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# **Red Riding Hood**

By

ALLISON GREGORY

**Dramatic Publishing Company**

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ALLISON GREGORY

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“*Red Riding Hood* was first commissioned and premiered by  
Seattle Children’s Theatre  
Courtney Sale, artistic director; Kevin Malgesini, managing director”

*Red Riding Hood* was first commissioned and premiered by Seattle Children’s Theatre on Feb. 11, 2022. Courtney Sale, artistic director; Kevin Malgesini, managing director.

CAST:

Wolfgang.....Conner Neddersen  
Delivery Person.....Claudine Mboligikpelani Nako  
Wolfgang Understudy .....Eric Ankrim  
Delivery Person Understudy ..... Annelih GH Hamilton

PRODUCTION:

Director ..... Steven Dietz  
Assistant Director.....Musse Barclay  
Scenic..... Matthew Smucker  
Lighting.....Connie Yun  
Costumes..... Sarah Burch Gordon  
Sound/Composer..... Robertson Witmer  
Stage Manager ..... Cristine Anne Reynolds  
Production Assistant.....Gavin Yehle

# Red Riding Hood

## CHARACTERS

**DELIVERY PERSON/RED (w):** A UPS- or FedEx-type who is transformed by a red beanie.

**WOLFGANG (a):** A performer who may or may not be a wolf. Male pronouns used throughout may be adjusted as needed.

**CHARACTER NOTE:** The play is written for two performers. A third character—a musician—could handily be built in, taking some of the narrative lines and assuming various characters and providing live music to accompany the songs. While a third actor would add another level of story-telling, I frankly appreciate the madcap theatricality and nimbleness that a two-hander allows.

**TIME:** Now, in this theatre during this performance.

**PLACE:** A theatre, and the landscape of our minds.

**MUSIC:** Producers are encouraged to create their own music for the songs and soundscape; however, the score from the original production is available directly from the composer/designer, Robertson Witmer ([robertsonwitmer@gmail.com](mailto:robertsonwitmer@gmail.com)).

Special thanks to  
Courtney Sale,  
Kevin Malgesini,  
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David Ivers,  
Shannon Flynn  
and Steven Dietz.

# Red Riding Hood

*(An abandoned stage.*

*Music: Mozart's "Variations in F on an Allegretto."*

*WOLFGANG prepares the stage for a performance—moving existing furniture or ladders, sorting a rack of old costumes, discarding a red beanie, pushing a bed onstage, acknowledging the audience, etc. He exits.*

*Music: Bach's "Prelude and Fugue No. 2 in C Minor."*

*DELIVERY PERSON enters the house in a rush, carrying a package, eyes on her cellphone. She checks the address on her package, runs the scanner over it, looks around for an address within the theatre and exits.*

*WOLFGANG returns toting a bedside table with a lamp, a teacup and a steaming pot of tea. WOLFGANG turns the lamp on and pours some tea. There's that annoying red beanie! He tosses the beanie and exits, then re-enters pulling an old trunk and positions it just so at the foot of the bed. He exits again.*

*DELIVERY PERSON crosses the stage, determinedly searching. She exits.*

*WOLFGANG pushes on a freestanding door. He pauses from this busy work to greet the audience.)*

WOLFGANG. Oh hello. Welcome to ... uh ... my house. As you very well see, it's not actually "my house." I have set the stage to look like a charming old cottage. Grandmama's cottage. This is a play. You knew that, right? Of course you did. Things *look* real, but they aren't "real."



*(To demonstrate, he walks through the doorway, then around the doorway.)*

WOLFGANG (*cont'd*). It's all pretend, see? I am an actor, and I alone will be performing *all of the roles* for you today. It's true. The thing is, rather than take up too much of your time, I thought we'd just jump ahead to the "meat" of the play. Hah-hah. Meaning the part where the wolf eats— (*Concerned.*) You know the story, don't you? Everyone knows this story, right? The girl wearing the red hood on her way to Grandmama's—who is sick in bed—to bring her cake. And her mother warns the girl, "Don't stray from the path." And what does she do? Yes, exactly, she strays from the path! Tsk, tsk. You wise kids these days never stray from the path. But in those days—before computers and cars and cellphones and baseball even, well children were curious, and they misbehaved sometimes because of it. *Not now*, but back then it was so.

