

Excerpt terms and conditions

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

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 you read the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

The Brave Little Tailor

A comedy for children's theatre

Suggested by Grimm's
"The Brave Little Tailor"

by

AURAND HARRIS



Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

© Dramatic Publishing

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 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.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 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.

©MCMLXI

By THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PRESS

Printed in the United States of America

All Rights Reserved

(THE BRAVE LITTLE TAILOR)

ISBN: 978-1-58342-902-0

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play must give credit to the author 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 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 (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. In all programs this notice must appear:

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., of Woodstock,
Illinois.”

To
NELLE and ROSE

The Brave Little Tailor

CHARACTERS

MAID
TAILOR
QUEEN EULALIA
QUEEN OHLALIA
GIANT
BROTHER GIANT

SCENES

In front of the Palace Gates
The Throne Room
Deep in the Forest

The Brave Little Tailor

ACT I

(MAID enters in front of the main curtain at L. She stands in a spot of light and reads from a large book, on the cover is printed in large letters “Grimm’s Fairy Tales.”)

MAID. “Once there was a little tailor who traveled from place to place, sewing buttons, mending coats, and making hats. He was small, but—oh, he was very brave ...” *(To audience.)* I know! Because—one day there was a knock at the palace gate—and there he stood—the brave little tailor.

(Curtains open, showing the ornate door to a fairy tale palace. The double door is a single large unit placed DC. Attached at either side of it is a small weather-stoop for a guard. No walls are needed. The gate alone is lighted. The back and sides of the stage are masked by curtains. TAILOR stands by the gate. He is small, friendly, and of course very brave. He carries a large bag on which is printed “TAILOR.” He knocks at the gate—once, twice. Loud, sound effect echoes the knock—once, twice. He looks at the audience and smiles. Gently he knocks again—once, twice, thrice. Three gentle knocks echo back. He looks at audience.)

TAILOR. Ah. *(Beams with an idea and a bell rings. Calls.)*
Hello.

(The door opens of a large peep-hole in the gate, and the MAID, who has walked behind the unit, puts her head out. TAILOR sees her and tips his hat.)

TAILOR (*cont'd*). Good day to you.

(*MAID quickly shuts the peep-door.*)

TAILOR (*cont'd*). I am a tailor. I come to serve you.

(*Heavy footsteps are heard marching, and MAID, dressed as a guard in coat and hat, marches in through the curtained backing of the guard weather-stoop at L. In comic military fashion, she square-corners, halts and presents—sword.*)

MAID. Halt! Who goes there?

TAILOR. I am a tailor. I will mend your coat, sew on a button, make you a hat.

MAID. You are not—(*Looks at him and whispers loudly.*) a giant?

(*The very small TAILOR shakes his head.*)

MAID (*cont'd*). You will not grow to be—a giant?

(*TAILOR shakes his head. MAID smiles with great relief and happily shouts.*)

MAID (*cont'd*). About face! Company march! (*Marches out through weather-stoop at L.*)

TAILOR. Wait! I can sew the queen a royal ruffle, the king a noble robe. Open up the gates!

MAID (*still dressed as the guard, marches in through curtain backing of weather-stoop at R*). Attention! State your occupation. State your destination!

TAILOR. I am a tailor! I travel where I am needed.

MAID. Have you seen—(*Looks at him and whispers loudly.*) a giant?

(*TAILOR shakes his head.*)

MAID (*cont'd*). Have you heard—a giant?

(*TAILOR shakes his head. MAID smiles with great relief and shouts happily.*)

MAID (*cont'd*). Hurray! Company retreat! (*Marches out through the weather-stoop at R.*)

TAILOR. Wait, I have come to serve—to sew for all the royal court.

MAID (*her head, without guard hat, suddenly appears through the peep-door*). There is no royal court.

TAILOR. I will be a tailor to the king.

MAID. There is no king.

TAILOR. No court? No king? Who rules the castle?

MAID. Two maiden queens.

TAILOR. Two queens?

MAID (*nods*). Twins! (*Disappears, closing door.*)

TAILOR. Open the gates. I will sew *twin* robes for the royal queens.

MAID (*loud marching is heard, dressed as guard, marches in through weather-stoop at L, across, and exits at weather-stoop at R*). I guard the castle ... protect the queens ... by day ... by night ... left, right ... (*Exits R.*)

TAILOR. Protect? Are they in danger? *Two* queens—inside—in distress.

MAID (*enters, as guard, through weather-stoop at R, marches across to L*). I guard the castle ... by night ... by day ... left ... right ... (*Gestures with sword.*) Bewarned! Begone! Away! (*Continues marching.*) Left ... right ... by night ... by day ... (*Exits through stoop at L.*)

TAILOR (*looks to L and to R, and makes a discovery*). *One guard*—two guards—but they look the same—they speak the same—they are the same person!

