

# WHO'S AFRAID OF THE RAIN?

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A One-Act Play

by Ramón Esquivel

Written in collaboration with:

Yulitssa Meza Duarte

Lus Gallardo

Arely Sanchez Medina

Mylaa Moreno

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## **Who's Afraid of the Rain?**

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### Cast

The play is designed for three performers with doubling.

#### **Performer 1**

CHIQUIS, a Lechuza

#### **Performer 2**

REBECCA, a Sasquatch

SQUIGGLES, a Ferret

#### **Performer 3**

A puppeteer would be ideal.

DRAKE, a Dragon

CARÍN, a Shrimp

### Settings

The Great Gate, a portal between Our World and the Other World

A Public Library

— The Children's Area within the Library

— Before a large window looking outside

Outside the Library, where it is perpetually raining

## PROLOGUE

DRAKE, a Dragon, guards the Great Gate.

DRAKE

Once upon a yesterday, this Great Gate was open. It was a portal between two worlds: Our World, and the Other World. When it was open, it was a time of peace and harmony.

But then, the water of Our World. Might fires swept through and burned our trees. I crossed this portal to ask for help from the Other World. What I saw there astonished me. The Other World had so much water that its land could not hold it all. They stored the extra water in the sky. I saw this with my own three eyes!

I knew what had happened: the Other World had stolen our water! I shared my suspicion with Our World, and everyone believed me. We closed the Great Gate. It has been closed so long, creatures of the Other World exist only in our books and imaginations.

## SCENE 1

REBECCA, a Sasquatch, and CHIQUIS, a Lechuza, have been listening to Drake's tale.

REBECCA

Every time we come here, this cranky old Dragon tells us the saaaame story.

CHIQUIS

Rebecca, do you really want to upset a Dragon?

REBECCA

I'm a Sasquatch. We're not afraid of anything, especially Dragons.

DRAKE

Hmm!

REBECCA

I'm not even afraid of my friend Chiquis here ...

CHIQUIS

—Hi, I'm Chiquis.

REBECCA

And she's a Lechuza! Lechuzas like her are scary. They fly around and swoop down and grab creatures and eat them. Do you do that, Chiquis?

CHIQUIS

Only sometimes.

DRAKE

Why do a Sasquatch and a Lechuza want to visit the Other World?

CHIQUIS

I've read books about magical creatures of the Other World. I want to see them. I want to see cats, shrimps, pigs, ferrets, capybaras, dogs ...

REBECCA

—I really want to see a dog. That is, if the Other World is even real.

DRAKE

Ohh, it is real. I saw it with my own three eyes!

CHIQUIS

Let us see the Other World, with our own eyes. Let us see all those fantastical creatures. Let us bring back stories to share with everyone in Our World. Including you.

DRAKE

If you enter the Other World, beware of the creatures you meet there. They will trick you.

REBECCA

I won't trust anyone but us.

DRAKE

Most of all, beware of the water that they stole from Our World. They have so much water that it falls from the sky. I hear that the water in the sky ... is POISON.

REBECCA

Poison water from the sky? Why would they do that?

DRAKE

They are not to be trusted.

CHIQUIS

We understand. We will remember your warning.

DRAKE

You may pass.

Drake opens the Great Gate. Chiquis and Rebecca walk through the portal.

## SCENE 2

A Library in the Other World. CHIQUIS and REBECCA enter.

CHIQUIS

So this is the Other World? Walls and walls of books?

REBECCA

I don't read much. I get my news from friends and family. This all seems wasteful.

CHIQUIS

I want to read their books, but it's so dark in here. Do you see that light over there? It seems to be coming from behind a door.

REBECCA

Let's investigate. But try to stay quiet.

Chiquis kicks over a garbage can.

CHIQUIS

—Ow! My talon!

REBECCA

So much for quiet.

An angry cry from behind the door.

CHIQUIS

That sound! A creature from the Other World? Let's hide.

REBECCA

Hide? I'm not afraid of anything.

CARÍN, a Shrimp, enters with a light.

CARÍN

Hah! Who goes there?

REBECCA

Run!

CHIQUIS

Hide!

CARÍN

Who dares disturb my evening reading?

REBECCA

Such a little thing. I'm not afraid of that. You stay here, Chiquis.

CARÍN

I said, who goes there?! It's too dark to see.

Rebecca emerges.

REBECCA

I go there. Or ... *here*. And who are you?

CARÍN

This is a library. I'm a librarian. I work here. But I'm not working at this moment. Know why? Because we're closed! It's the middle of the night, so get out of here!

