Excerpt terms and conditions





Words, Music and Dramatization by

DINAH TOUPS

With Lyrics and Music by

BARBARA WALKER

briefly. . .

Totally RED! This is a unique and fun retelling, in multiple styles, of the classic battle of wit and deception: Little Red Riding Hood. We meet Red (who is nobody's fool) and the wolf (who tries to be cool) and granny—well, sometimes she's left in the dark!

Totally RED! begins with a humorous version in storybook theatre style, followed by 3-5 minute retellings of sections of the story performed in the styles of melodrama, *The Perils of Being Miss RED*; Elizabethan, *Much Ado About RED*; 80s hip-hop slang, *REDz in the Hood*; and avant-garde, *Call the Moment RED*. There is also an option to include an additional scene with an American musical style, *RED! The Musical!* This play is as much fun for the performers as it is for the audience. *26 pages text/32 pages with musical. Code: Musical - TM6. Non-musical - TS6.*

APPROX. RUNNING TIME: 30 MINUTES

40 MINUTES WITH OPTIONAL MUSICAL SCENE

CAST: 5 MINIMUM; UP TO 30 WITH ROLES DISTRIBUTED; GOOD ROLES FOR YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT ACTORS

SETTING: SIMPLE, SUITABLE FOR TOURING

MUSIC: PRINTED MUSIC SCORE (PIANO/VOCAL) AVAILABLE. PLAY MAY BE PERFORMED WITH MUSICIAL SECTION OR WITHOUT MUSIC

PLAYWRIGHT: Dinah Toups (words, music, dramatization) is a U.S. Air Force officer's wife who has had the rare opportunity of spreading her love of theatre to many parts of the world. Over the past 25 years she has performed her original children's plays everywhere they were stationed, helped start community theatres, and offered acting classes for students as young as 5 and old as 98. She believes that quality theatre can be accessible to everyone without a huge budget or the trappings of an established theatre; that good theatre can be performed off the back of a truck if it's performed from the heart.

COMPOSER: Barbara Walker (lyrics and music for *RED!* The Musical) holds a Bachelors in Vocal Music Education from Louisiana State University and a Masters in Vocal Performance and Education from Loyola University (New Orleans), and a Kodaly Certification from Sam Houston State University. She has taught elementary music in public school for over twenty years and is an active adjudicator serving as the American Choral Directors Assoc. Children's Choir Repertoire and Standards Chair for Louisiana for eight years. Ms. Walker has been named Teacher of the Year for: 1989 State of Texas, Elementary; 1999 Livingston Parish, and Louisiana Region VII Elementary. She regularly serves as a guest conductor for district middle school and elementary school honor choirs.

ISBN13: 978-1-58342-744-6 ISBN10: 1-58342-744-9



Totally Red!

Dramatic Publishing 311 Washington St. Woodstock, IL 60098 ph: 800-4448-7469

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words, music and dramatization
by
Dinah Toups

with lyrics and music

by

Barbara Walker



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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(TOTALLY RED!)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-744-6

Dedicated to my husband who will always be my hero... although I know he wishes I didn't need rescuing quite so often.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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ORIGINAL PRODUCTION CREDIT

Totally RED! was originally produced by the B.A.C.K.stage Players (Bossier Arts Council's Kids Stage) Bossier City, Louisiana, 1995. The play was directed by Dinah Toups.

Cast:

Erik Champney Rachael Bean Tommy Welch Paul Horton Cassie Jones Carter Sutton Brooke Alexander Sadie Hayden Kelly Maxwell Whitney Crowson

Set Design: Dinah Toups and Tommy Welch

Costume Design: Legina Boswell

AUTHOR'S NOTES

Totally RED! is an extremely versatile play to produce. Cast of 5 required, or up to 30 with roles distributed. The play runs approximately 30 minutes. The play may be extended to a 40-minute version by adding the scene, RED! The Musical! included at the back of the script. (The musical score may be purchased from the publisher.)

I have heard concerns from directors that perhaps *Much* Ado About Red or Call the Moment Red might be over many young audiences' heads, but I can promise you this is not the case. Audiences ranging from Kindergarten to adults have enjoyed this play, and everyone leaves proclaiming, "I am a tree!" That's all the proof I need!