MAID (*her head, without guard hat, appears in peep-door*).

All the guards have gone. Everyone has fled! All are afraid—of the giant. (*Closes peep-door.*)

TAILOR. Wait! Three alike! Two guards—the maid—are *all* the same!

MAID (*appears in peep-door*). You are right. I am the guards, the maid, the cook, the musicians. I am the ringer of the bells and the washer of the dishes. I am the only one left to serve the queens. You must go, too—before the giant comes.

TAILOR. Giant?

MAID. There is danger here.

TAILOR. There are helpless people here. Two queens and a maid frightened of a giant. Open the gate. Call your queens. Announce—proclaim: I have come to help them.

MAID. How can you help? You are small and the giant is—enormous!

TAILOR. A little beaver with sharp teeth can fell the largest tree.

MAID. You are weak. The giant is strong!

TAILOR. A little mouse with a tiny squeak can chase away an elephant.

MAID. He will slay you with one blow.

TAILOR. There are more ways than one to fight a giant. Strength and bigness do not always make a victory. Open the gates. Bravery comes in all sizes.

MAID. You will save the queens—and me?

TAILOR. I will try.

MAID. Oh, open the gates! Come in! Come in! Make way—make way for the little—for the brave little—Mr. Tailor.

(Trumpets and bugles sound. The entrance gates part, one door slides off R, the other off L. Behind stands a double throne with canopy and two chairs. Framing the platform

of the throne on either side are two flats. Each now is covered with a drapery. MAID, in tunic and tights of a herald, which she wore underneath, stands DL, holding a long trumpet with a banner attached. TAILOR stands DC, hat in hand, back to audience, facing the throne. QUEEN EULALIA enters DR and QUEEN OHLALIA enters DL They are dressed exactly alike. They are sweet, feminine, pixilated ladies. They advance to the throne, giving an unexpected skip, then sit simultaneously. Music stops.)

MAID. Hear ye! Hear ye! A visitor, a friend, attends the Court.

(Both QUEENS raise their fans and smile. MAID raises her trumpet. There is music as TAILOR walks to throne. Music stops.)

MAID (*cont'd*). Her royal majesty—Queen Eulalia.

(EULALIA spreads her fan and nods.)

TAILOR. Your highness. (*Bows low.*)

MAID. Her royal majesty—Queen Ohlalia.

(OHLALIA spreads her fan and nods.)

TAILOR. Your highness. (*Bows low.*)

(Both QUEENS rise.)

EULALIA. How nice of you to come today.

OHLALIA. Most travelers go the other way.

TAILOR. I have come to serve you—with my needle and my thimble.

EULALIA. Oh, we will have new gowns—with lace and tuffs!

OHLALIA. New capes and new caps with ruffs!

TAILOR. And I have come—to try—to save you from the giant.

EULALIA. Oh!

OHLALIA. No!

(Both QUEENS gasp and embrace each other.)

EULALIA. He said the word!

OHLALIA. I heard!

EULALIA. My smelling salts! *(Sinks into chair.)*

OHLALIA. My fan! *(Sinks into chair.)*

TAILOR. I said—what word?

MAID. Hear ye! It has been decreed: in the presence of the two royal queens, no one is allowed to speak aloud—the word—*(Spells.)* G-I-A-N-T.

TAILOR. But if there is a gi—

(MAID raises horn, bugle sounds drown out the word.)

TAILOR *(cont'd)*. If you fear the gi—

(Again, MAID blows the bugle.)

TAILOR *(cont'd)*. You must know there is more than one way to fight the giant!

(Loud bugle sounds.)

EULALIA *(rises)*. We will pretend—he never spoke the word.

OHLALIA *(rises)*. We will pretend—we never heard.

(MAID exits.)

EULALIA. We will speak of the weather. Do you prefer cold or hot?

OHLALIA. Do you think it will rain or not?

TAILOR. Your royal highnesses, if I may say, not to call a fear by its name will not make that fear disappear.

OHLALIA (*ignoring reality, rails musically*). Tea—I will ring for tea.

EULALIA. Tea—for three.

MAID (*dressed as a maid, enters L, pushing a tea wagon*).

Yes, your majesties. There is only water and one piece of bread.

EULALIA. Oh dear, and company, too.

OHLALIA. Whatever will we do?

TAILOR. Ah! (*Holds up a finger, beams with an idea and a bell rings.*) If I may suggest ... in my bag I have a skin of cheese. If your majesties will share my humble food—

EULALIA. Cheese! I am very fond of it.

