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No. 511

THE PRINCESS in the FAIRY TALE

A Garden Fairy Story for Children
in One Act

BY

CONSTANCE WILCOX

PRINCESS PIGNATELLI

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A GARDEN FAIRY STORY FOR CHILDREN
IN ONE ACT

BY
CONSTANCE ^{Greenlee} WILCOX
" PRINCESS PIGNATELLI

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THE PRINCESS IN THE FAIRY TALE

ORIGINAL PROGRAM

A GARDEN FAIRY STORY FOR CHILDREN

CHARACTERS

The Princess in the Fairy Tale	-	Ethel Wilcox
The Old Nurse	- - -	Luck Andrews
The Dragon	- - -	Rudolph Willard
The Prince in the Fairy Tale	-	J. Andrews
Billy Travers	- - - -	Ben Perkins
The King in the Fairy Tale	-	Lionel Perkins
The Queen in the Fairy Tale	-	Constance Wilcox
The Little Princesses—	Betty Wilcox, Mary Hotchkiss, Mary Low, Ann Hart, Cynthia Harts	
The Heralds—	William Harts, W. Low	

SCENE. A Garden in a Fairy Tale.

TIME. A Summer Afternoon.

Given at Madison, Connecticut

THE PRINCESS IN
THE FAIRY TALE

THE PRINCESS IN THE FAIRY TALE¹

A GARDEN FAIRY STORY FOR CHILDREN

SCENE. *A garden in a fairy tale.*

TIME. *A summer afternoon.*

CHARACTERS

THE PRINCESS IN THE FAIRY TALE.

THE OLD NURSE.

THE DRAGON.

THE PRINCE IN THE FAIRY TALE.

BILLY TRAVERS.

THE KING IN THE FAIRY TALE.

THE QUEEN IN THE FAIRY TALE.

THE SIX LITTLE PRINCESSES.

THE TWO HERALDS.

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THE PRINCESS IN THE FAIRY TALE

(NOTE)

THIS setting is purely fantastic, and meant to be achieved by an indoor production. The suggestions for outdoor production are at the end of the play.

The scene is a garden. Four tall dark cedars guard it at the back, and behind their high silhouettes is a vague woodland, with slim tree trunks gray against a twilight mist, filled with an eerie, dim, mauve light. In the foreground, a round fountain, with one bright jet of water springing up from its clear pool. THE DRAGON lies by the fountain, his silver scales gleaming softly. As he lies, his horned head, with its scales and alligator jaw, rests peacefully on his outstretched front claws. His eyes are closed, and he is breathing gently, a little blue smoke coming from his wide nostrils. The little PRINCESS is seated on a low stool by the fountain, sewing. She is dressed in a very short white ruffled pinafore, with a crown embroidered in one corner, and her plump little legs in their white socks and black strap slippers are crossed primly before her. She has a quantity of beautiful fair hair hanging like spun silk, loose over her shoulders, and she wears a

very small high pointed gold crown. Her round pink and white face is all screwed up in her attempts at sewing as she jabs in and out of her embroidery.

THE OLD NURSE sits on a stool a little behind, at the right of the PRINCESS. She is very fat, and dressed in voluminous leaf brown, with a wide frilly cap framing her wrinkled face, topped by a pointed black witch hat.

The light in the garden is clear, and yet very soft, with an odd bluish tinge, like the edge of twilight. The sky above the dark cedars is a deep twilight blue.

THE NURSE

(In a droning voice, as her head nods back and forth on her ample chest)

“ A moonbeam floateth from the skies —
Whispering — ‘ Heighho, my dearie; *(She sighs sleepily)*

I would spin a web before your eyes —
A beautiful web of silver light,
Wherein is many a wondrous sight
Of a radiant garden leagues away —
Where the softly tinkling lilies sway —
. . . Heighho, my dearie! ’ ”

EUGENE FIELD.

(With a deep sigh, her voice trails away and she sleeps. THE DRAGON joins her with a gentle snore.)

PRINCESS

(With a sudden vicious jab of the needle)
Ouch! *(She puts her finger in her mouth.)*

NURSE

(Waking with a start, and rushing to the PRINCESS shaking her by the shoulder)

Drat the child! Take your thumb out of your mouth! *(She fishes a handkerchief out of the PRINCESS' pinafore pocket.)* And let three drops fall on your handkerchief at once! What sort of a Fairy Tale Princess are you — to let an opportunity like that go to waste. Oh, dear, Oh, dear! *(She tries to squeeze the PRINCESS' finger over the handkerchief.)*

PRINCESS

(Jerking her hand away, and sticking her thumb in her mouth again)

I will put my thumb in my mouth. I will. I will. *(She beats a tattoo on the stool with her heels.)* I won't put three drops on my handkerchief to make another old fairy tale — so it can be lost, and the Dragon eat it, or the pixies steal it, or the Prince find it. Of course he would find it and come flourishing back with the silly thing to me. They always end the same way. I'm tired of 'em. I am. I am! I'm sick of being the Princess in the Fairy Tale! Yah!

NURSE

You can't help that, my dearie, because that's what you are, and that's what you must be until the Fairy Lands fall into dust.

PRINCESS

They're all asleep now. I'm going to run away. *(She jumps up, and puts her embroidery on the stool.)*

NURSE

You can't do that, my dearie, because it's all a dream, and you are part of it.

PRINCESS

(Stamping her foot)

Then I will wake it up!

