

FairyTale Theatre Presents

A Rebel's Tale

By Craig and Heather Bitterling

(Lights come up on a small area of stage with a padded arm chair, where Alistair Kook is sitting with a book in his lap, and a pipe in his mouth. The "Masterpiece Theatre" theme or similar music plays for a moment and then fades)

Al: Hello, and welcome to another edition of Fairy Tale Theatre. I'm your host, as always, Alistair Kook. And I'm quite excited that you have chosen this night of all nights to join us for our story. Have you ever had one of those days where everything just seems to go right? From the time you wake up in the morning to the time you go to bed, everything goes precisely according to plan - no surprises, no disappointments, no misfortunes - as if every element of the day were designed and executed especially for you and your good fortune? Well, if you have, then you will certainly identify with our heroine tonight. The story we are about to tell is a delightful example of the sheer joy and blessing that can come from making good choices. It's about a young girl who chooses to follow the wise instructions of her elders and, thus, reaps the benefits of a glorious afternoon spent with a loving grandparent. I know that this is a story that will bring a smile to your face and a warmth to your heart. So, sit back and enjoy as we relate to you the story of "Jane's Visit to Grandmother's House." Our story begins in the home of young Jane Plain and her family, where breakfast has just been served...

(More lights reveal the story action portion of the stage, where Jane, her father, mother, and Jimmy and Timmy (the twins) are

sitting at a table eating breakfast. Father is engrossed in reading the paper. The twins are periodically poking one another back and forth and giggling as Mother Speaks)

Mother: Now, Jane, make sure to eat plenty of breakfast, you'll need your strength for the long walk to Grandma's house.

Jane: Yes, Mother. *(she unenthusiastically pokes at her breakfast)*

Mother: I've packed your basket with some snacks for you, and the Mulberry pies we made for Grandma's birthday party.

Jimmy: *(standing up on his chair he delivers his line stiffly to set Timmy up for the joke- like a vaudeville comedy team)*
We helped pick the berries!

Timmy: *(standing on his chair in the same manner as Jimmy)*
Yes – and we're "berry" good at it, too. *(They sit down and giggle together at their joke)*

Mother: *(not showing any signs of amusement)* Very funny, Jimmy.

Timmy: But, I'm Timmy..

Mother: *(to Jane)* And make sure you walk to Grandma's very quickly, Jane. She'll need your help to get ready for the party. We'll come along later, when your Father is finished with his work.

Jane: Yes, Mother.

Father: *(lowering his paper)* Jane, this is an important day for you, you know - your first outing on your own. You'd best be careful out there.

Jane: It's only to Grandma's house, father. There's a wide path all the way, and I've been on it so many times before.

Father: Yes, but never alone. The woods are a very dangerous place, Jane. You must remember to stick to the path.

Jane: Yes, sir.

Mother: Oh, and Jane, I want you to wear your red riding coat. The one with the hood. I don't want you catching cold out there.

Jane: But Mother, it so itchy. And I really don't like the color red.

Mother: Well, it's the best coat you have, and I want you to wear it.

Timmy: (*standing on his chair*) What color coat would you like to have, Jimmy?

Jimmy: (*also standing*) I've always liked "out-di-come," Timmy.

Timmy: Out-di-come? What's out-di-come?

Jimmy: Why, it's the opposite of "In-di-go!" (*They sit back down and giggle*)

Mother: (*speaking to Timmy, unfazed by the joke*) Jimmy, you need to finish your milk. You want to grow up big and strong, don't you?

Timmy: Mom! I'm Timmy, he's Jimmy..

Jimmy: You can always tell by the scar on my left leg... (*the boys begin to pull up their pant legs to reveal the scar but are interrupted before they can complete the task*)

Father: Alright, boys. Finish up, you need to get busy on your chores.

Jimmy/Timmy: Yes, sir. *(they take their last bites/drinks as they stand up from the table)*

Timmy: *(taunting)* Have a good trip... Red!

