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In Search of the
GOLDEN TEARDROP

by **BETTY HAVENS**

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BETTY HAVENS

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(IN SEARCH OF THE GOLDEN TEARDROP)

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IN SEARCH OF THE GOLDEN TEARDROP

First produced by the Alley Theatre Merry-Go-Round in Houston, Texas in May, 1971, with the following cast:

The Minstrel	Karen Briscoe
George	Martin Rizley
Mother	Troylyn Wiggington
King	Walter Saunders
Queen	Michelle Murders
Beatrice	Missy Hardy

THE WATERFALL

Flip	Julia Karotkin
Flitter	Kay Casimir
Foamy	Frances Cipolla
Foosh	Laura Baker

QUIET WATERS

Hush	Martha Haynes
Hum	Kimberly Brice
Heavenly	Cynthia Kendall
Holler	Nancy Clark

ROARING RAPIDS

Clatter	Mitchell Barrier
Craggy	Vickie Brownback
Clunk	Paul Munson
Crush	John Billingsley
Crowder	Laura Baker
Roar	Lance Anderson
Repeater	Kimberly Bradford

SINGING SEA

Ceceal	Shirley Reed
Celia	Jean Moore
Cecilly	Kimberly McKittrick
Neptune	Cissy Holcomb

Extensive doubling is possible, if necessary to reduce the size of the cast

The action takes place on the Endless River as it meanders its way from the Forgotten Kingdom to – who knows where!

The time is somewhere between a dream and a sigh.

NOTES ON THE PLAY

Here is one of the most charming children's plays you will find anywhere—and one of the most versatile. It is ideally suited for staging by adults for children, by children for other children, or by children for adults. The production may be very simple—a cardboard box representing the boat, on a bare stage. Or it may be very elaborate, with spectacular scenic and lighting effects.

For those who need a play for a large cast, this one has room for 25 or more performers. Most of the roles may be played by either males or females. However, because of the way the scenes are arranged, actors and actresses may double in roles, reducing the cast to as few as 10.

Reading the play will suggest an exciting variety of costumes—lots of glitter for the Waterfall; perhaps flowing pastel organdy for the Quiet Waters . . . and wild make-up and costumes with bright stripes, undulating scarves or capes or ribbons, and feathery headpieces for the Roaring Rapids. The costumes of the Singing Sea might be a parody of a currently popular singing group. And then green-clad Neptune with his swim fins and his fierce trident pops to the surface! A strip of blue cloth undulated by stagehands makes an exciting river.

The *'Stage Magic'* Director's Production Script for this play gives detailed information and drawings to help even inexperienced directors stage an enchanting production. The Director's Script may be purchased from the publisher.

IN SEARCH OF THE GOLDEN TEARDROP premiered so successfully in the Alley Merry-Go-Round, the theatre-school workshop of the famed Alley Theatre in Houston, that it was repeated in the school on several different occasions.

The play tells of the journey of two brave young men down the perilous uncharted Endless River in search of a golden teardrop which fell from the precious little eye of a precious little princess.

The theme is a simple one—have faith in yourself. But in our overcrowded world where a child's search for identity often meets frustrations which warp his character and personality, the message is an important one. George is just an ordinary fellow; but his faith in himself leads him to extraordinary achievement.

The adults in the audience may find a more subtle theme: that nit-wit kid you're laughing at today may grow up to be the genius of the century tomorrow.

At any rate, don't scoff at the next golden teardrop you see floating down the river. It may be your transport to happiness.

In Search of the GOLDEN TEARDROP

[Lights up. The MINSTREL is found on stage with mandolin. He is trying to play it, but is getting no sound. He speaks to it.]

MINSTREL. Come, now, my friend, play for me. You haven't an excuse in the world for not singing. It's very easy. Just listen to me. *[Sings]* Ping-ping-ping-ping. See, that's not hard. Now, you try. *[He strums the strings but nothing happens.]* Hmm. Well, perhaps, that was *too* easy for you. Let's try something more difficult. *[Sings]* Ping-aling, ping-aling, ping-aling, ping. Oh, I liked that! Now, it is your turn. *[Strums; nothing happens.]* You are being very stubborn and high-strung. Just when I need your help. I have to tell a story and you know I can't do it without your assistance. Now, please, co-operate! *[Strums; nothing happens.]* Very well, if that's the way you are going to be, it's into the fire with you! *[Immediately, MANDOLIN MUSIC begins.]* Aaaaahhhh! Thank you! *[Secretly, to audience]* That works everytime! And now, to my story. There once lived in a place called the Forgotten Kingdom, a young man named George. *[LIGHTS come up on GEORGE.]* George liked to do two things. He liked to make maps of the Endless River and he liked to eat. *[GEORGE takes a bite from a chicken leg.]* Now, since no one ever traveled down the Endless River, his maps were useless. And, since he never worked for any of the food he ate, his mother thought George was useless.