NURSE

(With a little chuckle)

You are part of the Fairy Tale even when you lose your temper. The Princess in the Fairy Tale can frequently do that. *(The PRINCESS swiftly runs out her tongue.)* But they never stick out their tongue. No. No. Naughty.

PRINCESS

(Jumping up and down)

I will be naughty! My foot's asleep. And I'm tired of being the sweet little Princess with golden hair, who waits around and waits around, and never does anything interesting, but sits in a tower window or under a tree with a dragon, and is rescued each evening by the same little sissy Prince!

NURSE

That's what makes the Fairy Tales. We each have our part to play. *(She tries to straighten the PRINCESS' pinafore.)* Now you mustn't get your clean pinafore all mussed, and your hair tumbled. It's almost time for the afternoon Story of the Dragon. I heard the owl hoot the first three times in the wood.

That means the Prince has started on his journey. He'll be here soon.

PRINCESS

(Jerking away as the NURSE tries to arrange her hair)

I don't want him to come. I don't want my hair smoothed. It's always being brushed, and fussed with, and last time the little silly tried to climb to the tower window on it he pulled dreadfully!

NURSE

(Soothingly)

But think how nice to be rescued from the dragon, and have all the trumpets blow, and the King and Queen come into the garden and order the cannon shot off, and the banquet — and the march of triumph around the dreadful dragon.

PRINCESS

He isn't a bit dreadful. He just sleeps and never even looks at me. He isn't half the nuisance the Prince is. I wish he would beat the Prince up for once.

NURSE

Oh, no, no. That wouldn't be according to law. And then think of all the festivity when he is vanquished!

PRINCESS

I don't think it's fun. And they never let me sit up for the banquet — and I hate walking in a silly procession and trying to keep off the long trains. And I want my tea!

NURSE

There. There. Sit down and finish the nice cob-web embroidery you are working for the Queen's birthday. It will never be done. You can leave a space for the evil Fairy to finish one corner.

PRINCESS

(Sitting sulkily)

Can't I ever have any fun? I want my tea.

NURSE

Just you be good, my dearie, and I will get you the tea. You shall have it right after the story with the Dragon.

PRINCESS

With strawberries?

NURSE

With strawberries — and sugar comfits. I'll go see to them now. Be good. *(She puts the PRINCESS' crown into place.)* Just think of the dragon. He never gets any tea.

(She goes out, briskly at the left, vanishing behind the trees. The PRINCESS sews for a moment, then stops, looks over her shoulder to make sure the NURSE has gone, slips from her seat, and tiptoes to THE DRAGON, who is still snoring very softly.)

PRINCESS

(In a whisper)

Dragon! *(A little louder, and moving nearer.)*
Dragon!

(THE DRAGON *stirs uneasily, and breathes an especially deep snore. The PRINCESS gets down softly on her knees, picks a long blade of grass, and tickles THE DRAGON'S nose with it.*)

PRINCESS

Dragon! (*She tickles his nose.*)

DRAGON

(*Moving a little*)

Ur-umph! (*He puffs out a lot of blue smoke.*)

PRINCESS

There's a dear! (*She tickles one ear.*)

DRAGON

(*In a very deep grumbly, sleepy voice*)

Ur-umph. What d'y want?

PRINCESS

(*Sitting back on her heels*)

Wake up, Dragon.

DRAGON

(*Turning a little and opening one eye*)

What for? 'Tisn't time yet. You can't fool me. I know it like a book. What y' disturbing me for?
(*He closes his eye again.*)

PRINCESS

I want to talk to you! (*She leans forward and tickles his ear.*)

DRAGON

Talk then. But don't whisk that thing about me!
(*He shakes his head peevishly, and opens his eyes.*)

PRINCESS

(*Getting down close to him — in a whisper*)
Dragon. Eat him!

DRAGON

(*With a prodigious yawn, showing his huge Crocodile
mouth and teeth*)

Eat who?

PRINCESS

(*Clapping her hands*)

That's it! You have such a beautiful, big, red
mouth and such long teeth. Eat him for me, Dragon.
Eat him!

DRAGON

(*Rolling his eyes at her reproachfully*)

I'm not a cannibal. I eat grasshoppers only, and
precious few and stringy they are since the fairies
have such a fad for riding them.

PRINCESS

Then scare him, Dragon. Open your mouth and
bellow, and frighten him, so he'll run and never come
back.

DRAGON

Who?

PRINCESS

The Prince.

DRAGON

I couldn't do it.

PRINCESS

Oh, yes, you could. You have no idea how soft he is, and little and fat. And easily scared!

DRAGON

But that sharp bright sword of his! He flicks it in front of me. And my eyes are weak.

PRINCESS

That's all he does. He doesn't know how to use it. And he's so used to your just lying down and letting him walk on you, that he'd never stop running if you just once turned on him and snapped. Oh, do, there's a darling, Dragon. Then he wouldn't bother me any more. And he is such a tiresome little boy.

DRAGON

(Reflectively, blinking his eyes)

I don't see why I should. I don't see what I get out of this. *(He grumbles deeply.)* For that matter what do I ever get out of anything, but a few hours' sleep and that disturbed —

PRINCESS

I am so sorry. But it is so important. As a favor —

DRAGON

I don't see that it is important. Here I am very comfortable. What's the use of stirring everything

up, and goodness knows what might happen? How do I know but he might accidentally jab that sword in my eye? And I'm not as spry as I used to be. He might beat me anyway. And think of the humiliation of that!

PRINCESS

He wouldn't. He's the scarest little thing, really!