*(He puts on a nightgown or shawl, spectacles and a granny cap.)*

WOLFGANG (*cont'd*). Which leads to the wolf, played by me, Wolfgang, entering Grandmama's house and ... well, no need to scare the young people. Let's just say things didn't end well for Granny. (*Excitedly climbing into bed.*) All of which puts us at this juicy moment in the story: the scene where the wolf—remember, I'm not actually a wolf, it's just pretend. The wolf is waiting for Red Riding Hood to walk through that very—

*(Music: Bach's "Prelude and Fugue No. 2 in C Minor.")*

*DELIVERY PERSON enters through the freestanding doorway with the package, more agitated now, running the scanner over the package, interrupting WOLFGANG.)*

WOLFGANG (*cont'd*) Can we help you?

DELIVERY PERSON. I'm looking for someone?

WOLFGANG. Because we were about to start.

DELIVERY PERSON. Start—?

WOLFGANG (*winking*). Or finish.

DELIVERY PERSON. I have an urgent delivery package  
care of (*Insert theatre name here.*).

WOLFGANG. What is it?

DELIVERY PERSON. I don't know. Is anyone expecting a  
package?

WOLFGANG. That's the *audience*.

DELIVERY PERSON. Oh. Hello, audience. Are you expecting  
a package?

WOLFGANG (*impatient*). They're expecting *a play*.

DELIVERY PERSON. Are *you* expecting a package? What's  
your name?

WOLFGANG. I am an *actor* who is trying to perform a  
memorable one-person extravaganza.

DELIVERY PERSON. My manager said I have to deliver this  
urgent package, that's my job. My manager is super bossy, and  
I know my manager is going to get mad if I don't do my job.

WOLFGANG. We were right in the middle of—

DELIVERY PERSON. I'm not trying to be rude, but why are  
you dressed like an old lady?

WOLFGANG (*looking at the audience*). This is a play.

DELIVERY PERSON. *No*.

WOLFGANG. Yes.

DELIVERY PERSON. I wouldn't want to be in a play—I'd  
be too nervous. Being onstage is scary.

WOLFGANG. You barged in right at the climactic moment  
when—

DELIVERY PERSON. What play?

WOLFGANG. What play?

*(He glances at the audience—maybe they help him tell her which play.)*

WOLFGANG *(cont'd)*. Red Riding Hood.

DELIVERY PERSON. I know that story!

WOLFGANG. *Everyone* knows that story. Now if you would kindly—

DELIVERY PERSON. She's on her way to Grandmama's house and she wears a red hat—

WOLFGANG. A hooded red cape, that's why she's called—

DELIVERY PERSON. Red Riding Hood, right! And her mother gives her soup to take to her sick grandmother—

WOLFGANG. Cake. *(To the audience.)* It's actually cake.

DELIVERY PERSON. Why would she give her grandmother cake when she's sick? Soup is much better for you.

WOLFGANG. That's silly, soup isn't *fairy-tale* food. Cake tastes better, I love cake.

DELIVERY PERSON. It's not *healthy*.

WOLFGANG. Sometimes you eat something because it *tastes* good, and that makes you *feel* good.

DELIVERY PERSON. Sometimes you eat something that's *good* for you and then you feel even *better*.

WOLFGANG. Well it's cake. In a basket.

DELIVERY PERSON. No, it's soup—in a *tureen*.

WOLFGANG.

Cake, cake, cake,  
cake, cake.

DELIVERY PERSON.

Soup, soup, soup,  
soup, soup.

WOLFGANG. What does it matter, *Grandmama doesn't get to eat!*

DELIVERY PERSON. Why not?

WOLFGANG. Because ...

*(WOLFGANG mimes attacking and chomping and swallowing Grandmama.)*

DELIVERY PERSON. Ohhh. Why are you telling them this gory story?

WOLFGANG. It's a classic fairy tale, they need to know these things. Now if you'll allow me to—

DELIVERY PERSON. You're going to tell it wrong, *I* should tell them this story.

WOLFGANG. But *you* have to deliver that “urgent package.”

DELIVERY PERSON. Yes, I know. But I just think—

WOLFGANG. So if you could please take a step that way.

*(DELIVERY PERSON takes a step away, then stops.)*

DELIVERY PERSON. I can tell this story—

WOLFGANG. Another step—

DELIVERY PERSON *(step)*. Better than you— *(She continues stepping as he instructs.)*

WOLFGANG. Another step.