MOTHER. *[Entering]* George, my son, you are useless.

You are also lazy and you eat too much. When are you going to get a job and bring some gold pieces home? I can't work forever, you know. I'm tired of bringing in the bread while you sit on your silly maps!

GEORGE. But, mother, dear, I feel the work I am doing will someday be profitable. Look! *[Shows her map]* I have charted this part of the Endless River to three miles out of the Forgotten Kingdom. Isn't that wonderful?

MOTHER. So what happens when you get past the three-mile mark? I'll tell you what happens! You fall off the end of the world! That's what happens!

GEORGE. But, mother, dear, I believe that the world is round and that you can't fall off.

MOTHER. The world is round! George, my son, you are a nitwit. Get a job! *[She exits. LIGHTS out on George.]*

MINSTREL. Now, for the other people in my story. *[Strums mandolin; nothing happens.]* All right, into the fire! *[MANDOLIN MUSIC begins.]* In the Forgotten Kingdom there was, of course, a king. *[KING enters.]* A queen. *[QUEEN enters.]* And a princess. *[PRINCESS enters.]* Now, the king and queen were very wealthy. But their proudest possession was their daughter. *[They pat daughter on the head.]* As far as they were concerned, the sun really did rise and set on Beatrice.

KING. Isn't she a doll? *[To Queen]* And she has all your good features. Your smile. Your beauty. Your grace.

QUEEN. *[To King]* And she has all your qualities. Your honor. Your intelligence. Your nobility. *[PRINCESS sneezes.]* Your hay fever!

MINSTREL. Despite Beatrice's hay fever, everything else about her was so precious that the king and queen kept every memento of her existence. Visitors to the kingdom were not shown gold and jewels. Instead . . . *[He crosses to king and queen and becomes a visitor.]*

KING. Aaahhh! Here let me show you something. Here are my daughter's first baby shoes.

QUEEN. Cast in gold!

KING. And this is a replica of her first smile.

QUEEN. Isn't that sweet?

KING. Here is a box of all her charming giggles. [*MINSTREL tries to peep into box.*] Now, be careful! Don't let them out! Here is her first baby tooth. And this is a case of her hiccups. [*BEATRICE hiccups. KING grabs the hiccup and puts it into box.*] Ah, another one for our collection. [*BEATRICE hiccups again.*]

QUEEN. Aren't they charming? [*QUEEN hiccups. KING hiccups.*]

MINSTREL. Oh, yes; they are charming. [*He hiccups.*] And catching, too! [*KING and QUEEN exit, hiccupping.*] And now our story really begins. One day, Beatrice was looking into a gold fish pond, talking to a fish. [*BEATRICE mimes the action.*] The King and Queen were very choosy about her playmates. And she said . . .

BEATRICE. Hello, little gold fish. How are you today? Where are you going? Are you off on an adventure? Are you going to swim down the Endless River? Oh, I wish I could go with you. It gets so lonesome here sometimes, I could just cry.

MINSTREL. And a very large golden tear formed in the princess's precious eye and started to roll down her precious cheek. She was just about to catch it and put it into a box for her father when . . .

BEATRICE. . . Ah . . . ah . . . ah . . . chew!

MINSTREL. She sneezed and her golden tear ran off her precious cheek and fell kerplunk into the pond.

BEATRICE. Uh – oh! [*KING and QUEEN rush in at the sound.*]

MINSTREL. She rushed to her father and said . . .

BEATRICE. Father, dear, I lost a teardrop in the pond. [*KING and QUEEN react broadly.*]

MINSTREL. Well, needless to say, the king and queen were very upset. They had saved every tear the princess had

ever cried and they weren't about to lose this one. The entire kingdom was notified of the loss. [*Activity begins.*] And a huge reward was offered for the recovery of the golden teardrop. Fortune hunters from all over the kingdom came and searched everywhere. [*People enter and search various places. The pace of the activity increases.*] The gold fish pond was turned upside down, but to no avail. Finally, it was decided that the golden teardrop had floated off into the Endless River and would never be seen again. [*Activity becomes mournful.*] Now, my story could easily end here, but the king issued a proclamation.