DRAGON

Even at that, where do I come in? Nobody ever pays any attention to me anyway, and if the Prince went away I would lose my job. I can hardly feed myself as it is. And no one ever invites me to tea. (*Ruminatively.*) And I have always loved candies.

PRINCESS

I will. I will give you half my tea. It's to be a lovely one. With strawberries — and sugar — and —

DRAGON

Candies?

PRINCESS

Comfits. Pink ones. Just chase the Prince a little way, Dragon, dear, and you can have all the comfits! — except one.

DRAGON

How could I get at the Prince? They'd never let me do it here.

PRINCESS

(*Eagerly clasping her hands*)

You could go to meet him. In the wood. And

then he would be surprised. He wouldn't have a chance. And run! (*She laughs.*) Just one beautiful blue snort from you — and my — he would run! I should love to see it. Come. Quick. (*She tugs at THE DRAGON'S claw, and he slowly lifts himself.*)

DRAGON

I am to have all the comfits.

PRINCESS

How greedy. But never mind. Just one switch of your tail and a good roar as if you meant it, and don't forget to open your beautiful red mouth. (*She drags him towards the wood.*)

DRAGON

You say he is very gentle? He always looked quite vicious to me — with that long sword.

PRINCESS

He's really very little — and fat.

DRAGON

(*Doubtfully*)

Well, I hope so. As a matter of fact I never have got a good look at him for all we meet every day. You see there is so much blue smoke to breathe out, that it fogs up the atmosphere, and then he flashes his sword, and, as I said, my eyes are a little weak. I always close them just as soon as I'm conquered so I can sleep as much as possible.

PRINCESS
(*Impatiently*)

Yes. Yes. But hurry. You will meet him at the edge of the wood. He must be almost there now.

DRAGON
(*Rolling his eyes*)

But how do I know after all I won't mistake him? He's always wearing some new costume, and I'd hate to stir up any of those spiteful tempered little pixies. They'd prick me all over with thistles.

PRINCESS
The pixies never come out till the moon is up. And the Prince is the only one who ever comes through the fairyland wood. He'll be a little boy without any horns on his head like the pixies, and he'll come along the highroad between Fairyland and the Outside, and turn into the wood. And then, one big snap and a growl and blue fire, and you can come down for tea with me. And nobody will disturb us.

DRAGON
Little and fat. You're quite sure he'll run?

PRINCESS
Oh, quite.

DRAGON
Gr-umph. (*He puffs out blue smoke.*) This is quite an adventure. I feel almost young again. Gr-umph! (*He turns into the wood.*)

PRINCESS

(Dancing up and down)

Isn't it fun! Good-by, Dragon, dear.

DRAGON

(Turning to look back)

All the comfits, mind. Don't you eat any before I come.

PRINCESS

Good-by. Good-by. *(She waves, as THE DRAGON slowly crawls through the wood. His silver scales gleam for a moment among the trees and then vanish in the mists.)*

(There sound three hoots of an owl. The PRINCESS turns with a jump, and looks about anxiously.)

PRINCESS

It isn't time yet, I'm sure. Oh, I hope he isn't too late. He's such a ponderous old thing! *(She looks into the wood after THE DRAGON.)*

(The PRINCE in the Fairy Tale enters suddenly from the right, emerging from the bushes. He is a plump little boy in a purple Fauntleroy suit with a deep lace collar, and a golden sash. He wears a little soft velvet cap with a long white feather, and his hair falls to his shoulders in neat yellow curls. He is very pretty, with a dimpled chin, and carries himself with a little swagger, pointing out his buckled slippers as he walks. A jaunty short velvet cap swings

from his shoulders, and in one hand he carries a very long unsheathed rapier.)

PRINCESS

(Seeing him, with a little cry)

Oh — now you've spoiled everything! *(She advances on him.)* How did you get here — and it's long before the time!

PRINCE

(With a low bow and a sweep of his cap)

Charming Princess. Behold, the Prince is here. *(He has some difficulty managing both the very long sword and the cap.)*

PRINCESS

(Plumping down on her little stool)

I could just cry with vexation! *(The PRINCE puts on his cap and takes an airy step, flourishing the sword.)* Well — how did you do it? Sneak up on me like that. You're always doing something silly.

PRINCE

(Loftily)

My Fairy Godmother met me, if you must know, and brought me here in her private chariot. It was very nice of her to save me all that walk through the wood — and the briars. I would have been a little late otherwise.

PRINCESS

(Flouncing off the stool)

Yes. Prinker. You like to have your hair

curled. I bet you were trying on lace collars — to see which was the most becoming!

PRINCE

(Touching his collar)

This is a new one. For my birthday. *(He flicks his sword.)* And this, too. *(He tries a fencing attitude.)*

PRINCESS

Oh — do stop that. I know you can't use it. It's ridiculous and as long as you are.

PRINCE

I certainly can. *(He looks around.)* Why, where's the Dragon?

PRINCESS

(Clasping her hands and taken aback)

Oh, dear. You *have* upset things!

PRINCE

But where is he?

PRINCESS

(Recovering herself)

Why should I know? *(She retires and stands aloofly looking into the wood.)* Your business is to rescue me from him.

PRINCE

But what will I do if he isn't here?

PRINCESS

(Scornfully)

You never have any ideas.

(There comes a sudden bellowing from the wood.)

PRINCE

(Jumping back a foot)

What's that!

PRINCESS

Oh, what can have happened to the Dragon!

(The bellowing becomes louder, and is mingled with a crashing of a heavy body approaching rapidly through the wood.)

