

POMPITIE FINNDS A NEEDLE

A One Act Play for Children of all ages

By David Purves

Adapted from a story

By Agnes Grozier Herbertson

POMPITIE FINNDS A NEEDLE

comedy/fantasy, 90 min. (3M6F)

This is a short play in Scots for children of all ages, based on a story by Agnes Grozier Herbertson, which was written in the 1920s.

Pompitie, the main character, is a gnome with the power of flight, who finds a needle on the Common which has just been bought by the *Broun Ogre* from the *Wutch-that-Mends Rainbows*, in order to mend his favorite dream. The *Broun Ogre* is furious at having lost the needle and threatens to kill whoever has taken it. Pompitie is tormented by the Needle (a tyrannical symbolic conscience with the power of speech) and forced to perform a series of kind deeds in succession, for the *Hen Wyfe*, *The Toll Man* and the *Tea Wyfe*.

Pompitie, exhausted with enforced well-doing, is forced by the Needle to return it to the *Wutch* to whom it originally belonged. The *Wutch* then mends the *Broun Ogre's* favorite dream. Pompitie is terrified that the *Broun Ogre* will discover that he had had the Needle, so he is astonished when the Ogre calls to thank him for returning it.

The *Wutch* is a frightening Jungian archetype who is realised as a harmless old woman, and the *Broun Ogre* is a threatening male figure who also turns out to be quite benign in the end. Pompitie's ability to fly might lead to some practical production challenges.

The play has been publicly read by the Edinburgh Playwrights' Workshop

CHARACTERS

Narrator

Broun Ogre

Wutch-that-mends Rainbow

Pompitie the G-nome

Needle (a female voice)

Hen Wyfe

Gangril Man

Hen

Toll Man

Feather (a male voice)

Tea Wyfe

Green Leaf (a female voice)

Pepper the G-nome

SCENE 1

The Green Common before the house of the Wutch-that-Mends-Rainbows

The *Broun Ogre* buys a needle from the *Wutch-that-Mends-Rainbows*. He loses it and *Pompitie* finds it. The Needle forces *Pompitie* to go home by the *Hen Wyfe's* place.

SCENE 2

The Hen Wyfe's House

The Needle forces *Pompitie* to look for the *Hen Wyfe's* lost hen. *Pompitie* finds the hen on the *Gangril Man's* potato patch and returns it to the *Hen Wyfe*. The *Hen Wyfe* gives *Pompitie* a hen feather and the Needle forces *Pompitie* to go home by the toll road.

SCENE 3

The Tea Wyfe's House

The *Broun Ogre* calls to report he has lost the Needle. He threatens whoever has taken it.

SCENE 4

The Toll House

The Needle forces *Pompitie* to go to the *Tea Wyfe's* house to buy a thimbleful of tea for the *Toll Man*. The Feather guides *Pompitie*.

SCENE 5

The Tea Wyfe's House

Pompitie buys tea and carries it back to the *Toll Man*.

SCENE 6

The Toll Man's House

Pompitie delivers tea to the *Toll Man*. The *Toll Man* gives him a green leaf. The Needle forces *Pompitie* to go to the house of the *Wutch-that-Mends-Rainbows*.

SCENE 7

The Witch's House

Pompitie arrives at the Witch's house and she relieves him of the Needle with the aid of the Feather and the Green Leaf.

SCENE 8

The Witch's House

The *Broun Ogre* arrives, in a rage about his lost Needle. The Witch uses the Needle to mend the Ogre's favorite dream and returns it to him.

SCENE 9

A curly bush on the Common

Pompitie rests by the curly bush on his way home. His neighbor, Pepper, discovers him and wheels him home in a barrow.

SCENE 10

Pompitie rests while Pepper makes him a cup of tea. Pompitie starts to tell his sad story. There is an unexpected visit from the *Broun Ogre*, who has had his favorite dream restored and has evidently been cured of his aggressive tendency.