KING. Be it known, that any young man who will sail down the Endless River and find my daughter's golden teardrop and bring it back safely will be crowned a prince and share half my kingdom. Now, what brave young man will do it?

FIRST MAN. I am a very brave man, but the Endless River has never been charted. I will not go, your majesty.

SECOND MAN. I, too, am brave, my king, but everyone knows if you sail too far down river you fall off the end of the world. Count me out, your highness.

THIRD MAN. I am the bravest man in the kingdom, but a brave man would not be so foolhardy. What you need is a nitwit.

GEORGE. I will go, your majesty!

KING. Oh, good! I found one!

GEORGE. I have charted part of the Endless River and I believe I can find your daughter's golden teardrop.

QUEEN. But, my dear boy, aren't you afraid of falling off the end of the world?

GEORGE. No, mam. You see, I believe the world is round.

QUEEN. [*Whispering to king*] He is a nitwit.

KING. I know. But he's the only one who will go. [*To George*] We will supply you with provisions for your journey.

GEORGE. And I will need someone to go with me to row the boat.

KING. Who will go with this nit . . . I mean, this brave young man? *[No one volunteers.]*

MINSTREL. *[To audience]* It seemed that I was the only other nitwit around, so I volunteered *[To king]* I will go, your majesty.

KING. Wonderful! Now, hurry! Beatrice's golden teardrop is sailing away at this very moment.

MINSTREL. So George and I supplied our boat with food, clothing, water, maps, food, and more food. All the kingdom turned out to see us off. *[People say, "goodbye" and "good luck," etc.]*

GEORGE. *[To Beatrice]* Don't worry, princess. I will bring back your golden teardrop.

BEATRICE. Poor little nitwit, we'll never see him again!

GEORGE'S MOTHER. I know. But at least he's got a job!

[LIGHTS fade on stage except for light on boat. Everyone but George and Minstrel exit. MUSIC.]

MINSTREL. We rowed for days. Or rather, I rowed for days. George kept himself busy with his maps and his bottomless tummy.

GEORGE. *[Eating]* Look, minstrel! We have reached the three-mile mark on my map!

MINSTREL. Wonderful! Now which way do we go?

GEORGE. I don't know. Maybe we ought to turn back.

MINSTREL. But, George, we have not found the golden teardrop. We can't go back empty-handed.

GEORGE. I know. But our food supply is getting low. *[He eats.]*

MINSTREL. I wonder why. You know, George, if you would help me row for awhile, we might have enough food left to last through our journey.

GEORGE. That's a good idea. Let's go that way! *[He points. MINSTREL starts rowing. GEORGE continues to eat. MUSIC and LIGHTS change.]*

MINSTREL. And so I rowed past the three-mile mark into

unknown waters. Everything was peaceful for a few days, but on the sixth day of our journey we heard . . .

FLIP. Hellllppp . . .

FLITTER. Meeeee . . .

FOAMY. I'mmmmmm . . .

FOOSH. Faaaaalllinnnngggg . . .

MINSTREL. We rowed to the spot. [*LIGHTS up on Waterfall.*]

THE WATERFALL. Helllp . . . usss . . . we'rrrrre . . . falllinnnngggg . . .

GEORGE. Look! A waterfall. Perhaps, the golden tear-drop is here. Hello!

THE WATERFALL. Hellllooooo . . . haaavve . . . yooou . . . cooome . . . tooo . . . hellppp . . . usssss?

GEORGE. What seems to be your problem?

FLIP. Can't you tell? Every day . . .

FLITTER. Every minute . . .

FOAMY. We are constantly . . .

FOOSH. Fallllinggg . . .

GEORGE. But isn't that what a waterfall usually does?

FLIP. Yes. But, that doesn't mean we have to like it.

GEORGE. My name is George. And this is the minstrel.

FLIP. I'm Flip.

FLITTER. I'm Flitter.

FOAMY. I'm Foamy.

FOOSH. And I'm Foosh!

GEORGE. How do you do? I'm sorry you don't like your work.

