

# **Excerpt Terms & Conditions**

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

**You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.**

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity of scripts.

## **Family Plays**

# A HOLIDAY DREAM

Comedy/Drama by  
ALLAN KUESTER



# A HOLIDAY DREAM

**Comedy/Drama. By Allan Kuester. Cast:** 6m., 7w., extras. In this interactive play, children in the audience shout “Courage!” when prompted by Peter Pixie, a holiday elf who uses a magic dream to help Tim overcome his shyness and gain self-esteem. Peter Pixie’s opening remarks to the audience refer to *A Christmas Carol*, in which dreams cause Scrooge to become a better person. Peter Pixie explains that he was not part of that story because he had another assignment: helping Tiny Tim, a shy boy whose only friends are in stories. He adds, “I gave Tiny Tim a magical dream that changed his life. Let’s look in on this Tim at the start of his adventure.” The play opens with Tim claiming to be too tired to join his family’s holiday celebration downstairs. He falls asleep after opening his storybook only to be awakened by Peter Pixie. With the help of the audience shouting “Courage!” when Peter Pixie rings a bell, Tim continues to gain self-confidence as he helps the elf rescue Hansel and Gretel from the witch, Little Red Riding Hood from the Big Bad Wolf, and Jack and his beanstalk from the giant. Was it only a dream? Peter Pixie’s answer: “Dreams are some of the most important things we have going. You see, if you can dream it, you can make it for real. Tim, without our dreams we have nothing.” In conclusion Tim says, “True, but this was only a dream and you gave me magic.” Peter: “The only magic you used was the magic you had in you all the time. Let’s hear the magic word!” Peter rings the bell, and the audience shouts “Courage.” The lights come up, the audience is recognized as elf helpers, and they give him one more jolt of magic to send him home. After an explosion of lights, Tim’s mother comes into his bedroom, and he prepares to join the family celebration. Any holiday could be substituted for Christmas referred to in this play, but it might be difficult because Peter Pixie’s opening remarks to the audience refer to *A Christmas Carol*. However, the play can be presented any time during the year because of its strong message. Cast members may be any age, children or adults (the original cast at Concordia College, Chicago, was composed of college students; sixth grade students performed it at Elm School, Hinsdale, Illinois). *Set: fragmented set pieces suggestive of storybook illustrations illustrate the magical dream-like quality of the one-act play. Costumes: traditional fairy tale. Approximate running time: 50 to 60 minutes. Code: HE3.*

## Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308  
Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170  
Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

[www.FamilyPlays.com](http://www.FamilyPlays.com)

ISBN-13 978-0-88680-456-5



9 780886 804565 >  
Title

# *A Holiday Dream*

by

DAVID ALLAN KUESTER

**Family Plays**

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

© Family Plays

\*\*\* NOTICE \*\*\*

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by FAMILY PLAYS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website [www.FamilyPlays.com](http://www.FamilyPlays.com), or we may be contacted by mail at: FAMILY PLAYS, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© 1999 by  
DAVID ALLAN KUESTER

Printed in the United States of America  
*All Rights Reserved*  
(A HOLIDAY DREAM)

ISBN: 978-0-88680-456-5

## IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with  
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

# **A HOLIDAY DREAM**

**Characters—in order of Appearance**

Tim  
Mom  
Peter (or Petrenella) Pixie  
Hansel  
Gretel  
Witch  
Red  
Grandma  
Wolf  
Jack  
Harpo  
Giant's Wife  
The Giant's Voice (from off stage)

*(Casting note:* The following parts may be double or triple cast to facilitate a much smaller cast size:

Hansel, Wolf, and Jack

Witch, Grandma, and Giant's Wife

Gretel, Red, and Harpo

## About the Play

Tim is a young boy with low esteem. He doesn't even want to join his family for a holiday celebration (Christmas or any other holiday or special occasion). As he dozes off to sleep, an elf comes to help him—with the aid of the audience. As he gains self-confidence, he rescues Hansel and Gretel from the witch, Little Red Riding Hood from the Big Bad Wolf, and Jack and his beanstalk from the giant. Was it only a dream? *A Holiday Dream* was originally produced at Concordian College, Chicago, and at Victoria College in Victoria, Texas, with a cast of college students. However, it also fits a cast of any age, including adults and children. A production at Elm School, Hillside, Ill., was performed by sixth grade students.