Jimmy: Yeah, see ya, Little Riding Hood! *(the boys exit)*

Mother: You need to be going too, Jane. Now, don't speak to strangers, watch out for wolves, and tell Grandma we'll be there as soon as we can.

Jane: Yes, Mother. It's not like anything's going to happen.

Father: Just be careful, Jane. We have confidence in you, and we know you will be just fine.

(Jane puts on her coat and takes the basket as Mother and Father clear away the table)

Al: And so, with a cheerful smile, a spring in her step...

Jane: *(tugging at the coat)* And an itchy neck...

Al: Jane set out on the path to her Grandmother's house. She wondered at the beauty of the day, and the joyful sounds of birdsong that filled the air. It was a great day to be alive *(Jane rolls her eyes)*. After a while, as Jane was strolling happily down the path...

Jane: Bored out of her mind...

Al: ... she encountered a stranger.

(Ginger runs onstage, stops in front of Jane, and faces DS as if addressing the audience)

Ginger: I've run past the Baker and from an old man.

Past rabbits and turtles and soldiers I ran!

Run, run, as fast as you can – you can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread man!

(Ginger darts offstage as an angry mob runs in and then follows him off with ad libs like "Catch that cookie" "Stop!" "I get the first bite", etc. Jane is wide-eyed and frozen in disbelief)

Al: But, since Jane's Mother had often told her not to talk to strangers...

Mother: *(Appearing upstage as in a flashback)* Don't talk to strangers, dear.

Al: And because the stranger had left the path and ventured into the woods...

Father: *(appearing next to Mother)* The woods are a very dangerous place, Jane. You must remember to stick to the path.

(Mother and Father exit)

Al: Jane disregarded the strange fellow, and continued on, down the path to her grandmother's house.

Jane: What?! Are you kidding me?!

Al: *(very uncomfortable)* I... I beg your pardon?

Jane: That was the weirdest thing I have ever seen!!

Al: Yes... I suppose it probably would be.

Jane: And you want me to just ignore it?! No way! I gotta follow that guy and see what happens next.

Al: But you can't... that's... that's not part of your story.

Jane: Story, schmory! That was exciting. There's nothing exciting about my story. I'm just Jane Plain, the little girl that always does what she's told and never has any fun.

Al: Oh, but there's a lot of fun in your story. Just wait until you get to....

Jane: Yep - there it is! "Wait!" That's what everybody says. "Just wait, Jane." "Be patient, Jane." "The best is yet to come, Jane." "Wait, wait, wait." Well, I'm sick of it! I'm not waiting any longer. I'm going to follow that cookie like everybody else!

Al: No, no, no - you can't. You have to follow the story that the Author has laid out for you.

Jane: Oh yeah? Why?

Al: Well, because the Author knows the whole story. He created your character for a purpose - and he has a plan for you - a plan that ends in great joy and blessings.

Jane: Okay - I'm fine with that. But we're not at the end yet. I'm just going to take a little detour. That's all.

Al: But if you change the Author's plan for you, even a little bit, there's no guarantee it will end happily, the way He intends it to. And it would affect other characters as well. It could be very dangerous!

Jane: And danger is exciting! Here we go... *(as if she were reading from the book)* "And so Jane followed the weird cookie guy into the dark forest!" *(she exits)*

Al: *(stunned for a moment, staring at the audience)* Oh dear. This is unprecedented. What do I do now? The next line in the story is supposed to be... *(shocked as he reads the next line from the book)* "And so Jane followed the weird cookie guy into the dark forest." But that's not what it said before - I'm sure of it! *(reading on)* "Jane ran through the thick woods for what seemed like hours, through briars and thickets, and the occasional spider web, but she never caught up to the elusive gingerbread and his followers. Finally, she gave up the chase and stopped to rest in a small clearing."