FLIP. Well, it wouldn't be so bad, but you see, I'm afraid of heights and just look where I am! [*FLIP is on top of waterfall.*]

FLITTER. And I'm simply tired of sparkling all day. Sparkle, sparkle, sparkle! [*FLITTER is just beneath Flip.*]

FOAMY. Her job is not so bad, but I constantly have a mouthful of foam. It's like having your mouth washed out every minute. [*FOAMY is just beneath Flitter.*]

FOOSH. [*On the bottom*] At least, you can breathe in. I

have to always breathe out. Foosh! . . . Foosh! . . . Foosh!
 . . . Foosh!

GEORGE. Well, it's too bad you don't like what you do, because together you make a very lovely picture.

WATERFALL. Weeeee . . . dooooo?

MINSTREL. Yes! You're gorgeous!

FLIP. No one has ever said that to us before.

FLITTER. Well, no one has ever seen us before. [*Showing off*] Sparkle! Sparkle! Sparkle!

FOAMY. Somehow, knowing we have beauty makes this work all worthwhile.

FOOSH. I'll never complain again.

WATERFALL. Thaaannnk . . . yooooouu!

GEORGE. You're quite welcome. Now, perhaps, you can help us. We are in search of a golden teardrop that was lost from a lovely princess's eye.

MINSTREL. Have you seen it?

FLIP. Yes!

FLITTER. It passed this way a day or so ago.

FOAMY. I tried to catch it, but just as it reached me . . .

FOOSH. I had to breathe out . . . foosh! And I blew it down river.

FLIP. That was the last time we saw it.

FLITTER. It probably floated into the land of Quiet Waters.

GEORGE. Where is that?

FOAMY. Down river a few miles.

FOOSH. If you hurry you might catch it there.

FLIP. But you will have to look and listen carefully. Those who live in Quiet Waters only whisper, so their land is difficult to locate.

GEORGE. Oh, thank you, very much. Let's go, minstrel.

FLITTER. Before you go, please tell us again how we look.

GEORGE and MINSTREL. You look beautiful!

WATERFALL. Thaaannnk . . . yooooouuu!

GEORGE and MINSTREL. Good-bye!

WATERFALL. Gooooood . . . byyyyye! [*LIGHTS out on Waterfall, up on boat*]

MINSTREL. [*Rowing*] And so we continued our journey down the Endless River. This time in search of the land of Quiet Waters. As the Waterfall had warned us, it was very difficult to find, for they made very little sound.

QUIET WATERS. [*Entering*] Sssssshhhh! Sssssshhhh! Sssssshhhh!

HUSH. [*To Hum*] Quietly.

HUM. [*To Heavenly*] Quietly.

HEAVENLY. [*To Holler*] Quietly.

HOLLER. [*Very loud voice*] What did you say?

HUSH, HUM, and HEAVENLY. Ssshhh!

GEORGE. Look, Minstrel. There it is! [*LIGHTS up on Quiet Waters.*]

HUSH. [*To Holler*] Now, see what you've done, big mouth!

GEORGE. This is the land of Quiet Waters, isn't it?

HUM. Yes. Yes. But, please, not so loud.

HUSH. You needn't announce it to the whole world.

GEORGE. I'm sorry. But, we've been looking for you for days.

MINSTREL. You are very difficult to find.

HEAVENLY. That's because we don't want anyone to find us.

HUM. You would still be looking if old Loud Mouth knew how to keep his voice down.

HOLLER. [*Loudly*] I'm sorry, but I couldn't hear what you said.

HUSH, HUM, HEAVENLY. Ssshhh! Not so loud.

HUM. You see what I mean?

GEORGE. My name is George and this is the minstrel.

HUSH. I'm Hush.

HUM. I'm Hum.

HEAVENLY. Hi, I'm Heavenly.

HOLLER. [*Loudly*] And I'm Holler.

HUSH, HUM, HEAVENLY. Sssh! Whisper, please!

MINSTREL. Why do we have to whisper?

HUSH. Why! ?

HUM. If you lived near the Roaring Rapids, you would be quiet, too!

GEORGE. The Roaring Rapids?

HEAVENLY. Yes. They live just around the bend of the river.

HUSH. And they're a lot of loud mouths like Holler, who do nothing but mischief all day!

HOLLER. [*Loudly*] I don't do mischief all day.

