on. Let’s go.

MEG

*(in a mood)*

Go where? I’m hungry.

CHARLES WALLACE

Here’s a pickle. We have to go see Mrs. Whatsit.

MEG

*Why* do we have to go see Mrs. Whatsit?

CHARLES WALLACE

You know why.

MEG

No, I don’t!

CHARLES WALLACE

Mother got very upset when Mrs. Whatsit mentioned tesseracts.

MEG

She wouldn’t even talk about it this morning.
CHARLES WALLACE
Which is why we need to talk to Mrs. Whatsit.

MEG
Fine. But if she chops me up and bakes me into a pie, you’re in big trouble.

CHARLES WALLACE
She won’t.

They walk in silence for a while. Then, out of the blue:

CHARLES WALLACE
Two years, three months, eleven days.

MEG
What’s that supposed to mean?

CHARLES WALLACE
Last night, when Mother said she loved you, you didn’t say “love you back.”

MEG
So?

CHARLES WALLACE
So that makes two years, three months and eleven days since the last time you told her you love her. Ever since Father left.

MEG
You are so weird sometimes.

CHARLES WALLACE
As you keep reminding me.

MEG
She knows I -- she knows how I --

CHARLES WALLACE
Stop. (nodding toward someone standing in the shadows) Is that the kid you had the fight with?

MEG
No.

CHARLES WALLACE
Then who is it, and why does he look like he’s waiting for us?
MEG
I think his name is Calvin. He’s two years ahead of me at school. He’s a big bug.

CALVIN (4)
*(stepping out of the shadows)*
Hey. You’re the Murry kids, right?

CHARLES WALLACE
*(aggressively)*
What are you doing here?

CALVIN
Nice to meet you, too. You must be the dumb little brother.

*Meg starts to go at him, but Charles Wallace holds her back.*

CHARLES WALLACE
The last guy who called me that got my sister’s fist in his face. Now answer my question.

CALVIN
Take it easy. I just wanted to get away from my family. They all have colds, and lemme tell you, ten kids with snot coming out their noses? -- not fun.

CHARLES WALLACE
That wasn’t my question. Why are you here?

CALVIN
Why are you here?

CHARLES WALLACE
You go first.

CALVIN
You go first.

MEG
Look, just tell him what he wants, or he’ll never stop bugging you.

CALVIN
*(after a beat)*
Okay. I get a feeling sometimes. Like a compulsion. You know what that means?
CHARLES WALLACE

“Urge. Constraint. An irresistible impulse to act.” Not the best definition, but it’s from my compact dictionary. I’m hoping to get the unabridged for my birthday.

CALVIN

Okay, you ... are not dumb.

MEG

No kidding.

CHARLES WALLACE

I don’t want the other kids to hate me for being a big brain. So I let them think I’m slow.

CALVIN

Huh. Same here. Anyway, like I said, I had this feeling. It doesn’t happen often, but when it does I always follow it. And today I had a feeling I should go over to the old haunted house.

CHARLES WALLACE

That’s where we’re going.

CALVIN

So maybe we were supposed to meet up. You tell me.

(Charles Wallace looks at Calvin probingly. His eyes glaze.)

What’s he doing?

MEG

Charles Wallace? Hey!

CHARLES WALLACE

(after a beat, coming out of it)

Okay. I believe you.

CALVIN

Oh, good, I passed the creepy-weirdo xray-eyes test.

CHARLES WALLACE

After the haunted house you’re coming over to our house for dinner.

CALVIN

Uh. Okay. Don’t you think you should ask your mom first?

CHARLES WALLACE

She won’t mind.
CALVIN
Well maybe Meg would mind. *(Meg looks at him oddly.)* What?

CHARLES WALLACE
She’s wondering how you knew her name. Meg isn’t really one of us, like you and I, but she’s part of this.

MEG
What do you mean, “one of us”? You and him are a team now?

CHARLES WALLACE
I’ll explain later, Meg. Right now we’ve got to talk to Mrs. Whatsit.

Charles Wallace and Calvin start walking.

MEG
Wait! What am I part of? Charles Wallace!

ACTOR 3
When they arrived at the haunted house, it was cloaked in the shadows of the elm trees that stood all around it.

*A crow lets out a raucous “Caw!” from a low-hanging branch. A rat scuttles around a corner of the house. A window shutter bangs. As the three kids approach the front door it creaks open by itself.*

CHARLES WALLACE
They have fun with all the haunted house props. Come on.

*They walk slowly into the house, looking around carefully. Suddenly, a ghostlike figure draped in white pops out and shouts:*

GHOST
Boo!

Meg and Calvin recoil but Charles Wallace reacts with a frown.

CHARLES WALLACE
Hello, Mrs. Who.

*He pulls the white sheet off to reveal a plump little woman with a beaming face and over-sized glasses.*
MRS. WHO

*Cor Caroli!* You’re no fun at all!

CHARLES WALLACE

You stole sheets so you could play ghost?

MRS. WHO

How else are we to frighten away intruders?

CALVIN

I wasn’t scared.

MEG

*(aside to Calvin)* You screamed like a girl.

CHARLES WALLACE

Mrs. Who, do you know this kid?

CALVIN

Hi.

MRS. WHO

He wasn’t my idea, *Caroli*, but I think he’s a good one.

CHARLES WALLACE

Where’s Mrs. Whatsit?

WHO

She’s busy preparing. The time is near, *Caroli*, very near. Although time can be a slippery noodle, as your father has discovered to his detriment.

CALVIN

Time is a noodle?

MEG

You know my father?

MRS. WHO

A spaghetti. Or no, what’s the one with the hole in it? Macaroni! Time is a stretched-out macaroni! No, that’s not right either. It’s an inside-out macaroni tied in a ... in a ... What was I saying?
MEG
Have you seen my father?

MRS. WHO
Carolī understands, don’t you, Carolī?

CALVIN
Who’s Carolī?

CHARLES WALLACE
It’s what she calls me.

MRS. WHO
And you are Kitalpha.

CALVIN
Calvin, actually.

MRS. WHO
Kitalpha. And Megrez! Carolī has told me so much about you.

CHARLES WALLACE
No I haven’t.

MRS. WHO
As for your father, Megrez, yes, he needs our help, which is our purpose and our challenge. Now go home, mes petites, meine kinder, my little ducklings. It’s lovely to meet you, but the moment is not yet ripe. Fear not, we won’t go without you. Get plenty of food and rest. And feed Kitalpha, he’s skin and bones. Now off with you, shoo!

She pushes them out, forcefully, then disappears.

MEG
Charles, what exactly is going on? And what’s with those names, Megrez, Carolī . . .?

CHARLES WALLACE
I don’t know. They’re the names of stars.

MEG
Stars?

CHARLES WALLACE
Let’s go home and eat. Like she said, you’re skin and bones.
CALVIN
And is there any particular reason she wants to fatten me up?

CHARLES WALLACE
You’ll need to be strong. For what’s coming.

*Charles Wallace walks off.*

CALVIN
Hold up! Hey! *(to Meg:)* Do you know what he’s talking about?

MEG
Almost never.

*Transition.*

ACTOR 5
At the Murry’s house, Calvin ate five bowls of stew, three helpings of Jello and seven cookies.

MOTHER
Do you need to let your parents know where you are, Calvin?

CALVIN
They won’t care.

MOTHER
Of course they will.

CALVIN
It’s just, they’ve got ten other kids to worry about, so I’ve learned to take care of myself.... Anyway, they’re used to me going off on my own. Mrs. Murry, that was the most delicious dinner I’ve ever eaten.

MOTHER
Thank you, Calvin. Now I’ve got to get back to my lab and finish the experiment I’ve been working on. Do you kids have homework to do?

CALVIN
Ugh. Math. Anything to do with words, I’m good, but numbers -- not so much.

MEG
I’m the opposite.
MOTHER

You should get Meg to help you.

CALVIN

Yeah, but I’m two grades ahead of her, so . . .

MEG

What is it, trigonometry or calculus?

CALVIN

Uh, calculus.

MEG

Differential calculus or integral calculus.

CALVIN

Differential, I think.

MEG

Unh hunh. Come on. My dad taught me that stuff a few years ago.

CALVIN

Are you serious? Is she serious?

(Mother nods, then exits.)

ACTOR 5

Later that evening, after Meg had finished with Calvin’s homework --

CALVIN

Come on! We’re going for a walk!

MEG

We are?

(He grabs her by the hand and they walk.)

CALVIN

Do you know how lucky you are?

