

Sides:

The Dowry of Princess Talia

Side 1

Characters: Talia, Dalton, Narrator, King

Narrator: Once upon a time, in a land far, far away...

King: It's not *that* far away.... OK, Worcester.

Princess Talia enters, carrying a drink for her father.

Narrator: ...lived a wise king named King Wendall the Wise, and his doting daughter, Princess Talia the Talented.

Talia: Not actually big on the doting. But he did say "please". And it is his birthday.

Narrator: One day, a suitor came along to the king.

Dalton enters, puffs his chest out.

Narrator: Prince Dalton the Dim.

Dalton: HEY! That's not nice.

Narrator: And the prince went to the king with a proposition.

Dalton comes before the king, a picture of confidence. He sets up as if to speak. Then he pulls out a wrinkled sheet of paper and reads, all in one breath.

Dalton: Oh good King Wendall the Wise, I, Dalton the Dim – Hey! – hearing of a creature of great beauty and wit, travelled all the way to Whir-Sester [he pronounces Worcester wrong] to hereby ask for your daughter Talia's hand in marriage. Make sure you're kneeling when you say this. Love, Mom.

Dalton takes a moment, and then sheepishly kneels in front of the king. Talia smiles and hides a giggle.

King: Well, good sir Dalton. I- You can stand now, by the way. *Dalton stands.*

King: No, I liked you better kneeling. Go on. Kneel.

Dalton kneels, confused.

King: As I was saying, a great many men have come before me to ask my daughter's hand in marriage. And since we live in Massachusetts, a couple of women as well. But to marry my daughter, she must agree to the match. But to even ask her the question, you must pay to me a dowry of one... hundred... Euros.

Dalton: Euros!?

King: Yeah. Have you seen the exchange rate these days? [points to the newspaper, whistles] Now bring me the dowry and then we'll talk.

Dalton: Sir, I will return with the dowry! [He salutes] Good day.

Dalton charges off stage. Pause. He then reenters sheepishly and exits from the way he came in originally.

Dalton: Sorry, forgot how to get out. This way? This place is so big. I'll just... let myself out.

Talia starts to go off after Dalton.

King: Where do think you're going?

Talia: Father. I like this suitor. I would go to see that he earns the dowry. King: Now just a minute, Talia the Troublesome

Talia: That's "Talented". Talia the Talented.

King: Not to me, it isn't. You'll always be Talia the Troublesome to me. Now, listen. Princes go on quests, and maidens stay back in the castle and... and.. practice being a maiden. Now go see if your brother needs help dressing for dinner.

Talia: He's almost 30!

King: I know. Time flies so much these days.

King Wendall exits.

Talia: So a princess is only good for sitting and waiting? Then maybe I won't be a princess for a little while.

Talia exits. Dalton enters.

Narrator: Meanwhile, in a clearing in the forest, we find Dalton the Dim-

Dalton: I'm standing right here.

Narrator: -Contemplating his situation.

Dalton: Oh what a situation to contemplate. Unless I find 100 Euros, I'll never be able to ask for fair Talia's hand in marriage. But where can I earn that type of money?

Talia enters, wearing boy's clothing and perhaps a moustache or hat to disguise her gender. She holds a sign saying "Career Advice. The Guidance Counselor is IN".

Talia: Ah-hem.

Dalton: What a stroke of luck! Hello, good sir.

Talia: And hello to you, sir...

Dalton: Dalton.

Talia: They must call you Dalton the Dashing.

Dalton: They don't, actually.

Talia: Oh. Well, are you in need of any guidance?

Dalton: Yes, I need to earn 100 Euros so that I can ask for Fair Princess Talia's hand in marriage.

Talia: That's so sweet! Well, I'm sure that there are many places that an able bodied young man could earn some money. Let's take a look.

Talia opens a local newspaper.

Talia: Why look! Just the next town over they're in need of a dragonslayer. That will surely earn you the money.

Dalton: That's great news. Thank you much, Sir...

Talia: Ta-- uh-- Tom.

Dalton shakes Tom's hand vigorously.

Dalton: Thank you, Sir Tom.

Dalton exits.

Talia: He might be Dim, but he has quite the firm... handshake.

Talia exits to watch the next scene.

Dalton enters stealthily, carrying a sword.

Dalton: Here, dragon. Here, dragon dragon dragon....