Cover Illustration: Thomas Welch

Play Script Layout & Design: Randy Blevins, irbdesign

ALTERNATE OPENING:

(High-energy music up. Everyone comes out energetically.)

ACTOR 1: Good morning/afternoon! And welcome to our show!

ACTOR 2: Tonight/today we're going to perform a brand new fairy tale for you about Little Red Riding Hood.

ACTOR 3: I know what you're thinking! I heard that fairy tale soooo many times when I was a little kid! It's going to be boring to hear it again!

ACTOR 4: Not the way WE'RE going to tell it!

ACTOR 5: You see, over the centuries, theatre has changed a lot!

ACTOR 6: So we thought it might be fun to take a story you know like Little Red Riding Hood and use it to show you just how MUCH theatre has changed.

ACTOR 1: We're going to start with a style we call storybook theatre.

ACTOR 2: That's my favorite! But then after we show you the traditional story of Little Red, we're going to have a little fun with it!

ACTOR 3: (Real hokey, like a bad TV commercial) Hey (ACTOR 4's Name), why don't you tell us the definition of Storybook Theatre!

ACTOR 4: (still part of the bad commercial) Okay, (ACTOR 3's name) Glad you asked! Storybook Theatre is style of theatre intended for small children.

ACTOR 5: (exaggerating gestures and facial expressions) The gestures are exaggerated and the facial expressions are animated! (Hold a funny pose until next line is finished.)

ACTOR 6: No, (Actor 5's Name), that would scare the children.

ACTOR 5: (breaks pose) Well, you get the get the idea.

ACTOR 1: Now sit back and get ready for the total experience of...

ALL: Totally Red!

(Music up again and out as they all exit. Music changes to happy fairytale-type music. Narrators for Storybook enter....so if you are using a small cast, two of the actors who just left immediately turn around and enter again without a long pause.)

Narrator 1: Once upon a time, in a wonderfully magical place called Fairy Tale Land, there existed a little girl known to the world as Little Red Riding Hood......-(Enter Red. Waves to audience. Stands sweetly. She is not wearing her red cape.)

Narrator 2: Little Red Riding Hood was a very special little girl --Etc....back to script.....

At the end of the play, don't repeat the "Once upon a time" line. The audience is laughing so hard it would be a downer. After the tree says "I'm a tree" the last time and the audience quits applauding and laughing, the actors hold the pose. Lights are fading during this: 5 knocks....hello is anybody out there? 5 knocks......hello I seem to be locked in the closet...... knocks......hello? Oh my. Fade to black.)

REDZ N the HOOD

Optional added line Redz N the Hood when they are talking about the contents of the bag:

WOLF: Yeah, like what?

RED: I don't know, Moms just said they are eats. I think there's some Kool

Aid.

WOLF: Yeah? What flavor?

RED: Red. You'd dig my grandmoms.

Questions: dwtoups@gmail.com

PRODUCTION SUGGESTIONS

A suggested simple set design is to create a tri-fold flat, painted black with **Totally RED!** painted in red on the middle flat. The tri-fold would be 7 feet high and 12 feet wide, and set in the middle of the stage, with outside flats folding toward upstage. The resulting screen would be used as back stage area for actors, set & costume pieces and props. Cubes or folding chairs can be used for the chorus in *Call the Moment RFD*.

The entire cast should wear something neutral. Black t-shirts or turtlenecks with blue jeans or black pants works well. The most important thing is that they look like a troupe, not individuals. All costumes are layered over the neutral costumes with no attempt to conceal them.

One day I asked my actors why the wolf didn't just push Little Red down and take her basket instead of going through the elaborate process of impersonating Granny. After much discussion, it was decided that he was a con artist playing a game. It was more fun for him to see if he could get Little Red to *give* him the basket. All of his actions and lines are motivated by this simple fact. After this discussion, we jokingly referred to *Totally RED!* as "Little Red...with subtext."