MEG

‘Cause I get to take a walk with Calvin O’Keefe?
CALVIN

No, well, yes but I mean like: Your life. Great house, cool kid brother, interesting friends, and you have a mom who’s gorgeous, brilliant, and a great cook!

MEG

Well I don’t feel lucky.

CALVIN

You should try my life on for size. Don’t get me wrong, I love my family, but . . .

MEG

But what?

CALVIN

They don’t get me. I’m different -- really different -- and they don’t know how to deal with it, so they pretty much ignore me. Gets a little lonely sometimes. Cue the sad violins.

MEG

But you’re Mr. Popular. Captain of the basketball team.

CALVIN

That’s my disguise. To fit in at school. That isn’t really me. (beat) Hey, that picture in the hall, the guy in the labcoat: that’s your father? (Meg nods.) He looks just like Charlie. Only bigger.

MEG

Yep.

CALVIN

So where is he anyway? People say he ran off or something.

MEG

(stiffening)

People lie!

CALVIN

Sorry.

MEG

He didn’t run off.

CALVIN

Okay. So he’s some kind of scientist?
MEG
He and my mom worked together at the Institute for Advanced Study. Then the government asked him to lead some kind of top-secret project. He had to travel a lot, and at first we got letters all the time. But one day the letters stopped coming. It’s been two years. Can we talk about something else now?

CALVIN
So you have no idea what happened to him?

MEG
(shaking her head)
My mother tried to find out, she went to Washington and everything, but they just told her he’s on a dangerous mission. The truth is, sometimes I’m afraid he might be . . .

CALVIN
Nah. He isn’t dead.

MEG
How do you know?

CALVIN
Mrs. Whosey-Whatsit said he needs our help. So he must be alive. Plus, I just have a feeling.

MEG
I don’t believe in feelings, and Mrs. Who is looney-tunes in case you didn’t notice.

CALVIN
I noticed.

MEG
I feel like crying all the time, but . . . Mom doesn’t cry, so I don’t either.

CALVIN
Crying can be good. It’s kinda normal actually.

MEG
Well I’m not normal. I wish I could be normal, I hate the way I am. *(She takes off her glasses and rubs her eyes.)*

CALVIN
I don’t. You have nice eyes without the glasses.
MEG
I’m blind as a bat.

CALVIN
Dreamboat eyes, my dad calls them. *(As his father:)* “That little filly’s got dreamboat eyes.”

*Their little moment is interrupted by the sudden, magical appearance of Mrs. Whatsit, who pokes her head between the two.*

MRS. WHATSIT
My but isn’t the moon lovely this evening?

MRS WHO
*(also appearing out of nowhere)*
Romantic piffle. The moon is a hunk of dead rock made of silicon, iron, magnesium --

MRS. WHATSIT
It’s made of moonlight and magic and that’s all they need to know.

CHARLES WALLACE
*(arriving)*
Sorry to break up this little whatever-it-is, but it’s time.

MEG
Time for what, Charles Wallace?

MRS. WHO
Time to find your father, Megrez.

MRS. WHATSIT
But I do wish there weren’t so much wind. It’s so difficult with all this paraphernalia, all these clothes, all this matter.

MRS. WHO
Matter, energy, wishes, wind, it’s all the same stuff, as you well know, Whatsit, so you needn’t be a crybaby about it.

WHATSIT
I’m not a crybaby!

WHO
She’s the youngest, you know, forever wanting attention.
A gust of wind, the leaves rustle, the light shifts, and then a silvery pinpoint of light appears: Mrs Which.

ACTOR 5
Then a little ball of light appeared out of nowhere, and from inside the light came a sharp, strange voice. (as Mrs. Which:) All right, girls. This isn't time for bickering.

CHARLES WALLACE
It's Mrs. Which.

MRS. WHICH
Forgive me if I don't materialize. I find it tiring, and we have much to do.

CALVIN
That's Mrs. Which? That little twinkle-light?

MRS. WHATSIT
Now, children, what you are about to experience may frighten you, but I can assure you --

MRS. WHICH
There's no time for that, Whatssitt! It's now or never!

MRS. WHATSIT
Yes, ladies and gentlemen, please make certain your seatbacks and tray tables are --

MRS. WHICH
Nnnnowww!

Her last word is drowned out by a wailing, ripping sound. Bright light, then blackness. Actors 2, 3 and 5 alternate the following:

-- And then the moon went out.
-- Out like a light.
-- And the wind stopped
-- blowing and the leaves stopped
-- rustling and the clock stopped
-- ticking and the ground
-- fell away no
-- ground no
-- light no
-- sound no
-- night as the
-- universe cracked open and
-- Meg fell through the crack

MEG
What’s happening?!
-- all alone total
-- darkness no
-- world all
-- nothing

MEG
Charles! Calvin!
-- couldn’t move couldn’t
-- feel
-- nothing to feel nothing to
-- feel with

MEG
I’ve lost my body! I’m a --
-- little drop of nothing in
-- an ocean of nothingness.

MEG
I’m having some kind of terrible nightmare. I want to wake up now, please, let me wake up! Help me!

Black silence. Then out of darkness Charles and Calvin appear.

CHARLES WALLACE
Mrs. Which! Couldn’t you have warned us before you . . .

CALVIN
What just happened? Charles Wallace, what the heck is going on?!

CHARLES WALLACE
Where’s Meg? Mrs. Which, you didn’t leave Meg behind, did you?!

With a ripping, shattering sound, Meg lurches into the light, falling to the ground as Charles and Calvin rush to help her.
CHARLES WALLACE

Meg! You’re here!

MEG

(weakly)

I’m . . . here. But where?

CALVIN

Good question.

MEG

How did we get in the middle of this field?

CALVIN

And how did a cold autumn night turn into a warm spring day?

MEG

That mountain wasn’t there before.

CALVIN

And neither was that herd of -- (squinting to make them out) -- unicorns?! Charlie?!

CHARLES WALLACE

Yes. Yes, I believe we’ve gone through some sort of . . . doorway.

MEG

Doorway to where, Charles?

MRS. WHO’S VOICE

“When shall we three meet again, In thunder, lightning, or in rain?”

Suddenly, magically, Mrs. Who, Mrs. Whatsit and the light representing Mrs. Which appear. Who and Whatsit giggle.

CHARLES WALLACE

If you three have had your fun I think you should tell us what’s going on.

CALVIN

Where are we?

MRS. WHATSIT

We are on Uriel.
MRS. WHO
Third planet of the star Malak, in the spiral nebula Messier 81.

CALVIN
Right. Pull the other one.

MRS. WHICH
(sternly)
Ssskepttttic. Wwhatssittt, wwhyy ddidd wwee bbringg thiss bboy?

CALVIN
Okay, fine, if we’re on some other planet, how did we get here?!

MRS. WHO
We wrinkled.

CALVIN
Well, that really clears things up.

WHATSIT
The distance between your world and this one is so great that to travel here by even the fastest of spacecraft would take millions of years. So we took a shortcut.

MRS. WHO
A quasi-permanent portal through multiply-connected extra-dimensional spacetime.

WHATSIT
A wormhole. Use your skirt to show them.

MRS. WHO
You see, if a small insect wished to travel from this point on my skirt, to this point over here, it would require quite a long walk to go the normal way. But if we wrinkle the fabric -- (she folds the two points together) -- our little bug reaches his destination in no time. That is how we travel. All of space and time are woven together like this fabric, and we can wrinkle the fabric of space-time just as I’ve folded my skirt. So we travel the galaxies in an instant. You see?

MEG
IIIII ... think I get it! I do, I get it!

CALVIN
I don’t get it.
MEG
A wrinkle in time! We got here through a wrinkle in time!

MRS. WHATSIT
In space-time, to be precise. Also called a tesseract.

MEG
Tesseract?! -- wait, does that mean my father is here?!

WHICH
Nnott hherre.

WHATSIT
Your father’s team of scientists discovered a crude way to use a tesseract, and he volunteered to be the guinea pig. Unfortunately, he tessered to a terrible place.

CHARLES WALLACE
Is he all right?

WHATSIT
For the moment, love, yes.

MEG
Take me to him!

WHATSIT
Patience, child. We stopped here because we must show you what you will be up against.

WHICH
Yyess. Sshoww themmm.

WHATSIT
Now? You mean I should ... change?

WHO
Please do, that costume is ridiculous.

WHICH
Yyess. Yyou mmusstt trranrssfforrrmm.

WHATSIT
Well all right. Don’t be frightened, loves, but in order to accomplish our purpose . . .
ACTOR 5
And then Mrs. Whatsit’s body began to shimmer, to quiver, to unfold, the colors of her clothes fading to white as she changed before their eyes . . .

