

Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY - MINNEAPOLIS

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Pippi Longstocking

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PIPPY LONGSTOCKING

Act I. Scene i

(Exterior of Pippi's home: Villa Villekulla. **Teacher** leads **Children** in two orderly lines, conducting them in a song [in Swedish and English] as various **Townspeople** pass.)

Children:

THERE'S A PROVEN WAY TO HARVEST CROPS OF CHILDREN. PURE AND BRIGHT PLANT THEM IN TWO ROWS POITELY: BOYS ON LEFT AND GIRLS ON RIGHT. KEEP THEM LOCKED IN SCHOOL FOR HOURS; IN DUE TIME THEY'LL GROW TO PLEASE FERTILIZED WITH MATHEMATICS, HISTORY AND "A.B.C'S"

Teacher: (The song ended)

Ahh, ja, ja, ja! Little children *should* always be bright and polite! And that's precisely what you are!

(she claps her hands twice.)

That will be all, children, for today.

Schoolchildren:

Thank you, Miss Teacher, for today.

(**Children** and **Teacher** scatter off. The loud whinny of a horse from inside the house causes **Annika** to halt and call her little brother.)

Annika:

Tommy! Wait!

Tommy:

What's the matter, Annika?

Annika:

I thought I just heard a...

(Another whinny.)

Annika & Tommy: (In unison)

...a horse!

(Horse pokes its head out of the window.)

Tommy: (Hopping excitedly.)

A horse, Annika! There's a horse inside that house! In the...

Annika:

...in the kitchen!

(rushing over to a sign.)

And look here!

Annika & Tommy: (In unison, reading.)
“Villa Villekulla.”

Annika:
This sign was never here before.

Tommy:
Annika! Annika! I bet someone’s finally moved into this old place!

Annika:
Ja! And Tommy – maybe they have children, too! Maybe someone for us to play with!

Tommy:
They’ve got a horse, at least. Only why is it in their kitchen, I wonder?

Pippi: (Unseen, from the rooftop.)
Well, the bathroom’s too small and the parlor is really much too formal for a horse, wouldn’t you agree?
(**Pippi** appears on the roof of the house, hands on hips and grinning. **Tommy** and **Annika** stare, dumbfounded.)

Tommy:
But...but...but horses normally live in stables.

Pippi:
Normally?! *Normally?!!*
(With a gesture of disdain.)
Ach!
(She hangs upside-down from the roof and hollers to the Horse.)
Hey, Horse! When you get done with the dishes, you can come out onto the porch, ‘cause that’s where you’re gonna live!
(She hops up, jumps down off the roof and marches up to the gaping children.)
So where do you guys live – “normally?”

Annika:
We...?

Pippi:
Ja, you.

Annika:
We live next door, Tommy and I.

Pippi: (To **Tommy**.)

“Tommy,” huh?
(He nods.)
Your sister?
(Another nod.)
Her name?

Tommy:
Annika

Annika:
Annika Settergren.
(She curtsseys, nudging **Tommy** to bow. **Pippi** chuckles.)

Tommy: (After a pause.)
Could you tell us who you are?

Pippi:
Sure, I could.
(A slight pause.)
Well? Aren’t you gonna ask?

Annika & Tommy: (In unison.)
What’s your name?

Pippi: (Merrily shouting as she cartwheels and flips.)
Pippilotta...Delicatessa...Windowshade...Mackrelmint...Ephraim’s
Daughter...Longstocking!

Annika:
Oh, my! What a complicated name!

Pippi:
Ja. So you can just call me “Pippi” – Pippi Longstocking! Oh, tiddlelipom and
piddleliday! I bet we’re gonna have some real fun together, whadda you think?

Annika: (A bit hesitantly, as **Pippi** disappears.)
Ja. Sure.

Tommy:
I think so, too.
(they share a look, then cautiously seek **Pippi**.)
Pippi?

Annika:

Pippi?!

Tommy:

Pippilotta...Windowshade...

Annika:

Ephraim's Daughter...Longstocking...

(**Pippi** sneaks up, unseen, behind them and taps **Annika** on the shoulder.)

Pippi:

Looking for someone?

(**Annika**, startled, gasps.)

Annika:

Pippi!

Tommy:

You just disappeared!

Annika:

Don't you ever stay in one place?

Pippi:

Not if I can help it.

I AM USED TO THINGS APPEARING AND DISAPPEARING CHANGING AND REARRANGING – FILL EV'RY MINUTE 'CAUSE YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE YOU MIGHT BE TOMORROW OR WHO YOU'LL MEET OR WHAT YOU'LL SEE OR WHERE YOU'LL GO.

Tommy:

And what about your parents?

Pippi:

My Mamma is an angel, up in heaven.

Annika & Tommy: (in unison.)

An angel?

Pippi:

Yup.

Annika:

And your Papa?