Dr. Kuester received his doctorate in speech communications and theater from Southern Illinois University in 1996.

Playing time is 50-60 minutes.



## PRODUCTION NOTES

### *Properties*

3 storybooks .....	Tim
Bell .....	Peter
Chunk of gingerbread .....	to be broken off of Witch's house
Wand .....	Witch
Large witch cookie .....	in oven
Robe .....	wolf
Basket of food .....	Red
Beanstalk (vine wrapped around a ladder) .....	appears on stage
Harp .....	part of Harpo's costume
Book .....	Wife

### *Costumes and Make-Up*

Traditional fairytale costumes would be appropriate—German alpine clothes for Hansel and Gretel, black robe and witch's hat and big nose for the Witch; a red cape and hood for Little Red Riding Hood, a suggestion of a wolf's head (especially the hairy face) for the Wolf, and modern clothes for Jack. Harpo leans against the front of a harp, and may wear a dress and facial makeup similar in color to the harp. Tim might appropriately wear pajamas, and Peter Pixie tells us he is wearing red and green.

### *The Set*

The setting is a space where a story is about to be told. All scenery should be fragmented set pieces that are suggestive of storybook illustrations. The only scene that could mirror reality is that of Tim's bedroom. All scenes should flow quickly into the next to support the magical dreamlike reality of the play.

# A HOLIDAY DREAM

## Scene 1

*[As the pre-show music lowers, the SET CREW enters the stage area putting the finishing touches on the set for Tim's Bedroom. PETER PIXIE enters and begins to put some props into place. PETER stops his work and notices that there is an audience. He quickly prepares to address them and moves forward down stage to do so. As Peter begins to talk, the LIGHTS lower on the set in the background and the SET CREW moves slowly off]*

PETER. Hello. Why you must be the people who came to see the show today. I thought so. I hope all of you are as excited as I am. Let me introduce myself. My name is Peter Pixie, I am a holiday elf. How many of you out there like holidays? Me too. What holiday is coming next? Right. Do you think you can guess which holiday is my favorite? I will give you a hint, I am wearing the colors red and green. Christmas is right! Christmas has always been a special time for elves. I just love the lights, the trees, the songs, and I really love hearing special holiday stories. Do you know what my favorite holiday story is? Let me tell you. It was written by a man named Charles Dickens and he called it *A Christmas Carol*. How many of you have heard of that? It's the story of an old grouchy man named Scrooge. He was mean and had no friends. Do you know what Scrooge had to say about Christmas? He said "Humbug!" Have you ever heard such a thing? Humbug to lights, humbug to trees, humbug to songs, and even humbug to Christmas presents. This man was so mean he would not even let his employees get off work to spend Christmas Eve with their families.

I want to tell you a secret. Some of us magical types got together one Christmas Eve a long long time ago to teach this old Mr. Scrooge a lesson. These magical friends got together to give Scrooge the dream of his life. At least one to change his life. He was visited by magical spirits from the past, the present, and his lonely future if he stayed as mean as he was.

I had a different kind of job to do that night. I spent that Christmas Eve visiting a special little boy. Let's call him Tiny Tim. Tim also needed help. You see he was afraid, afraid of everything. He had what we elves call a low self-concept. Tim was so afraid of people and things that he didn't even have any friends. He spent all his time lost in stories. The stories were his only friends. I decided that something had to be done. I want to take you back to that very special night, long ago, where

I gave Tim a magical dream that changed his life. Let's look in on Tim at the start of his adventure.

*[The LIGHTS slowly come up on the bedroom where TIM is looking at his storybooks]*

TIM. Which one of you stories shall keep me company tonight? Shall it be you, *Jack and the Beanstalk*? Or you, *Little Red Riding Hood*? Or a nice visit with *Hansel and Gretel*? Shh. Not a peep, I hear someone coming.

MOM. Tim, are you up here? Tim? *[Mom enters the room and looks at Tim]* There you are. Why are you up here in your room?

TIM. I am tired, Mother.

MOM. You should be down with our friends and family. It's Christmas Eve, Tim!

TIM. There are too many people down there.

MOM. People who love you and want to see you.

TIM. I am too tired, really.