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: STORYBOOK THEATRE

Not only was I teaching the actors the "large" acting one must do to keep children's attention while they sat 300 deep on the cafeteria floor, with lunchroom ladies banging pots and pans in the kitchen, I was using this scene as an opportunity to introduce them to the history of commedia dell'arte. It is important that the set and costumes remain simple and that the "door" is imaginary. Rather than using recorded sound effects, experiment with knocking on a piece of wood, a hollow box or a heavy book to find the right sound for the door. Pots and pans make great sounds for Granny being locked in the closet.

Opening Music Suggestion: happy fairytale-type music – perhaps something by Schumann.

Character/Costume Breakdown: 2 Female 2 Male 3 Flexible

Narrator 1 Flexible Narrator 2 Flexible

Mother Female, apron, handkerchief, red granny's hat s(optional)

Red Female, short red cape

Wolf Male, wolf ears on hair band, tail tied around waist,

duplicate of Granny's costume, but hat has big slits

for ears

Woody Male, lumberjack plaid shirt and ski cap
Granny Flexible, house coat or gown, hat and wig

(Mother/Granny/Woody can double or triple.)

Props: Picnic basket, real axe handle with cardboard blade, small silk flower, lady's handkerchief

THE PERILS OF BEING MISS RED

I've done this scene trying to recreate real melodrama as it was actually performed around the turn of the 20th century without the campy way we think of melodrama today. I've also performed is so over-the-top it was ridiculous, giving the wolf a top hat with wolf ears attached, a handlebar moustache, and a black cape. It works both ways.

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CHARACTER/COSTUME BREAKDOWN: 2 Female 2 Male 1 Flexible

Narrator 1 Flexible (preferably male)

Narrator 2 Female

Stage Manager Male, stage manager's headset

Wolf Male, long black cape, top hat with wolf ears

attached, foam handlebar moustache

Red Female, long skirt, full-length red cape (or

use short one)

Male, plaid shirt with ski cap Woodv

> (I have cast Wolf, Red and Woody as all females, playing genders written.)

Props: small basket 5 or 6 inches in diameter (one that could not possibly hold any goodies), real axe handle with cardboard blade

MUCH ADO ABOUT RED

This scene must be played by two male actors – no exceptions. The actor portraving Red should NEVER go for laughs by using a falsetto voice or prissy body movements and gestures. He should think the words "demure," "gentle," and "ladylike" as a female would have behaved in the 1600s. The audience should forget they are watching a male portraying a female.

Opening Music Suggestion: light recorder music that leans toward a baroque sound – perhaps something by Purcell

Character/Costume Breakdown: 2 Male 2 Flexible

Narrator 1 Flexible Narrator 2 Flexible

Red Male, medieval dress, red cone-shaped headpiece with

circular opening for face, long trailing scarf coming from

point of hat

Male, medieval shirt, black full-length cape Wolf

Props: Medieval style picnic basket

REDZ IN THE HOOD

This scene represents the slang of the 1980s. Your actors will have fun with it knowing they are speaking in "retro" slang. It removes the pressure of having to look cool or authentic and allows them to play these characters a little more tongue-in-cheek and over-the-top.

Opening Music Suggestion: 1980s style hip-hop music with no profanity or objectionable content (Note: observe copyright laws for use of any registered recordings.)

Character/Costume Breakdown: 1 Female 1 Male 1F lexible

Narrator Flexible (preferably male), baseball cap, unbuttoned dress

shirt, sunglasses

Red Female, red hooded sweatshirt or windbreaker, sunglasses Wolf Male, any baggy hip-hop looking clothing and sunglasses

Props: Backpack

CALL THE MOMENT RED

I have included two suggested methods of staging this scene, but my best advice would be to perform it with focus and attitude as though the words coming out of the actors' mouths were the most important words ever spoken to humanity. Other than that, be creative and come up with your own idea of your "Red" moment.

Opening Music Suggestion: Find a droning "meditation" type of music, or let the chorus hum in dissonant notes until the bongo player hits the first beat to start the scene.