OHLALIA. Oh, if you please! A dainty piece of it!

TAILOR. See, the milk still drips from the whey. (*Holds up skin and milk drips from it.*)

EULALIA. We will have a party!

OHLALIA. Like it used to be!

EULALIA. Music!

OHLALIA. Call the fiddlers three!

MAID. There is only one—just me. (*Exits.*)

TAILOR. Ah! (*The bell rings again, he beams.*) If I may suggest ... in my bag I have a music maker. If you will share my humble singer with me—(*Takes bird in cage from bag.*)

EULALIA. A bird! How sweet.

OHLALIA (*coos to bird*). Tweet! Tweet-tweet!

TAILOR. His wing was broken, but it is mended now. Today I will set him free. (*Sets cage on tea wagon.*) Come, little friend, sing for us a merry song, for our royal tea of bread and cheese.

(Bird trills sweetly, then fiddle music is heard as MAID enters L, playing a fiddle comically. She is dressed like a musician—even with a mustache.)

EULALIA. Hark! A lark and a fiddler with a bow.

OHLALIA. Music for a dancing toe.

(QUEENS sway with music.)

EULALIA. Shall we? Have you forgot?

OHLALIA. Shall we? One gavotte? *(Begins to dance, daintily; but comically.)*

EULALIA. Toe ... two ... three ...

OHLALIA *(bowing to each other)*. Oh! After you.

EULALIA. No! After me.

(They dance. EULALIA looks at TAILOR.)

EULALIA *(cont'd)*. Will you ... too?

OHLALIA. Join us ... perchance?

TAILOR. Madams, let us dance! *(Dances with them, not with sedate grace, but with joy and vigor. Suddenly he stops by the tea wagon, and leaves his arms over the cheese. Music stops.)* A fly! A fly is eating the cheese.

EULALIA. By royal decree! No fly shall intrude on our food.

(EULALIA smiles triumphantly. Music starts. QUEENS dance.)

TAILOR. Now there are two ... three ... four!

(Music stops.)

OHLALIA. Inform them they have lighted where they are not invited.

(OHLALIA smiles. Music starts. QUEENS dance.)

TAILOR. Five ... six ... seven! I will save the cheese!

(Music stops. TAILOR heroically takes the royal fly swatter, hanging on the tea wagon, and raises it high above his head.)

EULALIA. Sister, quick! Cover each ear!

OHLALIA. And close your eyes, my dear.

TAILOR. Ready ... aim ... swat! *(Smacks the cheese.)* Seven ... seven flies at a blow!

OHLALIA. How brave. You saved our tea.

EULALIA. He must be knighted. By you or by me?

OHLALIA *(takes ribbon from dress)*. I, with this ribbon—
kneel please—

(TAILOR kneels.)

OHLALIA *(cont'd)*. I do knight thee—Protector of the
Cheese.

(Pins ribbon on TAILOR. Off R, there is a rumbling sound.)

OHLALIA *(cont'd)*. Did you hear?

EULALIA. And very near!

(Another rumble is heard off R. QUEENS jump.)

TAILOR. I hear a rumble like thunder in the distance.

EULALIA *(trying to ignore the warning sound)*. Please start
the music! We will dance another round.

OHLALIA. Music! So we will not hear that dreadful sound!

(MAID plays fiddle, but the thunder rumbles louder off R.)

OHLALIA (*cont'd*). Eulalia!

EULALIA. Ohlalia!

(They embrace each other, frightened.)

TAILOR. What is it, your majesties?

EULALIA (*desperately pretending not to hear*). I will pour the tea!

OHLALIA. A squeeze of lemon, dear, for me!

(Louder rumbling.)

TAILOR. It sounds like—heavy footsteps—stepping closer.

EULALIA. Games! We'll play croquet!

OHLALIA. Or dress for chess!

TAILOR (*beams with an idea. Bell rings*). Ah! If I may suggest ... in my bag I have a telescope. With your permission I will look and see WHAT is approaching. (*Takes telescope from bag and looks off R.*)

OHLALIA. We know. We must go!

EULALIA. Quick, to our secret place. Behind the velvet lace.

(EULALIA motions MAID who lifts the cover on the flat on L, revealing a large framed baby picture.)

OHLALIA. I shall press the secret slide.

EULALIA. Quick! We will hide—inside.

(MAID lifts cover from picture on flat at R.)

TAILOR (*looking off R, starting at floor level, then looking up, up, up ...*). I see two big feet ... two big legs ... two big arms ... I see ... your majesties ... it is ... I must speak the word ...