(Jane reenters, looking tired and disheveled, with dirt streaks and scratches on her face and hands)

Jane: Ugh! This is ridiculous! Why doesn't someone trim all of these stupid bushes! I'm never going to catch that cookie now. *(She sits on a stump or rock)* Oh, my feet hurt – I think there must be a rock in my shoe or something.

(Jane removes her shoe to fix the problem, as a wolf (Ronald) enters behind her, dressed as a beatnik, with goatee and beret and scarf. He is rubbing his stomach. When he spots Jane, he licks his lips in delight before he approaches her)

Ronald: Hey there, chicky-baby! You must've wandered a long way from the henhouse. Why all the water around the eyes?

Jane: Excuse me? *(she looks up to see it is a wolf)* Oh! You're a.. you're a wolf!

Ronald: Woah, now, let's not go pasting labels on boxes you ain't opened yet. The name's Ronald. Pleased to eat ya – I mean "meet ya."

Jane: But you're a wolf!

Ronald: Canis Lupus, if you insist, but that ain't no cause to flip your wig, baby.

Jane: But my father said...

Father: *(appearing upstage)* Watch out for wolves, Jane. They're crafty and vicious. They would eat a girl like you without a second thought.

Ronald: Well, ain't that a zonk on the head!

Jane: And my mother said...

Mother: *(appearing next to Father)* Never trust a wolf, Jane, no matter how tame they look. Wolves are dangerous, and girls like you should stay far away from them.

Ronald: Oh, now that just plain hurts.

(Mother and Father exit)

Ronald: Listen, you don't believe everything you hear, do you?

Jane: Well...

Ronald: Look, I ain't got nothing against your folks, chicky-baby, but they're from a whole 'nother generation. They ain't keeping up with the times. Wolves today are just as hip as any cat.

Jane: Um.. they are?

Ronald: Yeah, sure, we just get a bad rap, that's all. Couple of oddball losers go out and cause some trouble, and suddenly the whole species is radioactive.

Jane: Oh, well that's terrible... I guess.

Ronald: Now you're straight. I could tell you were a brainer. Nobody's gonna pull a cloud over you – you got X-ray vision, baby.

Jane: Thanks... I think.

Ronald: Say, how'd you like to meet the rest of the gang?

Jane: Gang? I don't know ...

(Ronald turns and whistles loudly into the woods. Several wolves enter quickly – Jake (a surfer), Norman (a hippy), James (a greaser), and Clyde (Hip Hop))

Ronald: These are my friends. Jake.

Jake: Dude.

Ronald: Norman.

Norman: Far out, man.

Ronald: James.

James: *(with both thumbs up)* Ayyyyy.

Ronald: Clyde.

Clyde: Yo – What up?

Ronald: And Lawrence. Hey fellas, where's Larry?

(Lawrence (a flamboyant Hollywood type) enters dramatically, wearing a sheep costume over his Beverly Hills clothing)

Lawrence: Baa! Baa, darling. Simply Baaaa.

James: *(hushed)* Larry! We got company! Ixnay on the Eepshay!

Lawrence: Oh – pardon me. *(He removes his sheep costume)*

Norman: Lawrence is getting in touch with his inner sheep.

Clyde: Yeah, and we're cool with that.

Jake: I think it's totally knarly, dude.

James: Actually, he's kinda creeping me out with all this costume stuff.

Clyde: And man, we are way cool with that too.

Lawrence: Gentleman, please. I am simply honing the skills of my art. I am after all, an actor! *(He strikes a dramatic pose)*

Clyde: Yeah, ok. I gotta admit it – the boy ain't right.

Ronald: *(attempting to regain control)* But who are we to judge? We're all a bit kooky in our own way - you dig? We're just like one big swingin' family here.

Norman: We all one, babies.

Jane: Yes. Well, I'm pleased to meet you all, but I really need to be going now.

Ronald: What's your hurry, chicky-baby? You haven't even told us *your* name?

Jane: Oh, it's um... Jane.