Theatre magic, some combination of costume/prop trickery, puppet work and lighting effect: to evoke the book’s description of a Mrs. Whatsit who has acquired a white, powerful, horse-like body, tapering at the shoulders into a man’s upper torso. A combination of centaur and angel, extraordinary and beautiful. (See appendix for optional narration to help support the effect.)

CHARLES WALLACE
Mrs. Whatsit?

MEG
Mrs. Whatsit!

ACTOR 2
Then a pair of enormous wings unfolded from her shoulders, wings that seemed to be made of --

CALVIN
Rainbows

ACTOR 2
Of

CHARLES WALLACE
Light shining on water

ACTOR 2
Of

MEG
Stardust. Mrs. Whatsit, you are . . .

CALVIN
Awesome.

WHICH
Nowwww: Take themmm upp.

WHATSIT
Onto my back, children.
MRS. WHO

Wait. Here, starlings, take these.

(She hands each of them a strange-looking flower)

MEG

What kind of flower is this?

MRS. WHO

Liliaceae tulipa spiritus. The breathing flower.

MRS. WHATSIT

Keep them. You’ll need them later.

MEG

Why do they call it the breathing flower?

MRS. WHO

They don’t. I just made that up.

CHARLES WALLACE

Come on!

ACTOR 5

When they were on her back, a tremor went through Mrs. Whatsit’s great wings and then she lifted off the ground.

CALVIN

Whoa!

MEG

I don’t believe this!

CHARLES WALLACE

Where are you taking us?

WHATSIT

Up.

ACTOR 5

And up they went, higher and higher, until the field was far below and the trees had become dots.

WHATSIT

Hold on tight. Don’t slip.
CALVIN
We’re already in the clouds!

MEG
Are we going to the top of the mountain, Mrs. Whatsit?

MRS. WHATSIT
Yes, child.

MEG
But where is the top? It just keeps going up and up!

CALVIN
The air’s getting thinner. It’s getting hard to breathe.

WHATSIT
Use your flowers. Breathe through them and they will give you oxygen.

MEG
(doiing as instructed)
The breathing flower -- it’s true!

WHATSIT
We’re nearly there. Do you see that shelf of rock there, just below the summit? That’s where I’ll land. You’ll feel a bump. Hang on tight now.

They land. The kids lower themselves from her back.

CHARLES WALLACE
Mrs. Whatsit, why have you brought us up here?

MRS. WHATSIT
What I have to show you will be more visible at this high altitude, where the air is thin. The sun is about to set. Just keep looking, it will come soon.

MEG
What will come?

CALVIN
I don’t see anything.

WHATSIT
Watch!
So they did.

But what exactly are we . . . hunh.

What . . . is . . . that?

Some kind of cloud?

(Meg also says the words in boldface)


It looks like it’s eating the stars.

It feels . . . evil.

Yes. That is exactly what it is. Pure Evil. Dark Energy. Utter Blackness. It makes its way across the galaxies infecting every planet in its path.

Can anything stop it?

Do you see that star there, the brightest one?

Meg saw it. She saw the Black Thing move toward the star, then cover it.

Gone!

No. Keep watching.
See appendix for optional narration to support the following effect:

*The Black Thing seethes, as though shot through with electricity. A burst of light pierces the Thing, causing it to disappear. The bright star fades, until it, too, disappears.*

CALVIN

What just happened?

ACTOR 5

Without a word, Mrs. Whatsit turned, raised her wings, and lifted away from the mountainside. She flew them down, down, down, in silence. When they finally got back to the field . . .

CHARLES WALLACE

Mrs. Who! Mrs. Which! We saw the Black Thing.

MEG

It was horrible -- but then a bright star destroyed it.

MRS. WHO

No, Megrez. The Power of Darkness can never be destroyed. But it can sometimes be defeated. That star gave up its life in battle with the Black Thing. But the Thing lives on in many another place. *(to Whatsit:)* Are you all right, sister? It wasn’t so long ago for you, was it?

MEG

You saw that happen before, Mrs. Whatsit?

MRS. WHICH

She felt it happen. It happened too *hherr*.

MEG

What? How?

MRS. WHO

Same old story: rapid increase in density, spontaneous neutrino burst, terminal core collapse -- kaboom.

MRS. WHICH


CHARLES WALLACE

*(approaching Mrs. Whatsit)*

I always felt there was something really different about you. Now I understand. You used to be a star. *(She nods.)* And you -- you did what that star did? *(She nods again.)*
CALVIN

Wait. She was a star?

MRS. WHO

She was really far too young but -- so brave.

CHARLES WALLACE

Is that Black Thing what my father is fighting?

MRS. WHICH

Yesss. Aanndd hhee nneeeedss yyouurr hhelpp.

MRS. WHO

With you beside him he may find the courage to do for his children what he cannot do for himself.

MEG

But what about my mother? Won’t she be worried about us?

MRS. WHATSIT

You needn’t be concerned about that. Our travels are not only through space, but also through time. We should have you home five minutes before you left and your mother will never notice you’ve been gone.

MRS. WHICH

Ifff aalll ggoess wwellll.

MEG

But . . . what if all doesn’t go well?

MRS. WHICH

Thhenn itt wwon’tt mmatttterr iff wwee nneverr ggett bbackk.

MRS. WHATSIT

We showed you the Blackness because it stands between us and your father, yes; but also because for centuries it has been working to take your own planet in its grip. Many of your kind have fought against it -- Jesus, Mohammed, Da Vinci, Newton, Gandhi -- but the battle goes against you now. We must succeed, or all will be lost.

MRS. WHICH

Nnow yyouu knnnoww thee ttruthh. Arre yyouu rrreaddy?
CHARLES WALLACE

We’re ready.

CALVIN

Ready for what?!

MRS. WHATSIT

You will travel to a world called Camazotz.

MRS. WHICH

Itt liies bbehinddd.

MEG

Behind . . .

MRS. WHICH

Bbehinddd the Darrkkknesss. Wwwwherre yyyou wwill ffinndd yyyourr ffatherr.

MRS. WHATSIT

We will wrinkle again. But I must warn you: this leg of the journey will be difficult. Passing through the Darkness is dangerous, and when you arrive you will be on your own. We three cannot stay with you on Camazotz.

MEG

What?!

MRS. WHO

The Black Thing knows us. If it senses our presence it will destroy all of us in an instant. You three are small enough to go unnoticed, which is your advantage. We will be close, we will be watching. But we will not be able to help you.

MEG

But we aren’t stars! We’re just kids! We don’t stand a chance against that horrible Thing!

MRS. WHATSIT

Take heart, child. Yes, we ask you to do something very difficult. But we have faith that you can do it.

CHARLES WALLACE

Just send us to where Father is.

CALVIN

I don’t know about this, you guys.
MEG
Well I do. If that thing has my father then I hate it!

MRS. WHATSIT
Stay angry, Meg. You will need all your anger now.

MEG
Don’t worry, I’m angry enough for --

_Tesser effect: brightness, darkness, ripping, wailing._

ACTOR 2, 3 AND ACTOR 5

-- Nothing!
-- Alone!
-- Blackness, alone!
-- Alone all alone in the
-- clammy
-- starless
-- cold of an
-- empty black night empty
-- night empty
-- heart empty
-- body empty
-- night

MEG

Oh God!

-- Swirling darkness
-- blacker darkness
-- deepening
-- whirling all
-- around her into
-- _through_ her sharp black
-- needles burning
-- ice piercing
-- bones eating
-- heart
-- empty evil
-- dark crushing
-- smashing
-- pushing through her
-- like a
-- great
-- stone
-- FIST!

MEG
I can’t do this! It’s killing me!!

-- and then

The sound and light effects subside to silent darkness.

CHARLES WALLACE
Are you okay Meg? You don’t look well.

MEG
I . . . can’t . . . I . . . . Where . . . ?

CALVIN
Supposed to be Camazotz, but from the top of this hill it looks a lot like . . .

MEG
Home.

CALVIN
Sky looks like our sky, rocks look like our rocks, trees look like our trees. You think maybe they made a mistake, sent us back to Earth?

CHARLES WALLACE
No. Look down there.

MEG
Those houses . . .

CALVIN
They all look exactly the same. And nothing has any color.

CHARLES WALLACE
It feels . . . wrong.

CALVIN
You took the words right out of my mouth, Charlieboy.

MEG
That city. You think that’s where Dad is?
CHARLES WALLACE

Come on.

Mrs. Whatsit appears.

MRS. WHATSIT

Wait.