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Side 2

Characters: Witch, Dalton

Witch: [Offstage] I'm not home.

Dalton: OK.

Dalton turns to leave. Talia shakes her head in disbelief.

Dalton: Wait a minute. [Knocks on the door.] Are you sure you're not home?

Witch: [Offstage] Yep.

Dalton: Oh yeah? Prove it.

Pause.

Dalton: I'm waiting.

Witch: [Offstage] If I were home, wouldn't I have said something by now?

Dalton: I guess you're right. That does make sense.

Witch: [Offstage] I should think so.

Dalton: So if you're not in, you won't mind if I came in, would you? Witch:

[Offstage] Well, uh

Dalton: Well, here I go.

Dalton enters the house, looks around. The Witch shies away from him.

Dalton: Wow. What happened to this place? There's nothing here but walls made of gingerbread.

Witch: What do you think happened? I made some bad investments in the real estate market. And I had to sell everything. My broom, my cauldron, my tickets to the Quidditch World Cup. This gingerbread house is all I have.

Dalton: Oh, that's terrible.

Witch: And now you're here to take that away. This is worse than when those two German brats ate up my breakfast nook. Now who's the wicked one, eh?

Dalton: Oh. You're right. I am here to evict you. But I can't put you out on the street. I just can't. I guess I'm just not cut out to be a slumlord.

Dalton rips up his scroll, turns to leave.

Witch: Wait! You've done me a kindness, good sir. And so I should give you one in return.

She hands him a pouch.

Witch: Whenever you need a wish fulfilled, just open up the pouch.

Dalton: Thank you.

Witch: Goodbye!

Dalton leaves.

Witch: Wow. Thank goodness he didn't check the basement. [She reenters her house.]
Oh Hansel! Oh Gretel! Time for dinner!

The witch exits. Talia enters.

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Side 3

Characters: King, Dalton, Talia

King: And so you have the Golden Duck?

Dalton: No. I traded the duck to Jack, the Beanstalk guy? He gave me a can of magic beans for it, and the beans got me 125 Euros on eBay.

King: You know the duck lays golden eggs? As many as you want. *Talia shakes her head. Dalton is perplexed.*

Dalton: How can a rubber duck lay golden eggs? How can a rubber duck lay any eggs?

King: It's a fairytale, son. It doesn't have to make literal sense.

Dalton: Well, nevertheless, I now have the 100 Euros I need for fair Talia's dowry, with a little left over.

King: The price has gone up.

Dalton: What? To what?

King: 250 Euros.

Dalton: That's more than twice as much! Why?

King: Inflation.

Dalton: That's not fair.

King: Funny thing about being King. You get to decide what's fair and what isn't. Now do you have the dough?

Dalton: Well, now I have to find 125 more Euros. Wait one moment. That witch gave me a magic pouch. She said that if I needed a wish fulfilled, I could open it and make a wish. So here goes.

Dalton opens up the pouch. The King and Talia lean forward in interest.

Dalton: Oh, magic pouch. I wish that I had 125 more Euros, so that I can pay the dowry of fair Princess Talia.

Pause. Nothing happens.

Dalton: Abracadabra? Hocus Pocus? Expecto Patronus? [Pause] Please? *Finally, Talia breaks the silence with a sudden stamp of her feet.*

Talia: Oh for heaven's sake. Here.

She pulls money out of her cleavage and hands it to Dalton.

Dalton: Really?

Talia: Sure. I want to marry you, too.

Dalton: You do?

Talia: Yes. You're kind, generous, brave, and you look darn good in a singlet.

King: But daughter, however did you get this money?

Talia: Father, I've never told you this, but I write romance novels under the name Katrina Von Furstenberg.

King: You don't say?

Dalton: Sire. I trust that I... we... have paid the dowry, and I can ask your daughter's hand in marriage?

King: Go knock yourself out.

Dalton: Talia

Talia: Sure.

Dalton: OK. When?

Talia: Now?

Dalton: How?

Talia: Dad?

King: Done.

Dalton: Really?

King: Yes. I am the king after all. I now pronounce you Sir Dalton and Lady Talia, the Dims.

Dalton's head drops.

Dalton: It's pronounced "Dadeem". It's French.

Talia: Sweetie?

Dalton: Yes?

Talia: Shut up and kiss the bride.