Another step.

Another step.

Another step.

Another step.

Another step.

One more.

One more.

One more.

One more.

One more.

One more.

One more.

*(DELIVERY PERSON is now offstage.)*

WOLFGANG *(cont'd)*. At last. Now my friends, we can get to the delicious “heart” of the matter. *(He jumps back into bed.)* As you might recall, the wolf, played by me, is disguised as Grandmama ailing and wailing in her bed.

*(Dramatically, in a granny voice.)* “Woe is me, I wish someone would come visit and bring me cake.”

*(Narrating.)* Meanwhile, who is about to walk through that very door but—

*(DELIVERY PERSON skips onstage draped in a too-small red cape, carrying a basket holding the package.)*

DELIVERY PERSON *(singing badly)*. Tra-la-la, tra-la-la  
Skippity-doo-dah, ha ha ha,  
Look at me, I’m in a play  
Dressed in red the livelong day!

WOLFGANG. Nope. No. No, no, no.

DELIVERY PERSON. What’s wrong?

WOLFGANG. You’re not in this play.

DELIVERY PERSON. But I’m wearing a red cape, just like Little Red Riding Hood.

WOLFGANG. This is a one-person show. Plus you’re not “little.” That cape was meant for a small person. You look ridiculous.

DELIVERY PERSON. Well you’re telling the story badly.

WOLFGANG. I'm telling it exactly like in the fairy tale.

DELIVERY PERSON. Not the cake part.

WOLFGANG. Fine, how about a hamburger? *(To the audience.)* Everyone likes hamburgers, right?

DELIVERY PERSON. Not me.

WOLFGANG. What about donuts?

DELIVERY PERSON. Very unhealthy.

WOLFGANG. How about plain old bread?

*(DELIVERY PERSON sets down the basket.)*

DELIVERY PERSON. Bread works. A loaf of organic seven-grain bread made this morning by Mother, who is a world-class baker. "Ah, fresh warm bread." *(Takes a whiff.)* It smells like sunlight and a warm blanket. *(To the audience.)* Wouldn't you like butter with it? *(To WOLFGANG.)* We would like some butter.

WOLFGANG. Butter—?

DELIVERY PERSON. In the olden days, they always had a cow, so they always had butter. That's just the way it was. *(Mimes putting butter in the basket.)* Loads of creamy butter churned by the cow herself who's named Daisy.

WOLFGANG. Sweet ol' Daisy.

DELIVERY PERSON *(skipping)*. Once upon a time, there was a cheerful and clever young—

WOLFGANG. What are you doing?

DELIVERY PERSON. I'm starting the play.

WOLFGANG. You said you would be too nervous to be in a play.

DELIVERY PERSON. Well yes, I was before—but they seem nice enough. I think I can do it now.

WOLFGANG. Perform in front of an audience? Oh it's very scary. You have to be incredibly brave. All those strange people out there— *(To the audience.)* Sorry. *(Back to DELIVERY PERSON.)* All of them are looking at you with big eyes, watching your every move. Hanging on your every word. Your heart starts flipping and flopping. Your palms get moist ... you forget your words. Sometimes you even forget to breathe. The blood rushes to your face. You can't quite see them, but you know they're out there, sitting in the dark, waiting for you to trip or slip or say one wrong word and—

DELIVERY PERSON. HA!

WOLFGANG. HAAA!

DELIVERY PERSON & WOLFGANG. I told you! You're afraid! You are! No, I'm not!

DELIVERY PERSON. I'm telling you I can do it!

WOLFGANG *(regrouping)*. *The point is, if you're going to perform you cannot be afraid.*

*(That annoying red beanie that WOLFGANG thought he threw out appears; he picks it up.)*

WOLFGANG *(cont'd)*. And you'd have to wear this.

DELIVERY PERSON. A beanie?

WOLFGANG. Oh my no, it's a magic cap. Once you put this on you instantly become Red Riding Hood. *(To the audience.)* Some people will believe anything you tell them.

*(With great skepticism, DELIVERY PERSON puts on the red beanie and voila! She is transformed into RED.)*

RED *(skipping, singing a bouyant, upbeat tune like a Disney princess)*.