CALVIN

Mrs. Whatsit! I thought you said --

MRS. WHATSIT

That you’d be alone, yes, I shouldn’t have come . . . and I can’t stay. But I couldn’t let you go without giving you something.

CHARLES WALLACE

Mrs. Whatsit, you look scared.

MRS. WHATSIT

I fear for you. I wish I could help, but all I can do is give you each a charm. Something to hold in your hearts. Calvin. Your great gift is your ability to communicate, to communicate with all kinds of people. So for you, I strengthen that gift. And you, Charles Wallace. You are so unchildlike in so many ways . . . but in the most important way, you are still a child. Hold tightly to your innocence.

MEG

Do you have a charm for me?

MRS. WHATSIT

Little Meg with the fierce heart: to you I give your faults.

MEG

My faults! I’ve been trying to get rid of my faults my whole life!

MRS. WHATSIT

Nevertheless, you will find them useful on Camazotz.

MEG

How?! What faults?! How am I supposed to . . . Mrs. Whatsit! . . . I’m really scared.

MRS. WHATSIT

Only a fool wouldn’t be afraid. Now I must go. Mrs. Which will be --
MRS. WHO

(appearing out of nowhere)

Wait!

MRS. WHATSIT

Mrs. Who! What are you doing here?

MRS. WHO’S VOICE

Same as you. Megrez, take my glasses. (Meg does.) The lenses can achieve a simplified form of annular dark-field imaging by means of an electron beam matrix which rasters a -- (off the kids’ mystified looks:) Oh, for heaven’s sake, they’re magic. Use them only as a last resort. Kitalpha, take care of Megrez.

CHARLES WALLACE

I can take care of Meg. I always have.

MRS. WHATSIT

Charles Wallace, beware of pride and arrogance. Because of what you are, this place is especially dangerous for you. Your spirit is strong -- but not as strong as you think.

MRS. WHO

Whatsit, we cannot stay here any longer. (Her voice echoes and fades.)

MRS. WHATSIT

Yes. I’m coming.

Then Mrs. Which’s twinkle light appears.

MRS. WHICH

Wwwaitt!

CALVIN

And baby makes three.

MRS. WHICH


MRS. WHATSIT

Farewell.

Mrs. Whatsit and Mrs. Which are gone.
CALVIN
So. I guess that’s that. Time to go see what the deal is with Camazotz.

MEG
Just a sec.

She goes to Charles Wallace. She puts her hands on his shoulders, then hugs him. Then she pulls Calvin into a three-way hug. Charles Wallace pulls away but Meg continues to hug Calvin.

MEG
Okay. Let’s go.

ACTOR 5
It didn’t take them long to reach the houses at the bottom of the hill, and the closer they got, the more Calvin and Meg began to understand what Charles Wallace had been talking about.

CALVIN
It isn’t just that the houses are all alike. Every single yard has one kid in it, and they all look exactly the same -- they’re all dressed alike, and they’re all bouncing the same red rubber balls.

MEG
And look, they’re bouncing in exactly the same rhythm, up, down, up, down, like a machine.

ACTOR 5
Then all the doors of all the houses opened and out came women, like a row of paper dolls. They stood on their porches and clapped three times. The children all stopped their activities immediately, turned and walked into the houses, and the doors closed quietly behind them.

CALVIN
You guys, this is creeping me out. Maybe we should --

CHARLES WALLACE
We keep going.

CALVIN
I’m serious, let’s just go back.

MEG
We can’t go back.

CHARLES WALLACE
Hey. Look at that.
MEG
You mean that boy? The one who’s bouncing without any rhythm?

CALVIN
And look at his mom: like a mouse trying not to be noticed by the cat.

WOMAN’S VOICE (ACTOR 2, OFF)
Come inside!

A door slams. Then a ball rolls to Charles. He picks it up, approaches the front door.

CHARLES WALLACE
Hello?

CALVIN
Bad idea, Charlie.

The door creaks open. A woman appears, frightened.

WOMAN (2)
What do you want? I’ve given my Decency Donation. All my papers are in order.

CHARLES WALLACE
Your little boy dropped his ball.

WOMAN
No he didn’t! He wouldn’t! He’s a good boy!

CHARLES WALLACE
(looking past the woman at the little boy inside)
Hi there. What’s your name?

WOMAN
No! Why do you need to know his name? Are you going to red-mark him?

MEG
(aside to Charles)
What’s she so afraid of? Can you read her mind?

CHARLES WALLACE
No. It’s like she’s dead inside.
WOMAN
What are you children doing out on the street anyway?

CALVIN
We’re strangers here. Hi.

WOMAN
Do you have travel papers?

MEG
(her best bluff)
Who wants to know?

WOMAN
(nervously)
Are you . . . Examiners?

MEG
No. Well, maybe.

WOMAN
But -- but everyone knows our city has the best obedience record on Camazotz. That’s why Central Intelligence is located here. That’s why IT lives here.

CALVIN
(chilled)
IT?

MEG
And that’s why we’re here. Now we order you to point the way to Central Intelligence -- please -- or, or we’ll have to red-mark you.

WOMAN
It’s there, in the center of the city, the tallest building. Goodbye! (Slams door.)

CHARLES WALLACE
That was interesting.

CALVIN
Interesting?! Did you not hear her say that IT lives here?

MEG
Yeah, so?
CALVIN
Holy Moses, Meg, have you never seen a horror movie? Nothing good was ever named IT!

MEG
You coming or not?

*Meg starts walking, with Calvin reluctantly following -- then Meg realizes Charles Wallace hasn’t moved.*

Charles Wallace? What’s wrong?

CHARLES WALLACE

ACTOR 3
As they walked into the center of the city, they began to see many people, all dressed in gray, walking purposefully, looking straight ahead without seeming to notice them. Finally:

CALVIN
*(stopping the other two)*

Look ... at ... that.

*The three kids slowly tilt their heads back farther and farther as they look up at something that stretches high into the sky.*

MEG
That’s the tallest building I’ve ever seen.

CALVIN
I guess this must be the place.

CHARLES WALLACE
Central Intelligence.

MEG
Charles Wallace, if Dad is in trouble with the people who run this planet, then wouldn’t Central Intelligence be the worst place for us to go?

CHARLES WALLACE
How else are we going to find him?
CALVIN
So, what, we’re just going to waltz in there like we own the place? Don’t you think we might need some kind of official papers or something, like that woman said?

CHARLES WALLACE
If we needed papers, Mrs. Whatsit would have told us.

CALVIN
Well if you’re going to trust everything Mrs. Whatsit says, then she also said you’re in worse danger than any of us. So you should stay here with Meg, and I’ll go in and check things out. If it’s cool, I’ll let you know.

MEG
Aren’t you the guy who wanted to turn around and go home?

CALVIN
I’m still that guy, but . . .

MEG
And if you go in and don’t come out, we’re just going to have to come in after you. It’s not like we’re going to leave you there. So we stay together, like Mrs. Which said.

She links arms with them, and they face front, looking at the imposing building.

CALVIN
Anyone else feel like Dorothy and her friends, heading into the witch’s castle?

MEG
Which one are you?

CALVIN
Cowardly Lion, definitely . . . Listen, you guys remember when we first met and you asked why I was there and I said I had a feeling? Well, that was a good feeling. But the one I’m having right now? Not good. If we walk into that building, I have a feeling we might never walk out.

The three of them look at each other. Beat.

CHARLES WALLACE
Let’s go.

Optional Act Break.
The lights shift and they step into the great building. As soon as they do, the sound of a huge, heavy door closing behind them. The room they have entered is cavernous and imposing.

CALVIN

(sotto voce)

Now what?

CHARLES WALLACE

Let’s ask someone.

CALVIN

No one looks very friendly.

MEG

Excuse me. Could you help us?

MAN (5)

(cautiously approaching, looking around furtively)

What do you want?

MEG

We need to see whoever’s in charge. Can you tell us the procedure for that?

MAN

Why? Is this some kind of test?

CHARLES WALLACE

We’re strangers. We don’t know how things work here.

MAN

(pointing)

You present your papers to the A machine.

MEG

That’s just a blank wall.

MAN

Blank wall? Are you playing games? Do you want all of us to have to go through the Reprocessor? Just put your S papers in the B slot and leave me alone.

The Man hurries off.
CALVIN

S papers in the B slot. Okay.

Calvin reaches into a pocket and pulls out a piece of paper. He walks to the blank wall.

MEG

Wait, what are you doing?!

Calvin feeds the paper into a slot. A whisking sound.

CALVIN

Cool.

CHARLES WALLACE

The wall disappeared. What was that paper?