Chiquis emerges.

CHIQUIS

You're really loud. What is your name?

CARÍN

My name is Carín.

CHIQUIS

Nice to meet you, Carín. My name is Chiquis. This is Rebecca. This is our first time in ... what you call a *library*. We came through the Great Gate there.

CARÍN

Great Gate? You mean that door that is always locked? I thought it was an emergency exit. You say you're from another world?

REBECCA

You are from the Other World. We are from Our World.

CARÍN

I want to get a good look at you. Let me turn on the lights.

Carín turns on lights and sees Chiquis and Rebecca in their full glory.

REBECCA  
Hi!

CHIQUIS  
Hello.

CARÍN  
Wow! Oh wow! You're a ... you're a Sasquatch!

REBECCA  
Sure am.

CARÍN  
And you must be ... with an owl's body and woman's face? You're a Lechuza!

CHIQUIS  
That's right!

CARÍN  
Lechuzas fly through the air, and swoop down and kidnap creatures, and eat them.

CHIQUIS  
Only sometimes. How do you know about us?

CARÍN  
From books, of course. But Sasquatches and Lechuzas are only legends. You're not real.

REBECCA  
Of course we're real! We're as real as you are.

CARÍN  
I'm a Shrimp. Shrimps are real.

CHIQUIS  
You're a Shrimp! A real, live Shrimp.

CARÍN  
If you're from another world, how do you know about Shrimps?

CHIQUIS  
From books.

REBECCA  
Even I've heard of Shrimps.

CHIQUIS

*The Little Shrimp* is one of my favorite stories. The Little Shrimp falls in love with handsome werewolf on land, so the Little Shrimp gives up her voice to meet him.

CARÍN

Wrong. You're thinking of *The Little Mermaid*.

CHIQUIS

No, you're wrong. It's *The Little Shrimp*. Mermaids tell that story in school.

REBECCA

We're right. You're wrong. That's how it is.

CARÍN

Well ... we will agree to disagree.

CHIQUIS

But why? Isn't that what conversation is all about? Talking and discussing so that disagreements can become agreements?

CARÍN

These days, it seems that conversations and agreements only exist in fantasy stories. Stories like *The Little Mermaid*.

REBECCA

*The Little Shrimp*.

CARÍN

Why don't you return in the morning? When the library is open. I will be happy to give you books that will correct your way of thinking. But we're closed! Please go outside.

CHIQUIS

Outside? Where the water in the sky is?

CARÍN

You mean *rain*? Yes, it is raining. It's been raining for a long time.

REBECCA

You're trying to trick us into going into the POISON rain!

CARÍN

No-no, rain is not poison. Rain is just annoying. I never leave the library when the rain is falling. I have not left the library in a very long time.



CHIQUIS

Because you are afraid of water?

REBECCA

Water that was stolen from Our World!

CARÍN

Stolen ... ?

CHIQUIS

We have a right to be in this ... this strange fortress of books.

CARÍN

This is the [Insert Name of the Local] Library.

REBECCA

We're not going anywhere. Right, Chiquis?

CHIQUIS

Right.

Rebecca and Chiquis sit down.

CARÍN

Oh dear. A sit-in protest. Reminds me of my sit-in protests in college. Quite different being on the other side of one. I'll call Squiggles. He'll know what to do.

### SCENE 3

A little while later. Carín and SQUIGGLES, a Ferret, observe (offstage) Rebecca and Chiquis.

SQUIGGLES

You said her name is Rebecca? Funny name for a Sasquatch.

CARÍN

Some might say Squiggles is a funny name for a Ferret.

SQUIGGLES

"Squiggles" fits me, don't it? How many times have I squiggled into this library's pipes to fix the plumbing? What's the owl-lady's name?

CARÍN

Chiquis is not an "owl-lady." She's a Lechuza, part human and part owl.

SQUIGGLES

So ... an “owl-lady.”

CARÍN

Are you going to help me? I have to open soon, and I don’t want a Sasquatch and Lechuza sitting in the middle of the children’s book section. I do not need a bunch of screaming puppies, kittens, ponies, and kids running around the library. Too loud.

SQUIGGLES

Their world believes that this world stole their world’s water? Maybe there’s truth to that. After all, we steal water from each other in this world. Maybe we did steal their water.

CARÍN

Sad but true.

SQUIGGLES

But believing our rain is poison? That makes no sense. Everyone would be dead.