NO ONE WAS EVER SO KIND OR SO CLEVER  
OR DARING AS RED RIDING HOOD

RIGHT FROM THE START YOU'LL SEE I'VE GOT A  
BIG HEART  
I PROMISE TO DO SOMETHING GOOD  
I TRY TO REMEMBER I HAVE TO BE BRAVE  
WHEN THE WORLD MAKES ME FEEL AFRAID  
I TAKE A DEEP BREATH, THEN I TAKE A BIG STEP  
AND I SAY TO THE FEAR, "GO AWAY"!

WOLFGANG. She plays the part well. She is talented and skillful, and a healthy morsel. I'm beginning to warm up to this menu—I mean method.

*(WOLFGANG quickly hides the package, perhaps unseen by even the audience. He eagerly joins RED in her skipping, following a bit too closely.)*

WOLFGANG *(cont'd)*. Hold on, you tender mouthful.

*(RED abruptly removes the beanie, transforming back into DELIVERY PERSON.)*

DELIVERY PERSON. Excuse me—?

WOLFGANG. I've reconsidered. I think you would make a succulent Red Riding Hood—you're in the play!

DELIVERY PERSON. Yes! *(Picking up the basket.)* Wait—what about my urgent delivery? It's not in the basket—where's my package?

WOLFGANG. Oh. It's safe with me.

DELIVERY PERSON. Hand it over.

WOLFGANG *(looks at the audience)*. But it's hidden. In a super-secret hiding place.

*(DELIVERY PERSON holds her hand out, impatient.)*

WOLFGANG *(cont'd)*. Oh fine, close your eyes. Everyone, close your eyes. *Don't peek.*



*(WOLFGANG retrieves the package from a hiding place under his granny gown.)*

WOLFGANG *(cont'd, to the audience)*. What? I was keeping it safe.

*(WOLFGANG hands the package to DELIVERY PERSON.)*

WOLFGANG *(cont'd)*. Don't you wonder what's in this box?

*(DELIVERY PERSON puts it in the basket and covers it with a napkin.)*

DELIVERY PERSON. There.

WOLFGANG. Can we *please* start?

*(DELIVERY PERSON puts the red beanie back on. Throughout the rest of the play, DELIVERY PERSON transforms back and forth as RED seamlessly; WOLFGANG also transforms into several characters as indicated through the name or stage directions.)*

RED. Once upon a time, there was a cheerful and clever young—

WOLFGANG. What are you doing?

DELIVERY PERSON. To tell the story correctly we have to start at the beginning.

WOLFGANG. Quickly, then. *(Fashioning an apron. Carelessly, as MOTHER.)* Take this tasty loaf of warm bread to your granny who isn't feeling well. And hurry back.

DELIVERY PERSON. Are you going to do it like that?

WOLFGANG. What's wrong?

DELIVERY PERSON. You don't sound like a mother. They're not going to believe you.

WOLFGANG. Are you telling me how to *act*? I'll have you know I studied acting at the Royal Dramatic Academy of (*Insert the name of a local city, preferably starting with an "A."*). I am a *trained professional*.

(*Beat.*)

WOLFGANG (*cont'd*). How should a mother sound?

DELIVERY PERSON. Kind of old and tired.

WOLFGANG (*ancient Mom voice*). Red Riding Hood.

DELIVERY PERSON. Not that old.

WOLFGANG (*younger Mom voice*). Red Riding Hood.

DELIVERY PERSON. High-pitched.

WOLFGANG (*ridiculously high*). Red Riding Hood.

DELIVERY PERSON. And strict.

WOLFGANG (*strict*). Red Riding Hood.

DELIVERY PERSON. But loving. And smart. And busy.

(*WOLFGANG tries to process all of that and settles on a final voice.*)

MOTHER. Come, Red Riding Hood, here is a basket of healthful bread I baked myself—

DELIVERY PERSON. And butter?

MOTHER. And *butter* from our cow Daisy. Take this healthy food to your grandmama who is ill and weak. It will do her good.

RED (*this has always baffled her*). Why don't *you* go, Mother?

MOTHER. Well ... because Grandmama misses *you*, dear child. It would make her happy to see your cheerful face.

RED. Why don't you come *with* me, Mother?

MOTHER. Why ... ?

RED. Before this day, you've never sent me alone to the forest.