CALVIN

My math homework. Guess you got the right answers, Meg.

MEG

This hall is like a mile long.

CALVIN

What’s that red glow coming from the other end?

MEG

Only one way to find out.

CALVIN

I was afraid you’d say that.

They begin walking. Then Charles Wallace slows to a stop.

CHARLES WALLACE

He’s trying to get at me.

MEG

Who?

CHARLES WALLACE

I don’t know! I feel him! He’s trying to get at me!
CALVIN

(in a nervous sing-song)

Turning around, heading back.

CHARLES WALLACE

No. He wants us to be afraid, but we can’t let him stop us.

They walk again. CW is humming something under his breath.

MEG

Is that the lullabye Mom used to sing to us?

Charles Wallace doesn’t answer. They reach the end of the hall. A man in a chair on a platform, looking down. A red glow seems to emanate from him. His dialogue may be recorded in order to create the sense that he’s projecting his thoughts into their heads.

MAN

(in a gentle voice)

I have been waiting for you, dear ones.

The man raises his head to look at them. His eyes glow red.

MAN WITH RED EYES

But how is it that there are three of you?

CHARLES WALLACE

The big guy is Calvin. He came along for the ride.

MEG

Charles Wallace, don’t. Remember what Mrs. Whatsit said.

MAN WITH RED EYES

Welcome, Calvin. I hope you have enjoyed the ride thus far.

CALVIN

Okay, why does it feel like that guy’s voice is inside my head?

CHARLES WALLACE

Don’t look at him, he’ll hypnotize you.
MAN WITH RED EYES
Clever boy. But why would you wish to resist someone who only wants to save you pain and trouble? For you and for all the useful people on this planet, I am willing to assume all the burdens of thought and decision.

CHARLES WALLACE
No thanks. We'll make our own decisions.

MAN WITH RED EYES
But my way is so much easier. Let me show you. Let us say the multiplication table together.

CHARLES WALLACE
No!

MAN WITH RED EYES
One times one is one. One times two is two. One times three is three.

Meg and Calvin begin to join the recitation, quietly, uncertainly, then more mechanically. Charles Wallace resists.

CHARLES WALLACE
(overlapping)
Mary had a little lamb! Its fleece was white as snow!

MAN WITH RED EYES
(overlapping)
One times four is four. One times five is five. One times six is six.

CHARLES WALLACE
(overlapping)
And everywhere that Mary went the lamb was sure to go!

MAN WITH RED EYES
(overlapping)
One times seven is seven. One times eight is eight.

CHARLES WALLACE
(overlapping)
Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater, had a wife and couldn't keep her!

CALVIN
(overlapping)
Thomas, Martin, Theresa, Luther, George, David, Joan, John, August, Emily . . . (repeat as necessary)
MAN WITH RED EYES

(overlapping)
One times nine is nine. Two times one is two. Two times two is four. (Etc.)

CHARLES WALLACE

(overlapping)
Pease porridge hot, pease porridge cold --

MEG

(shouting over all of them)
Daddy! Daddy, are you here?!

The others stop their recitations.

MAN WITH RED EYES

Interesting.

MEG

Please. We’re just here for our father. Give him to us and we’ll leave you alone.

MAN WITH RED EYES

Why do you want him?

MEG

Because he’s our father!

MAN WITH RED EYES

He is a man who abandoned his family to go on a wild adventure.

MEG

Shut up! Just tell us where he is!

MAN WITH RED EYES

Patience, young lady. There is an order to things here.

CALVIN

Too much order, if you ask me.

MAN WITH RED EYES

I do not. We have established that you are merely along for the ride, so keep your mouth shut.

Calvin suddenly presses his hands to his temple in pain.
MEG

What are you doing to him?!

*Charles Wallace rushes the Man and hits him hard. Man winces.*

MEG

Charles!

*The Man raises a hand and Charles Wallace seems to be repelled by an invisible force.*

MAN WITH RED EYES

May I ask why you did that?

CHARLES WALLACE

Something isn’t right about you. It’s like something is talking through you. Something powerful.

MAN WITH RED EYES

Very good. And would you like to meet the power that speaks through me?

CHARLES WALLACE

Maybe.

MAN WITH RED EYES

Look into my eyes and you will find IT.

*Charles Wallace looks at Meg.*

MEG

Don’t. Don’t do it.

CHARLES WALLACE

You’ll tell us where Father is?

MAN WITH RED EYES

Yes. That is a promise.

CALVIN

Charles, let me do it. I’m older and stronger.

MAN WITH RED EYES

Only the boy’s brain is complex enough. If you tried it your mind would be destroyed.
MEG
And his won’t?

MAN WITH RED EYES
Probably not.

MEG
But it might?! Then he can’t do it!

CHARLES WALLACE
I have to find out what he really is. I’ll try to hold back, keep part of myself out.

MEG
But you won’t be able to. He’s too strong! Calvin?!

CALVIN
Charlie’s right, Meg. I don’t see any other way to get what we came here for.

CHARLES WALLACE
(to the Man)
All right.

CALVIN
(to Meg)
It’ll be okay. We’ll be here with him.

Charles looks deep into the Man’s red eyes. Meg watches as CW’s eyes go out of focus. Gradually his body relaxes and then a vacant smile creases his face.

MEG
Charles Wallace! No! What have you done to him?!

CHARLES WALLACE
What’s wrong, sister? Why are you angry?

MEG
That isn’t Charles Wallace!

Meg grabs Charles Wallace and pulls him into a tight hug.

CHARLES WALLACE
You’re hurting me! Let me go!
MEG

No!

CHARLES WALLACE

Meg, we had it all wrong, he isn’t our enemy at all. Those three old hags have confused us. They’re the real enemies.

MEG

I don’t believe that. (calling) Mrs. Whatsit! Mrs. Whatsit, help us!

CHARLES WALLACE

Let. Me. Go.

On his word, “Go,” Charles Wallace seems to summon superhuman strength to break free. He turns and begins walking toward the Man With Red Eyes.

MEG

Calvin!

Calvin grabs Charles Wallace and pins his arms behind him.

CHARLES WALLACE

You both ought to stop fighting and relax.

MEG

What about my father? You promised you’d take us to him.

MAN WITH RED EYES

Not possible.

MEG

But you said --

MAN WITH RED EYES

Silence! It is not possible for me to leave here. The boy will escort you, as soon as your brutish friend releases him.

Calvin looks at Meg, then releases Charles Wallace.

CHARLES WALLACE

Come.
ACTOR 2
And without another word, the boy who used to be Charles Wallace walked away.

CALVIN
(under his breath)
Thomas, Martin, Theresa, Luther, George, David --

MEG
(privately, as they follow behind Charles)
Why do you keep saying those names?

CALVIN
My brothers and sisters. If we make it home in one piece, I’m gonna hug every one of them like you wouldn’t believe. Except George. He might slug me.

MEG
Calvin, remember how Mrs. Whatsit said your gift was communication, and she strengthened it?

CALVIN
Yeah?

MEG
Maybe you should try to get past whatever is controlling him and communicate with the real Charles Wallace.

CALVIN
I’ll give it a try. Hey, Charlie-boy, hold up a second. So, I guess you’ll be pretty happy to see your father.

CHARLES WALLACE
He means nothing to me now that I have IT.

MEG
IT again. Who is this IT?

CHARLES WALLACE
You are not ready for IT.

CALVIN
So what do I have to do to be ready? Seriously, Charlie.

CHARLES WALLACE
You really wish to know?
CALVIN
Sure. Do that creepy-weirdo thing with your eyes and you’ll see I mean it.

(Their eyes lock. Calvin’s stare is intense.)

Charlie. Charles Wallace. We need your help. We can’t do it alone, Meg and I, we’re afraid of the Dark. Can you help us? Can you help your sister, can you help Meg, Charles Wallace?

Charles Wallace begins to sway, his eyes begin to roll back. Then he breaks away, and shakes it off.

CHARLES WALLACE
I should have known better. Why do you continue to resist what we offer?

Who’s we?

CHARLES WALLACE
We are Camazotz. A perfect world, where all are the same, all are happy, because IT takes care of us. As for those who resist -- IT takes care of them.

CALVIN
Takes care . . . you mean gets rid of them? Kills them?

Charles Wallace stops and waves his hand in front of a wall. An opening appears, revealing a small chamber.

CHARLES WALLACE
How did you do that? Make the wall open up?

We rearrange the atoms. Surely you know that matter isn’t solid, that it consists mostly of empty space. We simply part the atoms, like a beaded curtain, and walk through the space between.

