

Fairy Tale Bits & Bytes

By Christopher Gieschen

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PUBLISHED BY

ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY

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STORY OF THE PLAY

An evil computer virus invades a disk containing children's beloved fairy tales, stories, and nursery rhymes and causes all of the story characters to become mish-mashed together. Imagine Little Red Riding Hood's confusion when the Wolf in the woods asks about Three Little Pigs instead of the way to her Grandmother's house! Byte and Bit are computer chips who try to set things right and defeat the evil virus before he infects other computers. Things look so bad, even the Witch of Hansel and Gretel and the Evil Queen of Snow White help out against Virus. Bit saves the day, the audience helps the chips sort out the stories, and Little Red Riding Hood begins as it should.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(19 flexible parts.)

COMPUTER VIRUS: Totally evil, self-centered.

LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD: All-around sharp heroine.

WOLF 1: Big Bad Wolf from "The Three Little Pigs."

GOLDILOCKS: Spoiled rotten kid who learns to be good.

PRACTICAL PIG: Pig number 3 of "The Three Little Pigs."

WOLF 2: Wolf from "Little Red Riding Hood."

CRABBY: One of three dwarves; name says his attitude.

SMILEY: Another dwarf, forever smiling.

SILLY: Another dwarf, communicates only in pantomime.

BYTE: Computer chip in charge of the fairy tale disk.

BIT: Byte's helper, played like Stan Laurel to Byte's Oliver Hardy.

QUEEN: Beautiful, but wicked lady from "Snow White" with knowledge of magic.

WITCH: Evil, ugly old crone from "Hansel and Gretel."

PETER RABBIT: Played like Bugs Bunny, same wit and brains.

MOMMA BEAR: From "Goldilocks and the Three Bears."

JACK BEANSTALK: Thinks nursery rhymes are beneath him.

JACK HILL: Of "Jack and Jill" fame, argues with Jack Beanstalk.

JACK HORNER: Simple minded, all he wants is his Christmas pie.

JACK B. NIMBLE: From the short rhyme, played straight as is.

NOTE: Females can play most of the characters, but the four Jacks, Computer Virus, and Wolf 1 are best cast as male.

SETTING

One forest set. Several trees and bushes scattered about, with a "fallen log bench" at CS. Total of five exits needed - SR, USR, USC, USL and SL. Lighting and sound effects during spells are up to your imagination.

PROPS

RED RIDING HOOD: Basket, wild flowers.

WOLF 2: Big hair bow.

SMILEY: Pick-ax, lantern.

CRABBY: Pick-ax, lantern.

SILLY: Pick-ax, lantern, compass, paper and pencil, sextant
or protractor, dice, cards, maps, tape measure.

BYTE: Clipboard with paper, pen or pencil.

PETER RABBIT: Carrot.

VIRUS: Yellow papers.

SET: Sign pointing to Grandma's cottage.

Scene 1

(COMPUTER VIRUS enters through closed main curtain.)

COMPUTER VIRUS: Allow me to introduce myself. I am a computer virus. Most of those who know me just call me Virus. Just as viruses make people sick, I make computers sick. Very strange things happen when a computer virus enters a computer disk. Today you are going to see a very strange fairy tale. And if I have anything to do with it, it will be the last one you will ever see! *(Evil laugh.)* You see, I hate it when people are happy. Fairy tales and nursery rhymes make people like you... *(Points to audience.)*... happy. Therefore, in order to destroy your happiness, I shall enter this fairy tale computer disk and make it mine. Enjoy it while you can, because it will be the LAST one you will get to see! *(Exits through curtain with evil laugh.)*

(AT RISE: CURTAIN opens revealing forest scene. Sign pointing to "Grandma's cottage" at USL exit. RED RIDING HOOD enters SL.)

RED: Hi! I'm Little Red Riding Hood, but you can call me Red for short. Just don't be like my grandma. She calls me Little for short, just to tease me. Anyway, I need your help to get the story started. Now then, how do all fairy tales get started? What are the first four words? *(Ask several children. Can give clues to help them.)* Right! They all begin with, "Once upon a time." Most of them take place in a woods, so let's take a look here. *(RED moves about scanning trees and shrubs.)* Yep, this looks like a woods all right. *(RED is SR by now.)*

The story begins with my mom telling me to take this basket of goodies *(Shows basket.)* to my grandma's. I have to stay on the trail and not talk to strangers. Now, who remembers what or who I meet before I get to Grandma's house? *(Give hints if needed.)* Right again, you are so smart! The wolf is the next part of the story.

RED: *(Continued.)* He is hiding behind that tree over there.
(Points SL.) So, let's begin "Little Red Riding Hood." *(RED skips about the stage la-la-ing a tune as she heads for the tree SL.)* Now to pick some wild flowers and wait for the wolf. *(SHE bends down to pick wild flowers as WOLF 1 enters from SR looking very confused. Red keeps looking around SL tree. Just prior to Wolf's arrival at tree, Red walks around it. As she rounds the tree, they meet abruptly.)* Oh, there you are! Where have you been? The children are waiting to see the story.

WOLF 1: Ahhh...I...ummmmm...well, I...

RED: C'mon. Say your first line. We haven't got all day.

WOLF 1: OK. *(Ahem.)* Little pig, little pig let me come in.

RED: Huh?! What in the world was that?

WOLF 1: That's it.

RED: That's what?

WOLF 1: That's my first line. You said to say my first line, and that's it.

RED: That is not your first line. Your first line is, "Hey, little girl." What's with you? You sound different, too.

WOLF 1: It is so my first line. I've said it hundreds of times and it goes, "Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

RED: Now how can that be your first line? And besides, do I look like a pig?

WOLF 1: Of course not. I'm not blind, you know.

RED: Then what gives? You sure are acting weird.

WOLF 1: How should I know? *(Crosses SR.)* All I know is that everything is going great. I spy this little house of straw in the distance and start heading for it. Suddenly, I find myself in a completely different woods! That house of straw should be right where that tree is. *(Points to SL tree.)* Who you are and what you are doing in my story is beyond me.

RED: Your story? *(About to argue, but stops.)* Wait, arguing won't solve this. This isn't your story. If it were, then why are these woods so different to you?

WOLF 1: *(Looks around.)* Yeah, I guess you have a point there.

RED: Obviously something strange is going on here.

End of Freeview

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