PRINCE

The Dragon!

PRINCESS

Yes. It's all your fault. Now he may be bewitched or eaten some catnip or something, and eat us both! *(She runs terrified, back to the fountain. The PRINCE leaps away still further.)*

PRINCE

But he can't do that! Why, I always must vanquish him!

PRINCESS

But I've upset everything! Goodness knows what will happen. Oh, dear!

PRINCE

This is awful! *(He runs to the furthest corner of the garden, followed by the PRINCESS.)*

(THE DRAGON *appears, rushing through the wood, bellowing and blowing blue smoke. He tears down into the garden, howling. A small boy leaps after him shouting and throwing stones.*)

DRAGON

Oh! Oh! Stop him! He's killing me! (*He races around the fountain in long snaky twists, followed by the joyously shrieking small boy.*)

BOY

(*Throwing stones*)

Ki-yi! There's one on your nose!

PRINCESS

(*Rushing out and stopping the boy by force*)
Here, you. Don't you treat my Dragon like that!

BOY

(*Stopping*)

Oh — was it a pet of yours? (*He is a sturdy little boy with short touseled brown hair, a round freckled face, heavy boots and stockings, corduroy knickerbockers, and a rumpled brown shirt.*)

PRINCESS

It is. You shouldn't throw stones in Fairy Land.

PRINCE

(*Stepping out from behind the PRINCESS'S*)
It's our Dragon.

PRINCESS

And you've been treating it abominably!

DRAGON

(In a wail)

You said he was soft — and little — and fat! I knew he was vicious! Why, he's made of India rubber and has the disposition of a wildcat! I only spoke to him, and he was after me like a thousand hawks, throwing stones! Soft! Little! Ooh! I'll never believe you again!

PRINCESS

You got the wrong one, silly.

DRAGON

I told you my eyes were weak — and I puffed out so much smoke nobody could tell. You said the Prince was the only boy would come into the wood. I'm all over cracks and bruises! Ooh!

PRINCE

(To DRAGON)

What did you let a common trespasser in for?

DRAGON

I don't want him. *(He crawls off, breathing heavily, and lies down at the far right.)*

BOY

Well, he said he wanted to eat me. I met him up on the edge of the wood there. And he made faces at me, and stuck out his tongue. Of course. *(He*

plunges his hands into his pockets.) No one can do that—not even your pet animal. You see that. I had to show him.

PRINCE
(*Advancing*)

I vanquish him every day.

BOY
(*Fanning himself with his cap*)

Hot work.

PRINCE
It doesn't disturb me at all. I just come. And he lets me walk on him.

BOY
You're pretty fond of yourself. Aren't you?

PRINCESS
(*To the BOY*)

What's your name?

BOY
Billy. What's yours?

PRINCE
I am the Prince in the Fairy Tale.

BILLY
I didn't ask you, curly-locks. (*He turns to the PRINCESS.*) You seem to have a lot of spunk for a girl. And any one with a pet like that would have, of course. What is your name?

PRINCESS
(*Uncertainly*)

I — I'm — not quite sure.

BILLY

That's funny. (*Decidedly.*) Well, it ought to be Margery. I know a girl at home called Margery who has hair like yours. She's a very nice girl.

PRINCESS

I think you are a very nice boy. Will you stay here with me?

PRINCE
(*Pushing in*)

She's the Princess in the Fairy Tale of course, just as I'm the Prince. And this is our private Fairy Garden. How did you get in, and who are you, and don't you know you're trespassing? You must go right away.

DRAGON

Yes. For heaven's sake, don't keep that wild-cat in our garden.

PRINCESS

I will keep him. I will. (*She drags BILLY by the hand.*) He will stay and teach me to throw stones nicely as he does. What kingdom did you come from Billy?

BILLY
(*His hands in his pockets*)

Why, I live in the little white house by the Grocery store on Main street.

PRINCE

Well, you don't belong here. How did you get here?

BILLY

I was just walking along, and I chased a squirrel up to the edge of the wood — and then I met this — this creature here. And there didn't seem anything for me to do but chase him when he stuck out his tongue. I guess I came pretty far.

PRINCE

You can go back now.

PRINCESS

No. You're going to stay here. I like you. You can be the Prince.

PRINCE

I am the Prince. I am. I am.

PRINCESS

(Taking BILLY'S arm)

Prove it then. *(She drags BILLY away a little.)* Teach me how to throw stones. I have a golden ball to play with. *(She takes a golden ball out of her pinafore pocket.)*

PRINCE

Wait till my Fairy Godmother hears of this!

BILLY

(Taking the ball)

You are a sissy. This is a pretty jolly ball. *(He throws it to the PRINCESS.)*

PRINCE

(Almost weeping with rage)

I'll call the King and Queen — and Nurse.

PRINCESS

(Running joyfully back and forth as she and BILLY throw the ball)

Don't cry — and muss your curls!

PRINCE

(Furious)

Curls yourself! *(He throws himself on the PRINCESS and pulls her hair violently.)*

BILLY

(Pulling him away)

Drop that!

PRINCE

(Still clutching the PRINCESS' hair and kicking)

I won't! I won't! I will pull her hair. She's my Princess — and a mean thing to treat me so — and you're a big bully and a donkey. *(He kicks out madly at BILLY.)*

PRINCESS

Beat him up, Billy! *(She jumps up and down.)*

PRINCE

(Falling on BILLY)

Donkey! Great ugly donkey!

BILLY

I can't stand that! Donkey yourself. *(He tussles*

with the PRINCE and throws him.) You would call me names!