MOM. You are just too shy. There is no reason for it.

TIM. Is Father home yet?

MOM. Not yet, but he would want you downstairs with everyone.

TIM. I just can't.

MOM. Well, it's Christmas Eve. If you want to spend it alone with your stories, I'm not going to fight you on this, not on Christmas Eve.

TIM. Thank you, Mom.

MOM. Happy Holiday, my shy little one. I'll look in on you in a bit. Stories instead of parties—for the life of me I will never understand you, Tim.

*[MOM exits the room. TIM picks up one of his stories and starts to read it, soon falling asleep. PETER moves into the stage area to address the audience]*

PETER. This is where I come into the picture. *[PETER moves up to TIM to wake him. He tries several times and finally does, but both are startled and scare each other]*

TIM. Who are you?

PETER. Let me get my breath.

TIM. What do you want?

PETER. My name is Peter.

TIM. I know you! You are Peter Pixie! You live in my book.

PETER. That's me, in the flesh.

TIM. Am I dreaming?

PETER. Dream or not, I am here because I need your help.

TIM. Me? My help?

PETER. You have to rescue some of my friends that live in Storybook Land. Get up!

TIM. I can't...I am not the rescue type.

PETER. I would not be here if you couldn't help.

TIM. I am tiny, shy, and I am very afraid of you, so please go back into the book where you belong.

PETER. Look, Tim, the characters in your storybooks have been friends to you for a long time. Now they need your help.

TIM. Go find a brave kid to help them.

PETER. You are the only one, Tim. Please come with me. It will only take a few hours. They are counting on you because you know their stories.

TIM. No. I am too afraid of things to be of any help to anyone.

PETER. Is that what's stopping you?

TIM. Yes!

PETER. I forgot to tell you about the magic.

TIM. Magic?

PETER. Do you think you would feel more like going if you had some magical power to help you?

TIM. I don't know...well, maybe.

PETER. Wait right here. I will go and muster up some strong magic for you. Don't move. *[PETER waves a hand and TIM is motionless. PETER moves to the audience to address them]* This is where all of you come in to help with this problem. We have to give him some magic. Do you know what type of magic? Let me tell you. We have to help him get the magic of courage. This is how it works. *[PETER removes a bell from a pocket and rings it]* Did all of you hear that? That was my magic bell. Each time you hear that ring, I need you to say the magic word to give Tim power. The magic word is...COURAGE. Let's all practice that. I ring the bell, and you say?.....Good, once more. Good. Now remember that you need to say the magic word each time you hear the bell ring. *[PETER moves back to Tim's side]* OK there, Tim, now you have the magical power that will let you come with me tonight.

TIM. I don't feel anything.

PETER. Maybe you need an additional dose. Are we ready? (PETER

rings the bell and the Audience replies with "COURAGE"). Well?

TIM. I think, yes, I think I feel something.

PETER. Good, let's get going.

TIM. It will only be for a short time, right?

PETER. Right.

TIM. This will be safe, I mean I won't get hurt or anything, will I?

PETER. Tim, Tim, Tim, think about it. The odds are that this is all just a dream, and if this is a dream, what could it hurt to go on an adventure with a cute little elf like me. Look, if this is a dream you will be safe in your bed the whole time.

TIM. I'll go, but just for a short time.

PETER. *[To the audience]* It worked.

TIM. Where are we going?

PETER. To the enchanted forest... We have to hurry.

*[PETER leads TIM offstage. There should be a very fluid change to the next scene: the Witch's Gingerbread house]*

## Scene 2

*[PETER and TIM quickly enter from the opposite side of the stage. TIM sees the candy-coated house and runs to it]*

TIM. Wow, a real gingerbread house. At least I think it's real.

PETER. It's real all right. *[He moves to the house and pulls off a chunk and offers it to Tim. Just as TIM is about to taste it, there is a loud clamor from the inside of the house]* OOPS! Someone is coming. Hide. *[TIM and PETER duck behind a bush. Out of the gingerbread house an old nasty WITCH appears]*

WITCH. Is someone there? I thought I heard someone about to munch my house. Is someone there? I must be working too hard. Toil, toil, toil and bubble, a human may work, but a witch works double. It is time to gather wood and light my stove so with a pinch of nutmeg and a dash of clove I will cook those children from the grove. *[Cackle, cackle]* I'm going to cook me some kids. *[WITCH moves off stage]*

TIM. That was a witch!

