

## Wilderness House Literary Review 16/4

*Zvi A. Sesling*

### **Lester Bildorp Becomes An Orphan**

Lester Bildorp was fascinated with magic. When he heard Gelfman The Magician was going to perform at the New Town Theatre he begged his parents to take him. He begged and begged until they could not stand the begging anymore and agreed to take him to see Gelfman The Magician at the New Town Theatre. He wanted to see rabbits pulled from a hat, a lady sawed in half and handkerchiefs turned into doves that flew around the theatre and return to the magician's hand turned back into a handkerchief.

On that special day the family took a taxi to the theatre, bought tickets for the third row and settled in comfortably. Soon Gelfman The Magician appeared on stage to applause and cheers. He performed the requisite magic Lester expected: a rabbit pulled from Gelfman's hat, a red handkerchief turned into a dove and back to a handkerchief and the beautiful blonde sawed in half and put back together.

Then Gelfman The Magician announced: "Tonight, for the first time anywhere, here in the New Town Theatre I am going to perform magic that has never been attempted anywhere." The audience oohed and ahed with expectation. They shouted, clapped and stomped their feet. "I will need one or two volunteers." The theatre went silent. No one spoke up. Lester looked at his parents and begged them to go up, "You just have to, for me."

Gelfman heard Lester and implored the Bildorp parents to come on-stage. He guaranteed them the thrill of a lifetime and said their son would be extra proud of them. Lester looked at them with wide pleading eyes. His lips formed the word please. So the Bildorps agreed and alighted to the stage where Gelfman The Magician stood with arms spread wide

"Ladies and gentlemen," Gelfman announced, "today you are about to see the single most exciting act of magic ever performed live on a stage before an audience of so many people."

With that he opened a large box on the stage and motioned for the Bildorps to enter. He then closed the box and he and his assistant placed a large red sheet over it. He recited some incantations learned in India. Then he took one end of the red sheet while his assistant took the other end and together they removed the sheet. Gelfman opened the box and showed that it was empty.

"But where are my parents?" Lester Bildorp asked.

"Well, I'm not sure," Gelfman The Magician said. "I said I'd make them disappear but I never figured out how to make them return."