(The PRINCE lies sobbing on the grass, BILLY on top of him.)

PRINCE

You'll be sorry for this!

BILLY

(Rising and dusting himself)

You're not hurt really. I only gave you a little punch.

(The PRINCE raises himself just enough to pull a little tin horn out of his sash, and blow a shrill penetrating blast — then throws himself down again.)

PRINCESS

Oh! Now he *has* done it!

BILLY

What's up!

PRINCESS

You'll see. Look! *(She points to the left.)* It's the King and Queen in the Fairy Tale. Of course he had to go and call them!

(Through trees at the left come slowly the KING and QUEEN, very gorgeous in trailing gold and ermine robes. They both wear high spiked gold crowns and the KING carries a massive gold scepter. They are followed by two heralds in gold and scarlet, with long

trumpets, and then six little Princesses in a row. The Princesses are all of a height, with tiny gold crowns on their long light hair, and white gowns reaching to their feet. They wear wide blue sashes, and appear very, very young indeed. Last, comes THE OLD NURSE, bearing a tray with tea and cakes.)

THE QUEEN

(Rather peevishly, as the procession approaches)

It does seem to me that the Dragon was killed very early to-day. And I had reached such an interesting chapter in my novel.

THE KING

Never mind, my dear. It hardly ever takes more than ten minutes to read the award.

THE QUEEN

The trumpets always make my head ache — and the cannon —

THE KING

Maybe we can omit the cannon to-day.

QUEEN

Oh, do.

PRINCESS

(Watching the procession as it circles toward her in a stately way)

They *will* be vexed, when they find out.

BILLY

What's up, especially?

PRINCESS

Everything. It's all twisted and wrong. You're here, and the Prince is there, and the Dragon over there. They *will* be annoyed.

BILLY

Who are they anyhow?

PRINCESS

The King and Queen in the Fairy Tale, of course. And they have the extra princesses with them, and the heralds to trumpet for the defeat of the Dragon and the triumph of the Prince — and look at him. And they do so hate to have anything go wrong!

BILLY

But what is it all about?

PRINCESS

This is the end of a Fairy Tale day, of course. And everything should come out all nice and smooth, and the sunset gun go off to announce at the same time the death for the day of the Dragon, the freeing of the Princess, and the triumph of the Prince — saving gunpowder.

BILLY

So it's a Fairy Tale?

PRINCESS

Of course. I'm in it — and you — and everybody. We're all a Fairy Tale.

BILLY

Not much I'm not. I never did care for Fairy Tales.

PRINCESS

You're in it now.

BILLY

I guess I'll be going. I never had much to do with kings and queens.

(BILLY starts to go, but the KING, QUEEN and the little princesses have made a complete semi-circle around the garden, and he brings up short.)

KING

(Putting on spectacles, as he unrolls a scroll in his hand)

What's this?

PRINCESS

(Springing after BILLY, and seizing his hand)
It's the new Prince!

OLD NURSE

(Waddling forward with the tray, and putting it down on the stool at the right)

Oh — la — la. Something new.

PRINCE

(Rising with a wail)

He is not. I am the Prince.

QUEEN

(Distastefully)

What a mess he's in.

PRINCE

(Pointing at BILLY)

It's all because of him. He knocked me down. He insulted me. He came into the garden uninvited and threw stones. He's nothing but a common boy from outside.

KING

Dear. Dear. This is very tiresome. Where's the Dragon?

DRAGON

(Rolling himself up painfully)

Here.

KING

You seem very decently beaten up.

DRAGON

I am.

PRINCESS

And Billy did it. He should be the Prince.

PRINCE

Yes. He came into our garden and threw stones at our Dragon. Throw him out!

QUEEN

(Taking out a book from a pocket in her dress)

Why have so much argument?

PRINCESS

I will keep Billy.

PRINCE

But he insulted me, and he is only a common boy, and lives next to a grocer!

PRINCESS

And he beat you up, too. That shows he's a better Prince than you.

PRINCE

But I am the Prince!

KING

Dear. Dear. This is very unusual.

QUEEN

(Looking up from her book)

I don't see why it's unusual. It's only in another form. Somebody vanquished the Dragon — and at the same time, the competing Prince. Therefore — that somebody is the real Prince. In disguise, no doubt.

(She returns to her book)

KING

(Doubtfully)

Do you think so, my love?

QUEEN

Certainly.

PRINCESS

(Jumping up and down with joy)

Of course! Of course!

KING

Very well then. Sound the trumpets. (*The heralds lift their horns.*)

PRINCE

But what about me? I am left! Wait till my fairy Godmother hears!

KING

Dear. Dear. This is very upsetting. No one should be left.

QUEEN

(*Dropping her book to look at the PRINCE*)

He can have one of the other Princesses. They look about his height.

KING

(*Doubtfully*)

But I don't like spoiling the set —

QUEEN

One is sure to be snatched by an Ogre or fall into the river sooner or later. She might just as well go with this Prince. The Fairy Tale must be completed. My dear — (*She turns to one of the little Princesses.*) Here is a Prince for you. Curtsey when you're spoken to — and mind you are good to him and keep him dusted. He seems to be bent on making a mess of himself. (*She returns to her book.*)

(*The little PRINCESS steps out, looking shyly at the PRINCE.*)

PRINCE

I don't want her. She's a baby.

KING

(Testily)

Well — you'll have to take her. You couldn't keep the other. Sound the trumpets.