Pippi:

PAPA IS A PIRATE. EVER SINCE MY MAMA WENT AWAY TO HEAVEN IT'S BEEN PAPA AND ME. WE SAILED THE SEVEN SEAS TOGETHER JUST PAPA AND

ME. STANDING OUT ON A DECK AT NIGHT AND LOOKING TO THE SKY, WHERE MAMA LIVES IN HEAVEN.

Tommy: (Wide-eyed with excitement.)
Your Papa is a pirate?! Really?!

Pippi:
That's right! Captain Ephraim Longstocking – The Terror of the Sea!

Annika:
And where is he?

Tommy:
Could we meet him?

Pippi:
I'm afraid he disappeared – in a storm on the Caribbean Sea...
THERE WAS LIGHTNING, THERE WAS RAIN AND WAVES AS BIG AS HOUSES THE WAVES CRASHED UP ON DECK, SOON PAPA WAS A SPECK. FLOATING FAR AWAY, CAST AWAY, IN THE OCEAN. AND I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE.

Annika:
Oh, Pippi, how awful!

Pippi:
BUT I KNOW THAT MAMA'S LOOKING DOWN RIGHT NOW ON ME AND ON MY PAPA...
(A happy beller and wave overhead.)
Hi, Mama! Don't you worry about me; I'll always come out on top!

Tommy:
So it's just you and your horse, huh?

Pippi:
And Mr. Nilsson. Can't forget about him.
(A monkey pops up out of a bucket and chatters.)

Annika & Tommy:
A monkey!

Pippi:
Say "Hi," Mr. Nilsson!
(**Annika** and **Tommy** shake monkey's hand.)

Annika: (Turning sorrowfully.)
But no Mama or Papa?

Pippi:

Aw, Annika – it’s not all that bad. Listen to me...

I HAVE COME TO LEARN THAT FOLKS ARE LIKE THE TIDE THEY EBB AND FLOW MAY BE HERE FOR A MOMENT, BUT THEN SO QUICKLY DISAPPEAR AND YOU’VE GOT TO LET THEM GO. SO YOU CAN’T GET TOO ATTACHED TO THINGS: PEOPLE, PLACES OR WHATEVER. TAKE THE GOOD TIMES WITH THE BAD; ONE DAY HAPPY, NEXT DAY SAD...

I AM USED TO THINGS APPEARING AND DISAPPEARING CHANGING AND REARRANGING – FILL EV’RY MINUTE ‘CAUSE YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE YOU MIGHT BE TOMORROW OR WHO YOU’LL MEET OR WHAT YOU’LL SEE OR WHERE YOU’LL GO.

Trio: (In Unison.)

WE’LL GET USED TO THINGS APPEARING AND DISAPPEARING CHANGING AND REARRANGING – FILL EV’RY MINUTE ‘CAUSE YOU NEVER KNOW WHERE YOU MIGHT BE TOMORROW OR WHO YOU’LL MEET OR WHAT YOU’LL GO OR WHERE YOU’LL BE OR WHAT YOU’LL SEE OR WHAT YOU’LL LEARN WHEN TOMORROW IS TODAY!

Annika:

I still think it’s awfully sad your Mama and Papa are dead.

Pippi:

Hold on just one minute! Who said my Papa was dead?!

Annika:

But he must have drowned, of course...

Pippi:

Of course *not!* A big, fat pirate like him? No, ma’am! He floated off to some desert island somewhere, just like Robinson Crusoe. And he’s sitting around on the beach, just waiting for his ship The Hoptoad to come and rescue him.

Tommy:

So who tells you when to go to bed and stuff like that?

Pippi:

I do. First I say, to myself, in a nice, pleasant tone “Pippi dear, it’s time to go to bed now,” bur of course, I don’t pay any attention.

So I say to myself, a bit more firmly, “Pippi? Didn’t you hear me? I told you to go to bed.” Only I still don’t obey.

Then I lose my temper. I holler: “Damned kid, get to bed!” hop right in, and start snoring like a pig!

(She demonstrates with a couple snores. **Tommy** and **Annika** laugh.)

Mrs. Settergren: (Offstage, calling.)

Tommy! Annika! Time for supper!

Annika:

We have to go now, Pippi.

Tommy:

But we could come back later.

Annika:

That is, if you want us to.

Pippi:

Sure I do!

Tommy & Annika: (Waving as they exit.)

See you later!

Pippi:

‘bye now!

(A wave, then turning to Mr. Nilsson and Horse.)

Well, what do you think of that? Our first day in Villa Villekulla and already we’ve made two new friends! Tiddlelipom and piddleliday!

(she starts dancing merrily about the yard. A stuffy, elderly lady, **Mrs. Prysselius**, enters with a briefcase and attempts to get **Pippi**’s attention.)

Mrs. Prysselius:

Lilla flicka?! Little girl?! Stop! Stop, my little friend; I wish to speak with you!