When they’re all in the little room, it moves rapidly upward.

MEG
Is this an elevator?

CHARLES WALLACE
(with a sneer)
An omnivator. It moves in all directions.

Meg and Calvin lurch to one side – Charles barely reacts.
CALVIN
Listen, Charlie-boy, doesn’t it get kind of boring living in a world where everyone is the same?

CHARLES WALLACE
It’s better this way. Differences make problems. You know that, don’t you dear sister?

MEG
No.

CHARLES WALLACE
Of course you do. *(uncannily mimicking Meg:)* “I wish I could be normal, I hate the way I am.”

MEG
Well . . . that doesn’t mean I want to be exactly the same as everyone else.

CHARLES WALLACE
Why do you think your planet has wars? Why do you think people get confused and unhappy? Because no one trusts anyone who’s different.

*(He raises his hand and the omnivator comes to a stop)*

We will have to continue our discussion later. We have arrived. Wait here.

*The wall opens for a moment and Charles Wallace walks through -- but it closes again before Meg and Calvin can follow. See optional narration in appendix.*

MEG
Calvin! It’s a trick! They’re going to keep us prisoner in here!

CALVIN
Take it easy, Meg.

MEG
No! We were supposed to stay with Charles Wallace! Calvin, this is hopeless! You were right, we should have turned back when we had the chance.

CALVIN
You don’t mean that. You’re too stubborn to give up that easy.

MEG
I’m tired and I’m hungry and I just want to go home.

CALVIN
Hey. Look at me. *(She does.*) We can do this. Okay? *(She nods.*) Okay.
Suddenly, the wall opens again. We see Charles Wallace sitting cross-legged on the floor and staring oddly at a man inside a column of light. We don’t immediately see the man’s face.

MEG
Charles Wallace? What are you . . .? (She sees who the man is.) Daddy!

Meg rushes to the enclosure but is thrown back and falls to the floor. Charles Wallace laughs. Calvin helps her up.

MEG
Why doesn’t he answer me?

CHARLES WALLACE
Perhaps he’s not happy to see you.

CALVIN
I don’t think he can see you, Meg. He isn’t responding at all.

CHARLES WALLACE
Two points for the captain of the basketball team. That’s a black cell: We can see him, but he can’t see anything. He lives in total darkness.

MEG
Please, Charles Wallace, let him out of there.

CHARLES WALLACE
He’s pathetic, isn’t he.

MEG
Charles, that’s our father!

CHARLES WALLACE
So what? Take my advice, forget him, just like he’s forgotten us. Forget him and give yourself over to IT.

MEG
Calvin?

CALVIN
I don’t know what to do, Meg. I’m sorry. (Meg is suddenly crying.) Meg, don’t, please . . .

Meg takes off her glasses to rub her eyes, then looks at them.
MEG
Glasses. Mrs. Who’s glasses!

(She takes Mrs. Who’s glasses out of her pocket.)

She said use them as a last resort. I think this is it.

CHARLES WALLACE
Give me those spectacles!

But Meg has already put them on and now throws herself at the enclosure. With a crackle of energy and flash of light, the force field surrounding Father disintegrates. He looks up, confused, but doesn’t immediately see her.

MEG
Dad? (Father turns to her.) Daddy!

FATHER
Oh my lord! Meg!

MEG
(throwing herself into his arms.)

I can’t believe we found you!

FATHER
What are you doing here? Where’s your mother?

MEG
She isn’t here.

FATHER
You mean you’re alone?

MEG
No, Charles Wallace is here too, but IT has taken control of him, Daddy, and it’s all my fault.

FATHER
What are you talking about, Meg? Where is he? (seeing Calvin:) That can’t be Charles.

MEG
No, that’s Calvin. He’s my friend, or my . . .

CALVIN
I’m really glad to meet you, sir. Meg has told me all about --
Hiya, Pop.

Charles? Charles Wallace, is that you?

Father approaches CW, brings him into a hug. CW is completely unresponsive.

Stop that. We don’t like it.

Charles Wallace, do you remember me? I know you were very young when I left but --

We must go see IT now. IT is not pleased.

CW turns and walks away.

Charles Wallace!

He isn’t really Charles right now, Daddy. IT has taken over his mind.

Come. IT doesn’t like to be kept waiting.

No, we can’t go to IT. Meg won’t be able to handle that.

She should have thought of that before she decided to defy IT.

Charles, I’m your father, and you’re going to have to do as I say.

You’re just a weak little nothing. I answer to IT now.

Daddy, we have to do something. If IT has control of Charles, then maybe we should go and try to convince IT to let him go.
FATHER
You can’t reason with IT. Meg, forgive me, but you don’t understand.

MEG
But this is awful. I thought when we found you, you’d . . . You’re supposed to do something.

CHARLES WALLACE
Oh stop it. It isn’t as though you have a choice. We are going to IT now.

The others reluctantly follow Charles. He waves his hand and they’re back in the omnivator.

FATHER
So. Calvin. I don’t know how much credit you get for keeping Meg safe, but I’m grateful.

CALVIN
Actually, Meg takes care of herself pretty well.

FATHER
I’m sure she does. But you both need to understand something: we are about to go into an extremely dangerous situation. IT is a monster.

CALVIN
Have you seen IT, sir?

FATHER
Yes. Yes, I have.

The omnivator stops.

CHARLES WALLACE
We’re here.

Charles Wallace waves his hand and the wall opens. Pulsating red light, a deep, throbbing sound. As the scene goes on, Meg and Calvin gradually begin responding physically to the rhythm, cringing or twitching in time with it.

MEG
Look. What is that thing?

In the center of the room is a large pillar, about four feet across and six feet high. On top of the cylinder is a glass dome, and
under the dome is . . . what? Meg approaches to get a closer look at the thing under the glass.

MEG

Oh my God. It’s . . . a brain. IT is a huge, horrible brain.

CALVIN

Okay that is disgusting.

IT is voiced by Actors 2 and 3. Charles Wallace also speaks (or mouths) the lines in unison with them.

IT

IT . . . welcomes . . . the Murry. The Meg. The Calvin.

MEG

Give us back my brother, you creep!

FATHER

(holding Meg back)

We’ve come for Charles Wallace.

IT

That one is with IT.

FATHER

Yeah, well that one belongs with us.

IT

To be with that one you must be with IT.

FATHER

That isn’t going to happen.

(Bit Meg and Calvin are being drawn physically toward IT.)

Meg, Calvin -- Don’t give in! Leave them alone, monster!

CALVIN

Meg! What Mrs. Whatsit said: use your faults!

MEG

But what faults? I get mad. I don’t like to be bossed around. So -- so leave me alone, you big bully, or I’ll throw that big lump of brain-pudding to the floor and stomp it to a pulp! Hey, it worked. IT let go of me for a second.
FATHER

IT isn’t used to being resisted!

IT

If you destroy IT, you will destroy all who are part of IT.

CALVIN

He means Charles Wallace.

IT

Accept IT.  Come into IT.  Be with IT.  Be with IT.  Be with IT.  Be with IT.

MEG AND CALVIN

(joining in)

Be with IT.  Be with IT.

MEG

Daddy, do something!  I can’t fight IT much longer!

CALVIN

Be with IT.  Be with -- Meg.  I’m going to give myself up -- so you and your dad can get away!

MEG

No!!

CALVIN

Just get ready!

FATHER

No, wait.  Give me your hands, both of you.

* Sudden tesseract effects, more chaotic than ever. During the chaos, lights single out Calvin and Father, but Meg has disappeared. *

ACTORS 2 AND 3

-- Then bone-breaking
-- agony dissolving into
-- nothing
-- into empty
-- into timeless
-- into starless
-- hopeless shattered
-- twisted

FATHER

Meg! Calvin! Hold on!
As they come out of the tesseract, Calvin and Father fall to the ground, stunned. They are some distance apart from one another, and Meg is nowhere to be seen.

CALVIN

(standing shakily)
Oh, man, my head feels like it’s splitting open. Meg, are you okay – Meg?! Meg!!

FATHER

Calvin?

CALVIN

Mr. Murry, where’s Meg?!

FATHER

I don’t know, when we tessered I lost both of you! Meg! Meg!

CALVIN

You tessered us? Where?!

FATHER

I have no idea, I was flying blind but I had to get you and Meg away from IT!

CALVIN

Maybe IT got her!

FATHER

No, I’m sure I had hold of her when we -- (spotting her) There!

They scramble to the prostrate Meg. Father begins checking her vital signs. Calvin grabs her hand.

CALVIN

She’s cold as ice!
FATHER

I don’t think she’s breathing.