QUEEN

She's very nice tempered — and had all the proper gifts at christening. A little attention and society will do wonders for her.

KING

Let the cannon boom as the sun sets. *(The heralds sound a blast, and it is followed by a distant boom of cannon.)*

QUEEN

That's enough. *(The heralds put down their horns.)*

KING

*(Adjusting his spectacles, and reading very rapidly from the roll in his hand)*The Dragon is vanquished. The King and Queen rejoice. The trumpets sound. *(The heralds sound their horns.)* And the cannon —

QUEEN

Not again.

KING

Have boomed. And the Prince — What is your name, young man?

BILLY

Billy Travers.

KING

And the Prince Billy Travers — and the Fairy Princess —

PRINCESS

Margery. I want to be called Margery.

KING

And the Princess Margery lived happily ever after — to the tune of dancing and feasting. (*He rolls up the paper. The heralds sound a blast.*) Let there be dancing and feasting. (*The heralds produce lutes that were slung over their shoulders and play a gay tinkling tune.*)

DRAGON

(*Rolling up to THE OLD NURSE, who is standing by the tea tray*)

Did you bring out plenty of comfits?

NURSE

(*Slapping him on the snout*)

Not for you, I didn't.

KING

(*Bowing to QUEEN*)

May I have the honor, my love?

QUEEN

(*Taking his hand*)

Mind you don't step on my train. (*She picks this up over her arm and she and the KING dance.*)

PRINCESS

(Seizing BILLY'S hands)

You dance with me. *(They whirl around.)*

DRAGON

(Bowing to the NURSE)

Allow me, Madam.

NURSE

(Taking his claw and dancing sedately)

Remember my age.

DRAGON

And my joints. *(BILLY and the PRINCESS join them, making a square.)*

PRINCE

(To the LITTLE PRINCESS)

Do you dance?

LITTLE PRINCESS

Yeth, pleath. *(They dance with the KING and QUEEN, making another four.)*

(The heralds stand at the back, and the other little Princesses dance around the fountain.)

PRINCE

You're not a hoyden. Are you? I think I like you best anyway.

LITTLE PRINCESS

Yeth, pleath.

QUEEN

(Stopping)

There. That's enough. My crown is almost awry, and we must get to supper before the peacock pies are burnt. I faint with hunger.

KING

Sound the trumpets. *(The heralds sound the horns, and turn to go out, followed by the Little Princesses.)*

PRINCE

(Taking the hand of his PRINCESS)

We'll sit together at supper; you can save me your owls' tongues if you don't happen to care for them.

PRINCESS

Yeth. Pleath. *(They turn and go out.)*

BILLY

But —

DRAGON

I don't half like this —

QUEEN

No one ever has anything to say after the end.

KING

Good-night, my love. Nurse, see that she goes to bed particularly early after all this unusual excitement. The new Prince may stay to tea with her as a special treat. *(The procession moves slowly off.)*

PRINCESS

(Jumping up and down)

Oh, goody! And it does serve that little sissy right to get one of my sisters. They are such babies — and have never said anything but yes — or no — yet!

(The procession winds out of sight. The twilight deepens in the garden.)

DRAGON

(Curling himself up painfully)

This is beastly rough on me — This is. I don't like my new boxing partner one bit. *(He rolls his eyes at BILLY.)* We'll have to get in a little practice on the side, and I'll show you the right spots.

BILLY

Oh — I won't bother you any more. If — you're polite.

PRINCESS

You'll have to. Every afternoon — and sometimes in the morning. But then we can play with the Golden Ball between times. It will be fun.

BILLY

But I can't stay here, you know.

PRINCESS

(Running to the tea tray, and dragging it stool and all into the foreground)

Oh, yes — you must. You will stay here forever and ever — and we will play with the golden ball —

and maybe we'll be allowed to see the fairies dance — if they ever do it before sunset.

BILLY

Excuse me, but I'd rather not.

PRINCESS

Why, what do you mean?

BILLY

I'm — I'm not particularly used to fairies and such.

PRINCESS

Oh, I'll tell you all about it — while we have tea.

BILLY

I don't think I can stay for that.

PRINCESS

You can't stay!

BILLY

Well — it must be about supper time home — and mother'll be expecting me. We're to have hot cakes. Not but what you've been a very jolly little pal — and I thank you and all that.

PRINCESS

But he can't go — Can he, Nurse?

NURSE

(Who stands, solemnly against the dark cedar)
The way out of Fairy Land is always open.

BILLY

Yes — that's it. I couldn't live in a Fairy Tale, you know. Now could I? (*He approaches the PRINCESS, who looks about to cry.*) I don't look as if I would go into a Fairy Tale — now do I?

PRINCESS

- (*Gulping*)

I think you are per-perfectly lovely. And I would love to have you for a Prince. But you don't like me!

BILLY

I do. I think you are a very jolly — really corking Princess — and just as spunky as if you weren't in a silly Fairy Tale at all —

PRINCESS

(*Brightening*)

Oh — do you?

BILLY

Of course I do.

PRINCESS

Perhaps — we'll see each other again someday. Outside, maybe. I don't intend to always live in a Fairy Tale when I grow up.

BILLY

Perhaps we will. Fairy Tales aren't much. Good-by, Princess. (*He holds out his hand.*)

PRINCESS

Margery —

BILLY

Good-by, Margery. (*They shake hands.*)

PRINCESS

Good-by.

(*BILLY turns towards the wood. The PRINCESS follows him to the edge.*)

BILLY

(*Turning at the edge of the wood*)

Good-by.