CARÍN

They don’t even believe creatures like you and me are real, so using logic is tricky.

SQUIGGLES

We don’t believe creatures like them are real either, and yet, there they are. Ask Chiquis, the Lechuza, if she’ll come speak with me.

CARÍN

I hope they will listen to you. They stopped listening to me.

Carín exits.

SQUIGGLES

Hmm. How can I prove that the rain is not poison? Maybe the solution is something else?

CHIQUIS enters.

CHIQUIS

Awesome! I can’t believe I’m looking at a real, live ferret.

SQUIGGLES

Here I am. Handsome yeah?

CHIQUIS

Adorable.

SQUIGGLES

“Adorable,” she says. I always get “adorable.” Whatever, I’ll take it. I’m Squiggles.

CHIQUIS

I'm Chiquis. You wanted to speak to me?

SQUIGGLES

Yes. First of all, thank you for talking to me. I understand you and your friend there are doing a sit-in protest here in the library?

CHIQUIS

Rebecca and I just wanted to visit the Other World and see some of the magical creatures.

SQUIGGLES

Magical creatures? Like Ferrets?

CHIQUIS

Exactly. But the Shrimp, Carín, tried to trick us into going outside, in the poison rain!

SQUIGGLES

The rain isn't poison.

CHIQUIS

Are you trying to trick us too?!

SQUIGGLES

It has been raining for a long, long, long time. People don't want to get wet in the rain. Even Carín doesn't like getting wet. Can you believe a Shrimp that doesn't like water?

CHIQUIS

Carín must know that the rain is poison!

SQUIGGLES

Ferrets like me don't like the rain much either. It's wet and cold and, and if we get too wet and cold then sometimes we get sick. But I'm a plumber by trade, which means people call me all the time to fix their leaky pipes. My job means I have to go out in the rain all the time. But I have something that will protect me.

CHIQUIS

What's that?

Squiggles shares his umbrella.

SQUIGGLES

An umbrella!

CHIQUIS

An umbrella! I've read about them in books. Great warriors carry them, right?

SQUIGGLES

We sure do. This umbrella here keeps me dry *mostly*. When it rains really hard, I wear extra armor: rain jacket, rain pants, and rain boots. But an umbrella is the best.

CHIQUIS

The rain could never hurt you with this umbrella to protect you.

SQUIGGLES

A little rain water may seep in, but not enough to make me feel yucky. An umbrella is perfectly safe. Here, I brought extra umbrellas, for you and your friend. Want to go outside and try it?

Squiggles offers Chiquis the umbrellas.

CHIQUIS

I want to believe you, Squiggles. But I only just met you. Rebecca and the Dragon say that the rain is poison.

SQUIGGLES

The rain is not poison. Come outside and give / it a try.

CHIQUIS

—You're trying to trick me!

SQUIGGLES

I hear you. You really believe the rain is poison. I will go outside and show you how the umbrella protects me. Keep looking out the window.

Squiggles exits with his umbrella.

SCENE 4

Carín enters. She joins Chiquis at the window.

CARÍN

Where did Squiggles go?

CHIQUIS

Outside. He said his umbrella protects him from the poison rain. Do you have one?

CARÍN

Yes, I have an umbrella. I don't like getting wet, and it has been raining for such a very long time. I want the rain to stop, but it is still raining. When I absolutely must go outside in the rain, I bring my umbrella. Like Squiggles said, it protects me from getting wet.

CHIQUIS

Look! There he is! There's Squiggles.

CARÍN

What foolishness is he doing?

CHIQUIS

Squiggles is ... dancing? Other creatures are gathering to watch! They have umbrellas too.

CARÍN

Their umbrellas keep them dry.

CHIQUIS

What are those creatures?

CARÍN

Oh, well ... let's see. That creature there is a monkey.

CHIQUIS

A real monkey!

CARÍN

There is an ostrich. See that little guy on the ground there? That is a banana slug.

CHIQUIS

It's like my books are coming to life right in front of me. It looks so fun. Any dogs?

CARÍN

That furry creature there ... that is a dog.

CHIQUIS

A real dog. Wow.

CARÍN

They're all dancing now! Hmm. It does look fun. Maybe it's fun to dance in the rain?

CHIQUIS

You have an umbrella, don't you? Why don't you go outside and join them?

CARÍN

Would you like to join me? Meet that dog? Squiggles brought extra umbrellas. Maybe Rebecca can join us outside too?

CHIQUIS

Rebecca! She's going to be angry that I'm even thinking about it. You're tricking me.