CALVIN

No! That can’t -- she can’t be -- we have to do something, we have to find help!

FATHER

Let’s move her over here into the light. Be careful, keep her head still. Meg, can you hear me? Wait, I think I feel a heartbeat. Very faint, very slow, but . . .

CALVIN

*(cradling her head, rubbing her arms, etc.)*

Come on, Meg.

*Meg suddenly sits up with a gasp, like she’s coming out of a horrible nightmare.*

CALVIN

Meg!

MEG

*(weak, but urgent)*

Charles Wallace.

FATHER

Meg, stay still. You’ve taken a terrible beating.

MEG

Where’s Charles Wallace?

FATHER

He’s still with IT.

CALVIN

Your dad tessered us, Meg, but we don’t --

MEG

*(overlapping)*

No! No, go back!!

FATHER

We can’t, Meg.
CALVIN
Your dad had to take us through the Black Thing, it almost killed you.

MEG
You left Charles!

FATHER
We didn’t have a choice, Meg, I’m sorry. I couldn’t risk losing --

CALVIN
Mr. Murry! We’ve got company.

* A creature approaches them out of the darkness. *

ACTOR 3
Meg followed Calvin’s gaze into the gloomy half-light and saw something, coming toward them, moving silently.

MEG
What is that?

CALVIN
I don’t know but it’s big. Really big.

MEG
Make it go away!

CALVIN
* (approaching the creature) *

Hi. Uh. How’s it going?

BEAST
* (neither hostile nor friendly) *

Who are you?

CALVIN
We’re -- we’re from Earth.

FATHER
Don’t come any closer -- just leave us alone!

BEAST
* (Studying Father:) I will communicate with the young one. *(to Calvin:) * Why are you here?
CALVIN
We were on Camazotz, and we, uh, tessered?, through space-time?, anyway we landed here and my friend -- this girl -- was injured, badly.

_The creature leans over Meg, extends one of its arms. A puff of something comes out of a tentacle._

BEAST
This will ease the pain. Your Earth -- it is a dark planet?

CALVIN
No. Well. Darkish. The Black Thing is there, but we’re fighting it.

BEAST
Camazotz is dark.

CALVIN
Yeah, we know. We weren’t exactly there on vacation.

_The creature lifts Meg in its arms, cradling her._

FATHER
What are you doing?!

BEAST
Taking the child.

FATHER
No! Put her down! Please.

BEAST
She is in mortal danger. If we do nothing, she will die. You must trust me.

MEG
No! Don’t let it take away from you! Calvin!

CALVIN
Can you save her?

BEAST
I believe so. But the Dark Essence burns a tender soul. She needs special care.
ACTOR 3  

(Meg also says the boldfaced words)  
With no strength left to fight, Meg leaned her head against the creature’s chest. She hadn’t been held like this since she was very small. It felt/feels safe. And now from deep inside the creature Meg heard a soft, rumbly purring, which turned into a kind of beautiful music, like a lullaby. Like her mother’s lullaby.

(Meg drifts off to sleep. Lights shift. Transition to: Meg sleeping on a bed of fur. Father and Calvin talk to the creature.)  
Meg slept for a long, long time, and the strange creature stayed with her, caring for her, helping her to heal. Finally, when Meg was out of danger . . .

FATHER  
Thank you for taking care of Meg. But we have to get back to Camazotz, to my boy.

CALVIN  
Can’t you help us?

BEAST  
We know about tessering, as you call it, but we cannot do it onto a dark planet. And if you try to go back there yourself you could easily miss your target and become lost in the darkness forever.

MEG  
(groggily)  
Daddy?

BEAST  
Ah, so you are awake, little one.

FATHER  
Meg, how are you feeling?

MEG  
I feel . . . fine. All the pain is gone.

CALVIN  
You can thank Nurse Betty for that.

Calvin nods toward the creature.

MEG  
Oh. What should I call you?
BEAST
In your sleep you called me mother.

MEG
I did?

BEAST
But that name belongs to another. You may call me Aunt. And the word I felt in your mind when you first saw me: Beast. I shall be Aunt Beast.

MEG
Thank you for taking care of me, Aunt Beast. How long was I asleep?

CALVIN
Three days.

MEG
What?! No! We have to get to Charles Wallace!

FATHER
That’s what we were talking about when you woke up.

CALVIN
She thinks it’s a bad idea. And we don’t know how to get back there anyway.

MEG
Aunt Beast, you have to help us! Please!

AUNT BEAST
Child, I will try. My world, too, is in battle with the Dark Essence -- what you call the Black Thing. It is very powerful. Your father must be an extraordinary man to have gotten you away from Camazotz.

MEG
But he left Charles Wallace behind!

AUNT BEAST
I understand the little boy is very special, very important. But to go back through the Black Thing to Camazotz would be too dangerous. We cannot fight without help.

MEG
Mrs. Whatsit! Aunt Beast, do you know Mrs. Whatsit?
FATHER
Calvin told me about your friends, Meg, but I’m not so sure --

MEG
What’s wrong with you?! You abandoned us before, and now you’re going to abandon Charles forever?! Don’t you care about him at all?!

AUNT BEAST
Child.

FATHER
I’m sorry, Meg.

AUNT BEAST
She is distraught. She was almost taken by the Black Thing. I have restored her body, but the damage to her spirit may take longer to heal.

MEG
Well I’m not going to just sit around and do nothing! Mrs. Whatsit! Mrs. Whatsit!! If you care anything at all about me, if you care about Charles Wallace, Mrs. Whatsit, then you’ll come!!

WHATSIT
I have come.

(She appears.)

But why have you called me?

MEG
Mrs. Whatsit! My father left Charles Wallace on Camazotz! IT has him!

WHATSIT
Mr. Murry. I am pleased to make your acquaintance. You have a remarkable family.

MEG
Well his family is about to lose one of its kids if you don’t do something.

WHATSIT
And what do you expect me to do?

MEG
You have to help us get him back!

WHATSIT
You know I can do nothing on Camazotz.
MEG
So you’re just going to let him rot inside IT’s putrid brain forever?

WHATSIT
Did I say that?

FATHER
(stepping forward)
If you could teach me enough about the tesseract so I could get back to Camazotz safely . . .

MRS. WHATSIT
And what do you plan to do if you get back to Camazotz, Mr. Murry?

FATHER
I’ll try to take my child away from IT.

MRS. WHATSIT
You will not succeed. I’m sorry, but no.

CALVIN
Then I’ll go. I almost got him away before.

MRS. WHATSIT
No, he is much deeper into the mind of IT now. If you go, you will be lost as well.

MEG
I can’t stand this! Someone has to do something!!!

MRS. WHATSIT
Only one here can reach him.

Silence.

MEG
You mean me. The weakest one here. You want me to go.

MRS. WHATSIT
You are far from weak, Meg Murry.

FATHER
Look, if you think I’m going to let my daughter go back and face that monster, you’re crazy.

MRS. WHATSIT
She is the only one who can do it. But only if she goes with grace and understanding.
CALVIN

Just let me go. You said I’m supposed to take care of Meg.

MRS. WHATSIT

And you have done that.

CALVIN

I haven’t done anything!

MEG

Calvin, it’s okay. *(surprisingly calm)* Daddy, I’m sorry I got mad at you. I was scared, and I wanted you to make it all better . . . but I understand now. It has to be me. I’m the one who’s closest to Charles Wallace. When all this started I sat in my bed in a hurricane and waited for my little brother to come help me, because he’s the one who always comes. Now it’s my turn.

AUNT BEAST

Is she strong enough to go back through the darkness?

MRS. WHATSIT

If I escort her she will be all right. I think.

FATHER

You think?! The Black Thing almost killed her before. She can’t take it again. Anyway, how do I know you’re not in league with IT?

MEG

No, Daddy.

MRS. WHATSIT

I don’t blame your father for being suspicious and frightened, Meg. But Mr. Murry, you have to allow your daughter the privilege of accepting this danger. We must all admit that the danger may be fatal. And we must have faith that it won’t be.

MEG

Daddy, Mom is always shoving me out into the world. She’d want me to do this, you know she would. Just tell her -- Never mind. I’ll tell her myself.

FATHER

I may have already lost Charles. I can’t lose you too.

MEG

If we let IT win, we’ll both lose everything that matters anyway.
It is time. Say your farewells.

Aunt Beast.

Take care, little one.

Thank you for saving my life. Cal --

Calvin pulls her into a desperate hug. He kisses her.

Daddy.

Meg. My Megaparsec.

Megaparsec: an astronomical unit of measure equaling 3.26 million light years.