PRINCESS

Wait for me — when you get outside!

BILLY

You bet I will. Good-by. (*He disappears among the trees.*)

PRINCESS

Good-by! (*She waves — until he is out of sight. Then, with a little sob, she breaks down.*) And I haven't any Prince or anything!

DRAGON

(*Uncoiling himself*)

There are always plenty of Fairy Tale Princes. But I dare say you'll run away to this one just the same — Violent tempered creature. You never can tell what will please a woman.

PRINCESS

(Cheering up, and coming towards him)

I will. I will.

NURSE

Eat your tea now. There's a good girl. Or the owls and the pixies will get it — it's that late.

(She moves off, and disappears in the gathering darkness, right. A big yellow moon rises slowly behind the wood. The weird mists and interlacing tree branches and trunks are pricked out with light. The fountain glitters very bright in a shaft of moonlight, that falls on THE DRAGON, and gleams on the hair of the PRINCESS.)

DRAGON

And what about me? Where's my tea?

PRINCESS

You didn't do the right thing at all.

DRAGON

But I did the best I could. Don't I get any comfits? You promised them all to me.

PRINCESS

We will divide them. *(She and THE DRAGON sit down to tea.)**(From the left, THE OLD NURSE is heard singing softly.)*

"A brownie stealeth from the vine,

Singing, ' Heigho, my dearie,
And will you hear this song of mine —
A song of the land of murk and mist
Where bideth the bud the dew hath kissed?
Then let the moonbeams' web of light
Be spun before thee silvery white,
And I shall sing the livelong night —
Heigho — my dearie! ' "

[CURTAIN]

FOR OUTDOOR PRODUCTION OF THE
PRINCESS IN THE FAIRY TALE

Any garden, or any woodland, can of course be used for this play. The setting given is only a suggestion, and naturally could not be achieved in anything but an indoor production.

For an outdoor garden production, the initial entrance of the Princess, the Nurse and the Dragon, could be made in a sort of little procession through the garden. The Princess first, sewing as she walks, the Nurse following, singing softly, and the Dragon trailing grumpily some distance behind. They could take their places, the Nurse and the Princess on their little stools, and the Dragon sleeping by the fountain and the play start just as it is given.

For a final exit, the Princess and the Dragon could walk off hand in hand, the Princess holding the tea tray, and the Dragon eating a cake as he walks.

THE PRINCESS IN THE FAIRY TALE

NOTES ON SCENERY AND COSTUMES FOR AMATEURS

The Princess' costume is very simple. Any little white ruffled frock, very short with a wide blue sash. The little high spiked crown can be cut from cardboard and gilded. The smaller it is, the better. She wears socks and black strap slippers. Of course it is nice to have a real little girl act the Princess, but since the whole weight of the play falls on her, she must really be an excellent little actress, and often a somewhat older, small actress can be made to look very young and hold the play together better.

The Old Nurse can wear any of a variety of costumes according to what is most picturesque and becoming. The black pointed witch's hat can be made of black paper and cardboard easily, copied from any picture of Mother Goose or Fairy Tale Witch, but if this is unbecoming, a wide frilled cap will do, or any high fantastic hat in keeping with the costume. In one case, the high peaked hat was swathed in soft brown veils, drawn down about the chin Mediaeval fashion, and matching the soft brown of the voluminous costume. As long as it is kept in mind that she is a Fairy Nurse and quite old and wise, that is all that is necessary.

The Dragon costume is not so difficult if it is approached bravely and with simplicity. His suit can be made of two shades of green paper muslin, cut to represent scales. Here and there can be sewn other scales of silver paper. His feet and hands must be encased in huge paw-like gloves of the same stuff, and a long, stuffed tail, also scaled, attached in back. This tail can be made very effective, attached to the body by a sort of spiked vertebrae running up the back, made

of a series of points of the green, stuffed out and tipped with the silver paper. His head of course must be entirely masked. An old theatrical animal's head can serve for this, painted green and silver, with fantastic tongue, and spiked crest added. He can smoke a cigarette to give the effect of breathing fire—and must have a very deep, grumbling voice.

The King and Queen should be dressed more or less alike. Gold and white is a good combination, although any coloring that fits in with the scenery is possible. Their costumes should be fantastic to a degree, and copied, if possible, from some good Fairy-tale illustration. Their crowns should be exaggerated spiked affairs, and period should be utterly disregarded in true Fairy-tale custom. However, they must have a certain dignity and not be too grotesque. Ermine can be made of white cotton, with black tails either sewn or painted on, and the King and Queen both could have white wigs, either real or made of cotton. Long trains for both of them are very effective. These costumes do not need to be at all expensive, the simplest materials being perfectly suitable, but they must be striking in effect and coloring.

The Prince wears a little Fauntleroy costume with a lace collar, and a little plumed velvet hat. He should have long curls, and often it is found that a girl can take the part. If not a velvet suit he could wear one of blue satin with a little cape—anything that will give him an effeminate yet charming air.

The Little Princesses can be very little girls. They should all be of exactly one height, and if possible the same color fair hair. They are prettier without wigs. They should wear long straight white dresses, to their ankles, with tiny puff sleeves in Kate Greenaway pattern, and wide blue sashes. They all have tiny gold crowns.

The Heralds wear tunics with Heraldic design.

These can be made of brilliant yellow and white and scarlet paper muslin with black design painted on. They have bowl-cut wigs, and little plumed caps. They have very long trumpets gilded. These can be made of wood or cardboard and need not of course be practical—the trumpeter being hid behind the scenes. They wear tights of scarlet and yellow or yellow and white.