Character/Costume Breakdown: 1 Female 1 Male Flexible chorus

Narrator 1 Flexible, beret, any color, sunglasses Narrator 2 Flexible, beret, any color, sunglasses Bongo Player Flexible, beret, any color, sunglasses Tree Flexible, green beret, sunglasses Red Female, red beret, sunglasses Wolf Male, black beret, sunglasses Chorus Flexible, sunglasses optional

> (The chorus can be one flexible character or the entire cast if you have stage room. Narrators can be included in the chorus or can become Red and

Wolf after introduction.)

Props: Bongo drum

RED! THE MUSICAL!

If this scene is added to the production of *Totally RED!* it should be inserted between REDz in the Hood and Call the Moment RED. The opening narration song should be big and corny: high eyebrows, big smiles. It should appear as though these performers came out of nowhere all at once, a la Busby Berkeley. (Additional royalties are due for use of the piano/vocal score which is available from the publisher.)

Opening Music Suggestion: introduction music provided in the piano/vocal score.

Character/Costume Breakdown: 1 Male 1 Female 2+ Flexible

Narrator 1 Flexible Narrator 2 Flexible

Vocal Ensemble Flexible, top hats, white gloves, glittery vests Male, wolf ears on hair band, tail tied around waist Wolf

Red Female, short red cape

Props: Same basket from *STORYBOOK*, small silk flower

Totally RED!

words, music and dramatization by Dinah Toups with lyrics and music by Barbara Walker

(The stage is bare except for the tri-fold flat center stage. Narrators enter.)

NARRATOR 1: Once upon a time, in a wonderfully magical place called Fairy Tale Land, there existed a little girl known to the world as Little Red Riding Hood......

NARRATOR 2: I know what you're thinking! You're saying to yourself, "That old fairytale! I've heard it a million times!"

NARRATOR 1: But I guarantee you've never heard it told like this before!

NARRATOR 2: You see, over the centuries, theatre has changed a lot! So, we thought it might be fun to take a familiar story like Little Red Riding Hood and use it to show you just how MUCH it has changed.

NARRATOR 1: We're going to start with a style we call storybook theatre and then we're going to have a little fun with it!

NARRATOR 2: So, sit back and get ready for the total experience of...

BOTH: Totally RED!

Little RED Riding Hood:

Storybook Theatre

NARRATOR 1: Little Red Riding Hood was a very special little girl — (Red enters, waving to the audience, then stands sweetly. She is not wearing her red cape.) — because, although she was in the 8th grade, she never talked back to her mother, (Red shakes head.) never complained, (Red shakes head.) and always tried her best to do everything she was told. (Red nods.)

NARRATOR 2: We told you this was a fairytale. (Red gives Narrator 2 a dirty look.)

NARRATOR 1: One day, her mother — (Mother enters carrying a basket and a red cape, crosses to center, curtseys to audience, then crosses to Red.) — who was a good and kind woman, who never embarrassed Little Red by saying such things as, (Imitating a mother) "Who's your little boy friend?" (Mother shakes head.)

NARRATOR 2: ... or by wiping Red's face with spit on a hanky in public...(Mother shakes head, waves hanky.)

NARRATOR 1: ... asked her to do a very important favor for her.

MOTHER: Red, dear.

RED: (Smiling sweetly) Yes, Mother?

MOTHER: Would you be so kind as to take this to Granny's for me?

RED: Of course I will, Mother! What is it?

MOTHER: Just a few goodies I've prepared in a basket.

RED: Low fat, low cholesterol, I hope.

MOTHER: No, I made her things she would enjoy.

RED: Oh, is Granny's lumbago acting up again?

MOTHER: Yes, the poor dear.

RED: I'll be happy to walk it over. It's such a lovely day. (They

freeze gazing upward together at the "lovely day.")

NARRATOR 1: Everyone walks in Fairy Tale Land.

NARRATOR 2: They're very environmentally conscious. (Red and Mother unfreeze.)

NARRATOR 1: And even though Little Red was right in the middle of doing something she really enjoyed, she immediately stopped to take the long walk through the woods to Granny's, never once complaining. (Red begins to skip off stage.)

NARRATOR 2: Well, THIS is turning into quite a fairytale! (Red stops skipping, breaks character to give Narrator 2 another dirty look.)

MOTHER: Don't forget your hood, Little Red.