PETER. I know, and an evil one too. I think she is gone for awhile. You go and run in the house and save our friends.

TIM. Who?

PETER. You!

TIM. I meant, save who?

PETER. Our friends Hansel and Gretel. The witch is going to eat them.

TIM. Eat them?

PETER. That witch has them locked up in that gingerbread house. When she comes back, she is going to cook them in that oven over there. She will bake them into gingerbread children and eat them. She will do it, you know. She is a mean one, that witch.

TIM. She will really eat them?

PETER. If we don't save them fast, she will come back here and eat us too.

TIM. But, why do I have to save them?

PETER. Why? Well, because I have to stay here and keep a lookout.

TIM. OK, but you yell if you see her. *[TIM runs into the gingerbread house and returns with two plump German children named HANSEL and GRETEL]*

GRETEL. We want to thank you so very much for getting us out of there.

HANSEL. Yes, Thank you. It has been such a bad day.

GRETEL. First we got lost.

HANSEL. Then we got hungry.

GRETEL. Then we got locked up.

TIM. That's OK, I remember how the story goes now. We have to leave before that witch comes back. *[As they start away from the house, the WITCH appears and stops them with her wand]*

WITCH. Not so fast, my pretties!... Nasty children filled with lard, I freeze you like an icy chard. *[Both HANSEL and GRETEL are frozen motionless in their tracks. TIM tries to get them to move with little success until he notices the WITCH approaching closer]* Why are you still moving?

TIM. Because I can.

WITCH. *[She points her wand at Tim again]* Now here is the potion for no more motion.....FREEZE. *[She sees that it has no effect]* Why can't I freeze you?

TIM. I don't know.

WITCH. You are making me mad. And when I get mad, I get evil.

TIM. Well then try it again. *[The WITCH tries again but still cannot freeze Tim]*

WITCH. I now know what is wrong—in this story you do not belong.

TIM. You're right. I'll just be going now. *[TIM starts to leave but is*

*stopped by the WITCH]*

WITCH. Oh no you don't. You won't be leaving. You have been bad, you have been deceiving. The only thing left for me to do is to make a cookie out of you. Now march to that oven and get in!

TIM. Peter, help me! I'm very scared.

PETER. *[Moves to the edge of the stage to address the audience]* I think that Tim here could use some of our help. Do all of you remember what to do when I ring the magic bell? Let's see if we can give him some help. *[PETER rings the bell and the audience replies with "Courage!"]* Well, he doesn't look as afraid as he did. Look, I think he has a plan.

TIM. Miss Witch? What is it that you want me to do?

WITCH. I have told you. I want you to get in the oven!

TIM. Not being from the story, I don't understand.

WITCH. What part of "get in" is it that you don't understand?

TIM. If you could just show me. It would help me to understand you.

WITCH. I have never met such a thick-skulled boy. *[The WITCH moves to demonstrate getting in the oven]* All you have to do is to get up like this and crawl in like this. You got it?

TIM. Got you! *[TIM slams the door on her and holds it closed. There is a scuffle and a small explosion. TIM opens the door and pulls out a large witch cookie. PETER runs up to join Tim]*

PETER. Tim! You did it! You stopped the evil witch and you saved Hansel and Gretel.

TIM. They look funny to me! *[TIM notices that HANSEL and GRETEL are still motionless]*

PETER. German yes, I'm not sure about funny. *[PETER looks closely at them]* I think I can fix this. I need to go and get a magic word. I'll be right back. *[PETER moves to address the audience]* It seems we need a magic word to set the nice German kids free. It's coming to me. It's someone's name. I need to use someone's name as a magic word. *[PETER goes out into the audience and picks a person and gets his or her name. He returns to the stage and announces the name]* Now I need everyone's help. I am going to ring the bell and I need all of you to say the magic name. Ready, set *[he rings the bell]*. It worked, Hansel and Gretel are free. We did it. *[HANSEL and GRETEL begin to move and come out of the frozen trance]*

TIM. Are you OK?

HANSEL. The Witch, the Witch! Where is the Witch?

TIM. She is gone forever.

GRETEL. Thank you for saving us!