Pippi: (Bouncing in place for just a moment.)

You do? Well, go right ahead.

(She starts off again; **Mrs. Prysselius** in pursuit.)

Mrs. Prysselius:

My name is...my name is... my name is Mrs... my name is Mrs...

(With each phrase, **Pippi** plugs her ears, then unplugs.)

(**Mrs. Prysselius** finally grabs **Pippi**’s arm and quickly shouts.)

Mrs. Prysselius:

My name is Mrs. Prysselius!

(**Pippi** looks at **Mrs. Prysselius** as if she were the rudest person on earth.)

Mrs. Prysselius, embarrasses, resumes a “ladylike” demeanor.)

I am the chairperson of our village’s Child Welfare Board.

Pippi:

“Chairperson?” That sounds boring. “Child Welfare Board?” That sounds even *more* boring.

(A sudden thought.)

I know just the thing to perk you up – come on and dance!

(She starts dancing again. **Mrs. Prysselius** grabs **Pippi**’s arm again.)

Mrs. Prysselius:

Little girl, who are you?

Pippi: (Her customary series of cartwheels and flips.)

Pippilotta...Delicatessa...Windowshade...Mackrelmint...Ephraim’s Daughter...Longstocking!

(Adopting **Mrs Prysselius**’ snobbish tone.)

Oh but you mustn’t let that worry you, everybody calls me “Pippi!”

(With a whoop, she takes **Mrs. Prysselius**’ hat and tosses it through the window, then hides behind the porch fence, unnoticed by the woman.)

Mrs. Prysselius: (Unamused.)

I see. Well, Pippi...

(Noticing she is gone.)

Pippi? Pippi? Pippi?

(**Pippi** pokes her face through the planks of the fence.)

Pippi. Rumor has it you live here all alone. Is this true?

Pippi:

Sure is!

Mrs. Prysselius: (A gasp.)

Oh, you poor little dear! You’ve simply got to change this sad state of affairs!

Pippi:

“Sad?” Who’s sad?

Mrs. Prysselius:

Why, you are, darling, of course. Never mind, I’ll see to it you’re taken care of. Come on, we’ll get you a nice little room in the Children’s Home.

Pippi:

But I've already got a room in a "Children's Home."

Mrs. Prysselius:

You do?! Where?

Pippi:

Here! I am a child and this is my home, so that makes it a children's home! and I've got lots of room – enough to cram your whole Child Welfare Board, I'll betcha!

Mrs. Prysselius:

Well, I never...! And what about school?

Pippi:

What about it?

Mrs. Prysselius:

You don't go to school, I take it?

Pippi:

Take it and keep it, for all I care, lady.

Mrs. Prysselius:

But Pippi! Every child needs to go to school!

Pippi:

What for?

Mrs. Prysselius:

Why, to learn things that are useful and worthwhile...

Pippi:

For example?

Mrs. Prysselius:

For example, the multiplication tables and the capital of Portugal.

Pippi:

The capital of Portugal is Lisbon. I've been there with my Papa. And I get along fine without pluttifikation.

Mrs. Prysselius:

Multiplication!

Pippi:

Who cares?

Mrs. Prysselius:

You should! How will you like it when you've grown up to be completely ignorant?

Pippi:

I don't know, do you like it?

Mrs. Prysselius:

I can see you're not taking this too seriously.

Pippi:

Nope, but you are. Aw, come on, lady – have some fun!

Mrs. Prysselius:

No, thank you. Why don't we just say goodbye for now.

Pippi:

Alright, goodbye for now.

(Mrs. Prysselius searches for her hat. Horse appears through the window; the hat in his mouth. She is afraid to take it. Pippi steps forward.)

Allow me.

(Pippi grabs the hat, and unintentionally, pushes it a bit too far onto Mrs. Prysselius's head. She stumbles off.)

Mrs. Prysselius:

I shall return!

(Pippi waves, then goes to the window and pats Horse's neck.)

Pippi:

Good old Horse you deserve some oats.

(Pippi opens the lid to the oat bin and feeds Horse a handful of oats. Tommy and Annika rush onstage, excited.)

Tommy:

Pippi!

Annika:

Pippi! There's a carnival in the village tonight!

Pippi:

A carnival?

Tommy:

Ja! Our Mama even gave us some money to spend! Come on!

Pippi:

Oh, tiddlelipom and piddleliday! But, wait – I better bring some money too.

(She reaches inside the door and grabs a suitcase. She opens it to reveal hundreds of gold coins.)

Do you think this'll be enough?

Tommy: (Awestruck.)

Are you kidding?!

Annika:

Gold? *Real* gold?!

Pippi:

Of course. When your Papa's a pirate, you're rich as a troll.

Tommy:

I'll say!

Annika:

You could buy the whole carnival!

Pippi:

Well, maybe I will! Let's go!

(They exit as lights fade.)