HUM. [*Loud, too*] No, but you are a loud mouth!

HUSH and HEAVENLY. Ssshhh! !

HUSH. Do you want Roaring Rapids to find out where we are?

HUM. No. I'm sorry. But Holler makes me so mad.

HEAVENLY. It's not his fault. He just never learned to whisper.

GEORGE. What would happen if Roaring Rapids did find you?

HUSH. They would invade our land and make it loud, boisterous, and full of mischief.

HEAVENLY. Instead of the heavenly, peaceful country it is now.

HUM. Quiet Waters would never be quiet again.

HEAVENLY. So you see, we have to whisper so Roaring Rapids won't find us.

HOLLER. I can't hear a thing that's going on. What's happening? Who are these people? Why are they here?

GEORGE. Ssshhh! We are in search of a golden teardrop. The Waterfall said it might be in your land.

HOLLER. The golden tear! The one I tried to save!

HUSH. Sshh! Yes, the golden teardrop passed here a few days ago. We tried to save it, but Holler was making so much noise . . .

HUM. We had to spend our time keeping him quiet.

HEAVENLY. So the teardrop floated off toward Roaring Rapids. Goodness knows what happened to it there.

GEORGE. Come, minstrel, we better hurry before it reaches them.

HUSH. Yes, it won't last long, once they have played *their* games.

HUM. You won't tell Roaring Rapids where we live, will you?

GEORGE. Of course not. We don't want to see your land destroyed.

HEAVENLY. Oh, thank you. Good luck on your journey.

GEORGE and MINSTREL. Thank you and good-bye!

HUSH. Good-bye.

HUM. Good-bye.

HEAVENLY. Good-bye.

HOLLER. [*Loudly*] Are you leaving? [*HUSH, HUM, and HEAVENLY put their hands over Holler's mouth. They wave good-bye silently and exit.*]

MINSTREL. And so I rowed away from Quiet Waters and we continued our journey. We were a bit fearful, for we did not know what we would encounter in the land of Roaring Rapids. On the eighth day, while I was rowing and George was participating in his favorite passtime [*GEORGE is eating*], it suddenly grew dark and we began to hear strange sounds. [*LIGHTS darken as ROARING RAPIDS enter making sounds like rushing water. They surround the boat and start rocking it.*]

GEORGE. [*As RAPIDS enter*] Minstrel, listen to those sounds!

MINSTREL. I hear them! [*As they rock the boat*] The boat! ! The boat is rocking and I can't control it!

GEORGE. Minstrel, what's happening?

MINSTREL. I don't know! Just hang on, George, hang on! !

GEORGE. I can't, minstrel! We're about to capsize! What can we do?

MINSTREL. We'll have to abandon ship and swim for shore! !

GEORGE. No! No! No!

MINSTREL. Why not?

GEORGE. I can't swim!

MINSTREL. You can't swim! ! This is a great time to tell me!

GEORGE. What shall we do?

MINSTREL. Here! [*Hands him mandolin*] Hang onto my mandolin. She's made of wood and she'll keep us both afloat.

GEORGE. [*As he grabs mandolin*] We're going over!

MINSTREL. [*As RAPIDS rock boat heavily*] Jump, George, jump! [*They jump out of boat.*]

CLATTER. And now we have you in our grasp! [*RAPIDS laugh.*]

GEORGE. Swim, minstrel, swim for our lives!

MINSTREL. Which way?

GEORGE and MINSTREL. [*Both say*] That way! [*One points right, one points left; consequently they swim into each other and knock themselves into a silly daze by bumping heads.*]

CLATTER. [*After RAPIDS laugh*] Quick, Roaring Rapids, hide the boat while these two nitwits take a nap. [*The RAPIDS hide the boat onstage while GEORGE and the MINSTREL, still clinging to the mandolin, slowly recover their wits.*]

GEORGE. [*Coming out of his daze*] Oh, me!

MINSTREL. [*Also recovering*] Oh, my!

GEORGE and MINSTREL. [*As they touch their brows*] Oh, my aching head!

MINSTREL. Are you all right?

GEORGE. Yes, I think so.

MINSTREL. That was a close call. We almost lost everything.

GEORGE. Fortunately, I was able to save the map and the food.

MINSTREL. And fortunately, my dear mandolin was able to save both of us. But where is the boat? [*RAPIDS laugh.*]