Billy Travers wears the simplest of average boy costumes—preferably a little shabby, and khaki shirt and corduroy knickers.

SCENERY

In an outdoor setting, any garden or wood as is stated in the Note at the end of the play can be used, but care must be taken not to have any signs of civilization in the background. It is better to have it in a wood than in a garden where a house is obviously near.

For an indoor production a simple setting is just a deep blue cyclorama, well lighted, with silhouettes of four cypress trees cut from paper or bristol board, dark against it, and a row of conventionalized flowers at their base. The fountain is not necessary, although it is pretty. This is a Fairy Play and any attempt at realism in the scenery of an indoor production is a mistake. Much can be done with the lighting, but the fewer ordinary properties there are the better.

THE REJUVENATION OF AUNT MARY.

The famous comedy in three acts, by Anne Warner. 7 males, 6 females. Three interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

This is a genuinely funny comedy with splendid parts for "Aunt Mary," "Jack," her lively nephew; "Lucinda," a New England ancient maid of all work; "Jack's" three chums; the Girl "Jack" loves; "Joshua," Aunt Mary's hired man, etc.

"Aunt Mary" was played by May Robson in New York and on tour for over two years, and it is sure to be a big success wherever produced. We strongly recommend it.

Price, 60 Cents

MRS. BUMSTEAD-LEIGH.

A pleasing comedy, in three acts, by Harry James Smith, author of "The Tailor-Made Man." 6 males, 6 females. One interior scene. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

Mr. Smith chose for his initial comedy the complications arising from the endeavors of a social climber to land herself in the altitude peopled by hyphenated names—a theme permitting innumerable complications, according to the spirit of the writer.

This most successful comedy was toured for several seasons by Mrs. Fiske with enormous success.

Price, 60 Cents.

MRS. TEMPLE'S TELEGRAM.

A most successful farce in three acts, by Frank Wyatt and William Morris. 5 males, 4 females. One interior scene stands throughout the three acts. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

"Mrs. Temple's Telegram" is a sprightly farce in which there is an abundance of fun without any taint of impropriety or any element of offence. As noticed by Sir Walter Scott, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive!"

There is not a dull moment in the entire farce, and from the time the curtain rises until it makes the final drop the fun is fast and furious. A very exceptional farce.

Price, 60 Cents.

THE NEW CO-ED.

A comedy in four acts, by Marie Doran, author of "Tempest and Sunshine," etc. Characters, 4 males, 7 females, though any number of boys and girls can be introduced in the action of the play. One interior and one exterior scene, but can be easily played in one interior scene. Costumes modern. Time, about 2 hours.

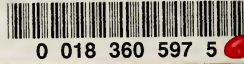
The theme of this play is the coming of a new student to the college, her reception by the scholars, her trials and final triumph.

There are three especially good girls' parts, Letty, Madge and Estelle, but the others have plenty to do. "Punch" Doolittle and George Washington Watts, a gentleman of color, are two particularly good comedy characters. We can strongly recommend "The New Co-Ed" to high schools and amateurs.

Price, 30 Cents.

(The Above Are Subject to Royalty When Produced)

SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City
New and Explicit Descriptive Catalogue Mailed Free on Request



DOROTHY'S NEIGHBO

A brand new comedy in four acts, by Marie Doran, author of "The New Co-Ed," "Tempest and Sunshine," and many other successful plays. 4 males, 7 females. The scenes are extremely easy to arrange; two plain interiors and one exterior, a garden, or, if necessary, the two interiors will answer. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

The story is about vocational training, a subject now widely discussed; also, the distribution of large wealth.

Back of the comedy situation and snappy dialogue there is good logic and a sound moral in this pretty play, which is worthy the attention of the experienced amateur. It is a clean, wholesome play, particularly suited to high school production.

Price, 30 Cents.

MISS SOMEBODY ELSE.

A modern play in four acts by Marion Short, author of "The Touch-down," etc. 6 males, 10 females. Two interior scenes. Costumes modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{4}$ hours.

This delightful comedy has gripping dramatic moments, unusual character types, a striking and original plot and is essentially modern in theme and treatment. The story concerns the adventures of Constance Darcy, a multi-millionaire's young daughter. Constance embarks on a trip to find a young man who had been in her father's employ and had stolen a large sum of money. She almost succeeds, when suddenly all traces of the young man are lost. At this point she meets some old friends who are living in almost want and, in order to assist them through motives benevolent, she determines to sink her own aristocratic personality in that of a refined but humble little Irish waitress with the family that are in want. She not only carries her scheme to success in assisting the family, but finds romance and much tense and lively adventure during the period of her incognito, aside from capturing the young man who had defrauded her father. The story is full of bright comedy lines and dramatic situations and is highly recommended for amateur production. This is one of the best comedies we have ever offered with a large number of female characters. The dialogue is bright and the play is full of action from start to finish; not a dull moment in it. This is a great comedy for high schools and colleges, and the wholesome story will please the parents and teachers. We strongly recommend it.

Price, 30 Cents

PURPLE AND FINE LINEN.

An exceptionally pretty comedy of Puritan New England, in three acts, by Amita B. Fairgrieve and Helena Miller. 9 male, 5 female characters.

This is the Lend A Hand Smith College prize play. It is an admirable play for amateurs, is rich in character portrayal of varied types and is not too difficult while thoroughly pleasing.

Price, 30 Cents.

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