Which is how far I’d go to be with you.

(to Whatsit:) Are you going with me?

Only through the Blackness. Then you will be on your own. But my love goes with you. Never forget that, all right?

Okay.

Margaret Murry. You have something that IT does not have. It is your only weapon. But you must find it for yourself.

I’ll try.
MRS. WHATSIT
And so: not hand in hand, but heart in heart -- we go!

FATHER
Wait --

*Lights, sound.*

ACTOR 2
Meg was swept immediately into darkness and the icy devouring cold of the Black Thing.

MEG
Don’t let it get me, don’t let it get me, please Mrs. Whatsit, don’t let it get me.

ACTOR 3
And then -- Camazotz. Meg was surprised to find herself already inside the Central Intelligence building, in one of its many corridors.

ACTOR 4
She took a moment to orient herself --

MEG
Okay. Let’s go.

-- then began walking

ACTOR 2
Putting one foot in front of the other

ACTOR 3
Not thinking

ACTOR 5
Not planning

MEG
Just walking

ACTOR 3
Until she found herself at the omnivator.

MEG
The door is already open. Does IT know I’m here, does IT want me to come? OK, here I come.
She enters the omnivator and it immediately surges upward.

ACTOR 3
As Meg got closer and closer to IT, she thought

MEG
What have I got that IT hasn’t got? Daddy said IT isn’t used to being resisted. And I’m stubborn, I resist all the time. Is that what I have, my stubbornness? That can’t be it, can it?

ACTOR 2
And then the omnivator came to a sudden stop and the wall opened before her.

ACTOR 3
And immediately Meg felt

ACTOR 2
The pulsating light

ACTOR 3
The throbbing noise

ACTOR 2
The horrible, beating power of

ALL ACTORS
IT!

MEG
I can’t give in, I have to resist IT’s rhythm, I have to fight!

ACTOR 3
But she felt as though she were already inside IT, swallowed up by IT’s power.

MEG
What have I got that IT hasn’t got? What have I --

She is interrupted by a creepy giggling.

CHARLES WALLACE
Hi. We’ve been waiting for you.

MEG
Charles Wallace!
Charles crouches beside IT, his jaw slack, his eyes empty. He sways/nods/breathes to the rhythm of IT.

CHARLES WALLACE
We knew you’d come. We made you some cocoa. (He giggles.)

MEG
What are you talking about?

CHARLES WALLACE
Whatsit delivered you to us. She is our friend, you know.

MEG
No! That’s a lie! (Charles laughs.) Mrs. Whatsit told me -- Wait. Just then I felt IT let go of me for a second. Is it because I got mad? Maybe that’s what I have that IT doesn’t have, my anger, my emotions.

CHARLES WALLACE
Nonsense! You have nothing that IT doesn’t have.

MEG
Shut up, you little gargoyle! You’re not my brother, you’re just a little IT-ling and I hate you and I hate that monster you call master!

(she cries out in pain as she feels IT’s grip squeezing her)

Ahh!! No. No, hate won’t work. IT knows all about hate, don’t you, you black-hearted heap of rotten -- No, let me go!

Through the following sequence Meg is pulled closer and closer to IT, until she seems to have been fully sucked into IT’s control, physically and mentally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IT</th>
<th>CHARLES</th>
<th>MEG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IT welcomes the Meg.</td>
<td>Ha!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT welcomes the Murry-Meg.</td>
<td>We have you!!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Murry-Meg must come into IT.</td>
<td>Sister!!</td>
<td>No!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Murry-Meg must be with IT.</td>
<td>Sister and me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be with IT.</td>
<td>and IT makes three!!</td>
<td>I can’t do it!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be IT.</td>
<td>Sister in IT!!</td>
<td>Can’t do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be IT.</td>
<td>Sister is IT!!</td>
<td>Do it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be-IT.</td>
<td>Tag you’re IT!!</td>
<td>Be it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE-IT.</td>
<td>Hahahahahaha</td>
<td>Be IT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE-IT.</td>
<td>hahahahahahah!</td>
<td>Be –</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Just as it seems all is lost, Meg jerks free and shouts to Charles:

MEG
Stop it!!! You’re a liar! You are lying!

IT
IT does not lie. IT is the truth.

MEG
And that’s the biggest lie of all. You’re lying about this place, you’re lying about what you are, you’re lying about Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Whatsit would never have anything to do with you!

CHARLES WALLACE
(with a soft chuckle)
Mrs. Whatsit hates the Murry-Meg.

MEG
What did you say?

CHARLES WALLACE
(hissing)
She HATES you!

MEG
No.

ACTOR 2
And suddenly Meg felt it --

MEG
(suddenly calm, feeling it)
No, Mrs. Whatsit loves me, she told me so just before I came back here.

ACTOR 3
-- A burst of light filling her heart --

MEG
She told me never to forget it.

ACTOR 2
-- And she knew:
MEG

That’s what I have that IT doesn’t have.

CHARLES WALLACE

What?

ACTOR 3

Mrs. Whatsit’s love.

ACTOR 5

And her father’s.

ACTOR 2

And her mother’s.

ACTOR 4

And Calvin’s.

ACTOR 2

And Aunt Beast’s.

MEG

And Charles Wallace. I have my love for him. For you Charles!

CHARLES WALLACE

What?!

MEG

Little brother, come back to me. Come away from IT, come back, come home. I love you, Charles. I love you, you weird little perfect little boy. I love you.

CHARLES WALLACE

Stop that.

MEG

I love you. I love you. I love you. I LOVE YOU, CHARLES WALLACE!

The pulsing light, the pounding noise stop. Eerie silence. Then Charles Wallace rises from his crouch, looks at IT, looks at Meg, then runs to her and hugs her for dear life.

CHARLES WALLACE

Meg!
MEG
(now in a whisper)
I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you.

Growing cacaphony of sound and light, perhaps flashing projections, in different places on the set, reading “IT . . . IT . . . IT is a dark and stormy IT!”

A whirl of raging shadow.

An icy cold blast.

An angry, hate-filled howl --

IT

NOOOOOO!

Then the empty darkness of the tesseract.

And in the passing of an instant, Meg felt the ground beneath her feet again. Then she was rolling on the sweet-smelling autumnal earth with her little brother in her arms.

Charles Wallace.

Meg, you saved me!

Then she heard --

Meg!

And --
FATHER
Meg! Charles Wallace!

ACTOR 3
And she realized that she and Charles Wallace were sitting in her mother’s vegetable garden. And Calvin was running toward her saying

CALVIN
Meg, you did it! You brought him home!

Calvin runs to her, launches himself into the air and lands on top of Meg and Charles Wallace.

ACTOR 3
And now Meg saw her mother stepping out through the kitchen door and coming toward her with a puzzled look on her face --

MOTHER
Meg? What are you -- Is that . . . ? Oh my lord.

FATHER
Kate.

ACTOR 3
-- then her mother and father were in each other’s arms, and then all of them on the ground, hugging each other and laughing and crying in the garden. And now Meg felt something else. A new flood of joy and love.

MEG
Hush.

CHARLES WALLACE
What is it?

CALVIN
You hear something, Meg?

Beat.

ACTOR 3
It was a glorious, star-strewn night.
MEG

Listen.

ACTOR 3

And on this night three stars shone brighter than all the rest.

_Three star-lights appear and we hear the bubbling laughter of Mrs. Whatsit, Mrs. Who and Mrs. Which. Meg smiles._

_End of play._
Appendix: Optional Narration

Note: Narration is to be avoided wherever a suitably convincing stage effect can accomplish the story-telling (see “A Note about Staging” at front of script). But in a few cases I foresee a need for some additional narration for some productions, as follows.

p. 28 (to be divided among available ensemble members)

– Then something began happening to Mrs. Whatsit.

– Her plump little body began to shimmer, to quiver, to shift, the wild colors of her hobo clothes fading and whitening as her body stretched and unfolded until finally, standing before them was a creature more beautiful than any Meg had ever seen.

– Its powerful white body looked something like a horse, except that rising up from its back was an almost human torso, with a head that was like a man’s head –

– but with perfect, soft, feminine features.

p. 32, for Actor 2

Suddenly The Black Thing seemed to seethe and vibrate, as though shot through with electricity. And then a great burst of light pierced the Darkness, and wherever the light touched, the Darkness disappeared, until it was completely gone. Finally the shining light began to fade, until it, too, had disappeared, and all they could see was a peaceful sea of stars.

p. 54, for Actor 2

The wall opened for a moment and Charles Wallace walked through – but it closed again before Meg and Calvin could follow.