

Wild Island Adventure

Adapted from Ruth Stiles Gannett's *My Father's Dragon*

By
Claudia Haas

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DEDICATION

Thanks to Ruth Giles Gannett for creating such a charming children's adventure story that respects children.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Young Erin loves to hear his father's story of a baby dragon on Wild Island who needs rescuing. With the help of an alley cat, Erin finds himself in the adventure. Along the way, Erin realizes that he must use his wits, bravery, and cunning to outsmart numerous jungle animals including a gorilla, lion, crocodile, wild boars and a rhino! The use of masks and puppetry keep young audiences engaged as they watch Erin in his quest to set free the dragon. About an hour.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

Performed as a touring production in June 2014 by Central Missouri Repertory Theatre with the following cast and crew: Connor Bosworth, Nellie Maple, Daniel Perman, Bryson Kenworthy, Kacy Barta, Victoria Depew, Rosie Swanson, Elizabeth Pecher, Nehemiah Campbell, June Copperfield, Colette Tilden and directed by Richard Herman.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(Flexible cast of 4 – 23, optional extras)

FATHER: Erin's father. Settled down now but had the quite the adventure in his youth.
ERIN: He's quite a good boy! (or girl!) About 11 years old. Plays the role of his father in the story.
ELEGIAN: A scrappy, old, adventurous alley cat.
MOTHER: Not a cat lover.
SAILOR SAM: Just doing his job.
SAILOR SAB: Just doing his job.
MANGY MOUSE: All atwitter.
FISHERMAN: Somber, thoughtful.
WHALE: (No lines.) Docile, sleepy.
TURTLE DEE: Agreeable.
TURTLE GEE: More agreeable.
BOARUS: An exciteable wild boar.
BOARUM: A "think things through" wild Boar.
TIGERINA: The leader of the diabolical tigers who like to play with their food!
TIGEROLA: A tiger.
TIGERATA: A tiger.
RHINO: Vain and slightly emotional.
LIONHEART: An impetuous, young, messy lion.
LIONESSA: Proper, motherly lion.
MONKEYKAT: The gorilla's minion.
MONKEYCAM: Another minion of the gorilla.
GORILLALA: A bully!
CROC: A crocodile with a sweet tooth.
OPTIONAL EXTRAS: Dragon, crocodiles, a monkey, various animals.

Doubling for a cast of 4:

Actor 1: Erin Elevator

Actor 2: Father, Sailor Sam, Whale, Turtle Dee, Boarus, Tigerola, Gorillala, Rhino

Actor 3: Elegian, Fisherman, Turtle Gee, Boarum, Tigerata, Lionessa, Monkeykat

Actor 4: Mother, Sailor Sab, Mangy Mouse, Tigerina, Lionheart, Monkeycam, Croc

PRODUCTION NOTES

CAST: The show can be done with a cast of 4 and puppetry (many animal masks/heads on long stick) or by a cast of 23 plus extras or anywhere in between. All roles can be played by either gender. If you are using a cast of 4, keep everything minimal and let the actors change roles in front of the audience with a simple prop or mask. In Scene 5, a small cast may use a stick with two extra tiger masks on them while a large cast can divide the lines among 7 tigers.

SET: All settings can be suggested by props. Scene 1 has a simple chair, such as a rocker, a block, a stool or an armchair. The chair can change into the docks, the boat, the bushes – just the way children would play at home. In Scene 4, the stones can be chairs, set pieces, actors, or any items. The scene can be onstage or in the audience. In the rocks is a sleeping whale which can be a mask, an actor, a tail piece, or one long stone with eyes on one end and a tail on the other. In Scene 7, a river is put in place along with crocodile heads which form a bridge across the river. When Erin rescues the dragon, the use of a scrim is helpful. The dragon can be a giant wing.

PROPS: Glass of milk, saucer, blanket, flashlight, cookies, knapsack, a sack that says “Cranberry,” tangerines, chewing gum, toothbrush and paste, comb, brush, 7 hair ribbons, looking glass, 2 magnifying glasses, lollipops, and jackknife.

SFX: Rain, howling wind, clock chimes, ocean waves, gull’s cry, “All aboard” call, waves lapping, a large roar of snoring, another snore, wave noises increasing, loud whale snore, dizzy sound, increasing sounds of the jungle, babbling brook, loud roar, a river, splash, crocodile sound, jungle animal sounds, a mournful roar, and animal noises. Additionally, music of your choosing for the animal parade, a sea shanty, Erin’s long walk, and animals dancing.

FX: A baby dragon drops from the sky, a boat “sails,” waves and fish peek up, waves and sea creatures glimmer in the setting sun, and flash of wing or flash of fire.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: There is a simple chair, a furnace, a table or trunk carrying props for the different locations and costume pieces for the different characters. FATHER is sitting in the chair. ERIN enters and makes a beeline for him.)

ERIN: I can't sleep.

FATHER: Again?

ERIN: Again. I need a story. The story of you and the dragon.

FATHER: Again?

ERIN: Yes, please. Again.

FATHER: Where do I begin?

ERIN: Where you always begin. With the cat.

(ELEGIAN appears, showing only his face.)

FATHER: Very well. But you need to help me. I know you know it by heart.

ERIN: I want to be you!

(ERIN takes off a robe and dons a jacket.)

FATHER: You are the spitting image of me!

ERIN: I know! That's why I was named after you! Erin Elevator! The best name ever!

FATHER: Very well, Erin. We'll start with Elegian the cat. It was a blustery spring day when I met the cat.

ERIN: I thought it was raining!

FATHER: And so it was. I was peeking outside to see if the rain stopped, and there she was—

(SFX: Rain. ELEGIAN jumps out and slowly approaches ERIN and gives him an "almost" rub with a mournful meow. FATHER discreetly exits.)

ELEGIAN: Me-ow!

ERIN: Oh my! Aren't you a cute one?

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ELEGIAN: *(Hanging HER bedraggled head.)* Meow.

ERIN: You look so drippy and cold. Would you like to come inside?

ELEGIAN: I was hoping you would say that!

ERIN: You talked!

ELEGIAN: Does that bother you?

ERIN: Nope. It'll make things easier. Come in. We have a warm furnace where we can sit and chat. I'm sure we could spare an extra saucer of milk.

ELEGIAN: What are we waiting for? Alley cats really don't love alleys, you know.

ERIN: They don't?

ELEGIAN: Nah. Every cat wants a home. We just don't always get one.

ERIN: I will share my home with you.

ELEGIAN: You're a good one, ya know? For a human.

ERIN: Thank you. And you are...a perfectly wonderful cat.

ELEGIAN: Aww...quit it. You're making me blush!

ERIN: I'm Erin Elevator. Welcome to my home.

ELEGIAN: Pleased to meet you Erin. I'm Elegian. Elegian-the-Adventurous-Cat.

(ELEGIAN enters. ERIN finds a glass of milk and pours some into a saucer. They get cozy by a furnace. ELEGIAN delicately laps a little milk and loudly purrs.)

ELEGIAN: *(Cont'd.)* I like this. Being in a home. I'm usually pretty independent... I have itchy feet, you know? I love to sail the seven seas and see what I can see. But these days...my bones ache in the chill, and it would be nice to settle down and have a cozy furnace to come home to.

ERIN: Have you really seen the world?

ELEGIAN: All the wonders and more!

ERIN: I'm going to do that. But when I see the world it will be with an airplane! Wouldn't that be the absolute, best thing in the world? To go anywhere you want at any time?

ELEGIAN: Would you really like to fly? Tricky stuff. I tried once and wham! There went one of my nine lives!

End of Freeview

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