RED: (Smiling sweetly again) Thank you for reminding me, Mother. (Red returns to Mother who puts the cape on Red's shoulders.)

NARRATOR 2: And Little Red set out through the woods to Granny's.

MOTHER: I forgot to warn her about that tricky Big Bad Wolf! (Like a worried sigh) Oh, my.

(Narrators exit. Little Red skips out and goes left behind the flat. Mother exits right. Wolf enters left.)

WOLF: (To audience) I'm bored. There's nothing to do in these stupid woods. I always want to eat when I'm bored. I know it's a bad habit, but hey, I'm full of bad habits. You could say it's sort of my trademark. I mean, they don't call me the Big Bad Wolf for nothing. If only something would... (Little Red skips out from right of flats la-la-laing "Over the River and Through the Woods." Red doesn't see him as she stops to pick imaginary flowers.) Hello? (This is not spoken to her. It is spoken with the British meaning, "What's this?")

RED: Oh, look! Flowers! I'll pick some for Granny. (She begins picking imaginary flowers.)

WOLF: (To himself) What have we here? (To audience) Maybe today won't be so bad after all. Watch a pro in action. (Wolf leans against an imaginary tree center stage and sticks out his foot.) It's amazing how good I am at being sooooo bad.

(Red sees an imaginary red flower she wants stage left and runs to get it.)

RED: Oh! A pretty red one!

(Red trips over Wolf's foot. She falls, dropping her basket. The only real thing in Red's basket is a small silk flower.)

RED: Oh, my!

WOLF: (Very politely, overacting, like a con artist) Oh, I do beg your pardon. Allow me to assist you. (Helping her up)

RED: Thank you. *(Concerned for him)* I'm sorry, I didn't see you. How clumsy of me. Are you alright?

WOLF: Don't worry about me. I'm fine. I was resting by this tree and didn't see you coming. Are you alright?

RED: (Dusting off cape) A little dusty, that's all.

WOLF: What a lovely hood you have.

RED: Why thank you. My grandmother made it for me.

WOLF: What a lucky girl to have such a talented grandmother!

RED: I'll be sure to tell my granny you said so. She isn't feeling well and I'm sure your words will cheer her.

WOLF: You are too kind. I blush. (Overacting embarrassment)

RED: Not at all. You are a very nice person. (Goes to basket and starts gathering the imaginary contents that spilled) What brings you to these woods?

WOLF: Hopes of meeting someone like you. (He bows.)

RED: Now, I blush. (She giggles.)

WOLF: (Turning away from her; trying to get her sympathy) Living alone in the woods gets lonely at times.

RED: Don't you have any forest friends?

WOLF: Finding someone interesting in the forest to talk to is rare. (He goes to her and squats next to her.) Ever tried carrying on an intelligent conversation with a squirrel? (She shakes her head.) Don't bother. (He rises and she laughs.) You're fun to talk to. You have a wonderful laugh.

RED: I like you, too. I'll tell you a secret. (He leans in.) I get lonely, too, sometimes.

WOLF: You? Anyone as nice as you must have lots of friends.

RED: Not really. We live so far from town.

WOLF: (Spoken more as a statement than a question, it's all part of the con.) I don't suppose you'd want to be friends with a boring old wolf like me? (He walks away, standing with his back to her, yet revealing his sneakiness with his eyes ... this is not melodrama...so it is not overplayed. He's hoping she will cross to him. If she does, then he knows he's won the game he's playing. She crosses to him.)

RED: Don't put yourself down. (Putting her hand on his shoulder to comfort him) I would be honored to call you friend. (Formally) Hello, friend, I'm Little Red Riding Hood. (Extends hand and curtseys, giggling)

WOLF: (Bowing grandly) How do you do? I am called the Big Bad--(Pause) Lou.

RED: It's a pleasure to make your acquaintance, Lou. (She laughs, then pauses and smiles sweetly, handing him the flower from her basket.) Here, want a flower?

WOLF: (Caught off guard by the kindness) Thanks. (He looks at the flower and is touched.) No one's ever given me a flower before. (Uncomfortable, doesn't know what to say; he shoves the flower into his pocket and changes the subject.) Well, friend, what shall we talk about?

