

TAPESTRY

by
Craig Sodaro

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SYNOPSIS

A weaver, under the threat of death, must create a tapestry that will provide the King some comfort upon the death of his beloved son. The woman weaves six tales into her tapestry, the first telling the story of girl who encounters an old woman stuck to a stump in the forest. When they accidentally exchange places, the girl learns a good deal about herself. The second concerns two farmers who have a chance at a tremendous fortune. All it may cost them is everything they have. In the third story, three sisters go searching for a treasure using a map their grandmother had used. The trouble is they don't know what the treasure is. The fourth tale concerns a young man who is a failure at everything, until he falls in love. In the fifth tale a vegetarian wolf faces the prejudices of the "normal" wolves in his clan until a drought upsets their lives. Finally the woman weaves the story of Tatiana, a mother who loses her daughter and almost, but not quite, succumbs to her own grief. Upon completion of the tapestry, the King must decide whether he has found consolation and peace.

"Tapestry" is the 2005 winner of the Jackie White Memorial National Children's Playwriting Contest.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(11 m, 22 w, 2 flexible. Minimum cast 2 m, 5 w, 2 flexible.)

GUARD

KING

WOMAN

First Threads:

MATHILDA: A young woman.

GRETCHEN: An old woman.

MORGAN: A beautiful young woman.

MATTHEW: A selfish young man.

MOTHER: Mathilda's.

MARK: A generous young man.

Second Threads:

EDWIN: A farmer.

EDGAR: A farmer.

ESTHER: Edwin's daughter.

EDITH: Edgar's daughter.

EUPHORIA GRIMM: A seller of potions.

Third Threads:

SARAH: A young woman.

SABRINA: Her sister.

SOPHIE: Her other sister.

MOTHER: Their mother.

SAMUEL: A young man.

Fourth Threads:

ROGER: A young man.

ROWENA: A young woman.

RENEE: Another young woman.

RHONDA: Her servant.

Fifth Threads:

WALLACE: A young wolf.

WARREN: Another.

WENDY: A young troll.

WINNIFRED: Her mother.

Sixth Threads:

TATIANA: A mother.

TERESA: Her youngest daughter.

TANYA: Her oldest daughter.

FIGURE ONE

FIGURE TWO

FIGURE THREE

TAGGERT: A brutal man.

SETTING

Nothing specific is required for the set other than small moveable pieces. These include a throne, a suggestion of a wooden loom with threads, and stumps to sit on as indicated in the script. A production designer might want trees here and there or other visual elements, but none are required. At the end of the play, when the tapestry is created, the Woman can either drop a pastoral background upstage, unfold it if it is a screen, have it projected from behind, or any other technique the production designer wants. As many of the cast as desired can be placed in the tapestry.

PROPS

Knitting	basket
Bundle	burlap bag of seeds
Sling	list/pencil
2 hoes	basket
Jug	bag of potions
piece of pie on a plate	bag of gold coins
bucket	rocking chair
2 baskets of laundry	shirt
Knitting	rolled-up map
bundle of sandwiches	small mirror
small musical instrument	herald hat, trumpet, decree
dress accessories	rock
tablecloth, candles	picnic basket w/ breakfast
bushel of straw	bundle of grass
small cart	cane
jug, covered bowl	stick, chain, rope

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: A single throne USL. A body facing UC, kneeling, huddled, deep in sorrow. A death BELL clangs, its resonance hovers in the air. This man, we see, is the KING. GUARD steps SL.)

GUARD: In evidence, one king. A ruler esteemed by most of his people, though there are those who say they would slit his throat on sight. But they are the complainers who spend their days swilling ale at the inns or lying on the dried grass blaming everyone else for their own failings. *(GUARD moves to King.)* This man, and he is, after all only a man, grieves. He doesn't grieve for those who would do him harm; he would damn them if he had the power. No, he grieves for one who had no power. He grieves for one who only had love for him. *(GUARD kneels next to King, but facing DS.)* Your Majesty?

(KING looks up slowly, still facing UP.)

KING: Why do you disturb me?

GUARD: Your guards have brought the woman.

KING: The woman is here? Now?

GUARD: She waits in the next room.

KING: Then get her.

GUARD: Yes, Your Majesty.

(GUARD rises, bows, exits SR. KING slowly rises and turns DS. His face is anguished, his eyes red with tears. He moves UPL and sits on throne. Guard leads WOMAN on SR. She is old, dressed in a peasant costume. Her expression is tinged with fear. Guard points to center. The Woman moves cautiously DS as Guard exits SR.)

KING: You don't look like much.

WOMAN: *(Surprised.)* Which means?

Tapestry

- 6 -

KING: I expected someone more ...

WOMAN: More what?

KING: Mysterious? Wondrous? Enchanting?

WOMAN: I'm sorry you're disappointed.

KING: The least of my sorrows, good lady.

WOMAN: Where is my husband?

KING: In the tower.

WOMAN: May I see him now? I was told I could see him if I came.

KING: That's not possible.

WOMAN: I am his wife!

KING: The condemned see no one but the executioner.

WOMAN: Condemned? But I had been told he was only imprisoned!

KING: He has been found guilty of murder.

WOMAN: Murder! Oh, no, Your Majesty, there must be some mistake. My husband isn't capable of such an act.

KING: He will be put to the sword at dawn.

WOMAN: No! No! Who is it he has killed?

KING: My son.

WOMAN: The Prince? My husband didn't know the Prince.

KING: No one ever said he did. But your husband took from me the most precious gift a man can have: his child.

WOMAN: I don't believe this! My husband could never --

KING: He did!

WOMAN: How, then, did he do this foul deed?

KING: He built the stone fence across McLory's land.

WOMAN: Aye, I'll swear he did. A good, sturdy fence, as he was asked to do!

KING: A fence too high for the Prince's horse.

WOMAN: Your Majesty!

KING: The boy went riding yesterday. He crossed McLory's land. He tried to jump the fence on his way back to the castle. His horse caught the top row of stones and tumbled. My son ... my dear son ... flew forward and the horse ... rolled ... over him.

WOMAN: Your Majesty! You suffer grief beyond all words, but how can you blame my husband for causing it?

KING: If the fence had been lower --

End of Freeview

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