CARÍN

Take the umbrella, don't take the umbrella — the choice is yours. But do remember that: the choice is yours. Rebecca's choice is hers. I'm not trying to trick you.

CHIQUIS

I'm not sure I believe you.

CARÍN

Why did our two worlds stop trusting each other? I wish I knew. But I think it would be fun to dance in the rain with a Lechuza, and a Sasquatch. It would make a good story.

CHIQUIS

I would like that story. But I can't leave my friend. She will be angry if I accept the umbrella. And if I go outside without her, it will hurt her feelings. She's big and she's tough, but she's really got a gentle heart.

CARÍN

The umbrellas are there if you change your mind. Talk to Rebecca. I hope both of you will join us outside. If not, you are welcome to stay in the library for as long as you wish.

## SCENE 5

SQUIGGLES dances in the rain. CARÍN joins in. Their umbrellas keep them safe.

## SCENE 6

CHIQUIS is speaking to REBECCA, still protesting. Chiquis has two umbrellas.

REBECCA

What did the Dragon warn us about? Beware of Other Worlders telling you lies.

CHIQUIS

How do you know the Ferret was lying? You haven't even met Squiggles.

REBECCA

I know because I know. That's all I need to know.

Chiquis twirls an umbrella, fiddles with it, etc.

CHIQUIS

This umbrella is actually really cool.

REBECCA

Whatever an umbrella is, it's stupid. Get rid of it. It could be poisoned, like the rain.

CHIQUIS

Squiggles and Carín say that it's specially designed to protect us from the rain.

REBECCA

They admitted it! The rain *is* poisoned.

CHIQUIS

Maybe it is, maybe it isn't ...

REBECCA

—It is. It definitely is.

CHIQUIS

Either way, though, poison or not poison, these umbrellas will protect us.

REBECCA

Lies. All lies.

CHIQUIS

Right now, Squiggles and Carín are outside, in the rain, dancing and laughing and having a good time with a monkey, an ostrich, a banana slug ... and a dog. Just like in the books.

REBECCA

Did you say ... a dog? I've always wanted to see a dog.

CHIQUIS

Look out that window. See Carín dancing there? The fella dancing next to her? That's Squiggles the Ferret. And that creature clowning next to them? That is a dog.

REBECCA

But the rain ... ? It should be hurting them.

CHIQUIS

The umbrellas are keeping them safe from the rain.

REBECCA

We're going home. I think about these things more than you do, and I know better.

CHIQUIS

You only think you know better.

REBECCA

This place is changing you. I don't like it.

CHIQUIS

You're my best friend, and adventures aren't any fun unless you're having them with me. I would like to go outside and play in the rain with those other creatures. I believe this umbrella will protect me from the rain.

REBECCA

Fine! Then go!

CHIQUIS

But your friendship is more important. If you don't want to go, I won't leave you alone.

REBECCA

Your friendship is important to me too. You can outside, with the umbrella. It is your choice. But I'm staying here.

CHIQUIS

Are you angry with me?

REBECCA

Yes. But I'll get over it. I always do.

CHIQUIS

Thank you, Rebecca. Now I just need to figure out how to open this.

Chiquis opens the umbrella. When she tries to hold it, it sways her this way and that.

REBECCA

What's wrong? Is it enchanted? Why are you moving like that?

CHIQUIS

It's hard to hold. I don't think umbrellas are designed for creatures with wings.

REBECCA

They probably designed it that way on purpose so creatures from Our World will get poisoned by the rain.



CHIQUIS

Or ... maybe they just haven't met creatures from Our World before? Creatures like you and me? We can help them understand us. They can help us understand them.

REBECCA

Give me the umbrellas. I will hold them for both of us.

CHIQUIS

You're not afraid of it being poisoned?

REBECCA

I'm not afraid of anything. I'm not afraid of the rain! But I'll use this umbrella anyway.

CHIQUIS

Thank you. What changed your mind?

REBECCA

You changed my mind, my friend. I am doing this for you.

## SCENE 7

CHIQUIS and REBECCA outside in the rain.  
Rebecca holds both umbrellas, while Chiquis  
dances beneath. The umbrellas protect them.

## EPILOGUE

The Great Gate is open. DRAKE the Dragon  
returns. She holds an umbrella.

DRAKE

Once upon a yesterday, this Great Gate was closed. Now it is open, a portal between two worlds. All are welcome. Soon, it will once again be a time of peace and harmony. Can you see it? I can see it, with my own three eyes.

End of play.