(Red is uncomfortable for a moment trying to think of something to say. She is trying too hard, like a girl talking to a boy she has a crush on and is nervous.)

RED: Beautiful day, wouldn't you say?

WOLF: That rhymes!

RED: I beg your pardon?

WOLF: "Beautiful day, wouldn't you say?" --rhymes.

RED: (Giggling) I guess it does.

WOLF: What a great laugh you have. (Trying to change subject to basket) So, your granny isn't feeling well. I'm sorry to hear that. Is there anything I can do?

RED: I'm afraid not. Thanks.

WOLF: What's in the basket?

RED: Oh, lots of wonderful things!

WOLF: Like what?

RED: Well, there's....and there's...and, well... (Giggles)...you know, I have no idea! Mother just said they were goodies.

WOLF: Wanna peek?

RED: All right, I don't think it would do any harm. (They sit. Red begins looking deep into the basket and pulling out imaginary things one at a time. She doesn't look up. Wolf is crouched on her right with his nose close to the basket. Red picks up the imaginary food from the basket with her right hand, passing it in a swooping gesture from the basket to a point above Wolf's head. Wolf follows her hand with his nose while loudly inhaling the aroma, then she places it back in the basket. This is done with one big sweeping motion from start to finish. He follows the food as far as he can with his nose, then exhales down to his crouching position again, ready for the next bit of food. He repeats this motion each time.) There is potato salad ... fried chicken ... homemade bread ... and some strawberry preserves. (The last time Red looks deep into the basket and finds nothing left. When she turns her head in his direction, Wolf finds himself nose to nose with her instead of finding food. She talks directly into his face from this position.) You'd love my granny.

WOLF: (They both sit up in unison straight out to the audience.) I'm sure I would. I'll have to have you both for dinner very soon. (Wolf pretends to get an idea.) Hey! (Stands) I just had a wonderful idea! What if I were to go with you to visit your granny?

RED: (Standing) What a lovely idea!

WOLF: Oh, drat. (*Pretending disappointment*) I'm supposed to wait for someone here. (*Pause*) Hey! Perhaps I could meet you at your granny's later! Where does she live?

RED: In that lovely house just at the edge of the woods.

WOLF: The one with the roses on the trellis?

RED: That's the one!

WOLF: Then let's meet at Granny's...shall we say one hour?

RED: Sure!

WOLF: Agreed.

RED: See you later. (She starts to skip upstage left to exit behind flat, then pauses, turns, smiles warmly and waves.) Friend.

(Wolf watches her exit, waving and smiling.)

WOLF: (Turns head to audience with hand still up in a wave, speaks through his fake smile) I may be ill ... too much sugar for my diet. (Drops pose, speaks slyly) But, I have a plan ... such a simple plan...and aren't they always the best? I'll take a shortcut to Granny's, getting there long before she does. Then I'll wait. It won't be difficult to fool her ... she's so naive. What a good-goody. (Putting his thumb in his pocket he feels the flower she gave him and takes it out and looks at it. For a brief moment he is touched again by the kindness she had shown him and then shakes it off, angry at showing weakness. He throws the flower on the ground and crushes it with his foot.) Oh, who wants to be friends with a goody-two-shoes, anyway?! I'll get that goody-goody's goodies, or my name isn't THE BIG BAD WOLF! (Exits left)

(Narrators enter right, bringing a chair and placing it left in front of flat as they are talking.)

NARRATOR 2: And so Lou, alias Big Bad Wolf, fooled Little Red into thinking he was a kind and trustworthy friend.

NARRATOR 1: He was a very clever wolf. He was full of tricks. Even his name was tricky. For you see, Lou is the French word for Wolf.

NARRATOR 2: So the wolf had a plan. He would get a red cape, knock on Granny's door, (Getting caught up in the story, getting carried away, acting it out as a one-man show) grab Granny, lock her in the closet, put on her night cap and robe. Then he would pretend to be Granny. When Little Red knocks on the door...

NARRATOR 1: Hold it! Don't tell them the whole story! You'll ruin the ending!