

LAURIE BERKNER'S, PILLOWLAND

Written for the stage by Barbara Zinn Krieger

Devised by Jonathan Shmidt Chapman

Directed by Khalia Davis

CAST OF CHARACTERS

STANLEY – Male: over active, inquisitive, the one who can't sleep.

FINN – Male: cautious, a worrier.

QUINN – Female: a take-charge person. Puppeteer for the King, also plays the Queen.

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December 5, 2017

January 24, 2018

February 28, 2018

March 14, 2018

April 2, 2018

September 9, 2018

(Note: all audience members will receive an email prior to coming to PILLOWLAND inviting them to wear pajamas, and to be prepared to take off their shoes.)

PRE-SHOW

(We begin in the front lobby. The actors, dressed in pajamas and shoeless, greet the audience of kids and adults. Everyone is asked to take off their shoes and put them in rows in an assigned place. While we wait for all to arrive, the kids are given small white bags, introduced as their take-home “pillowcases”, to decorate with crayons. Parents are asked to hold their kids “pillowcase” until the end of the performance, when they will be given something to put in it.

When all are assembled, the actors escort the audience into the sectioned-off back portion of the lobby, which is set up as the actors’ bedroom. It is positioned in front of the door to the theater. There are pillows on a blanket on the floor, which serves as the actors’ bed. A canopy is above. The kids are seated on a blanket in front of the playing area. Their caregivers stand behind. The actors take their places on the pillows under the canopy. This section shouldn’t last more than five minutes.)

PROLOGUE

(Narration, to the audience.)

Quinn

Once there was a house.

FINN

And in that house, there was a bedroom.

STANLEY

(He points to each of them as he speaks.)

And in that bedroom, there were, one, two, three.

QUINN

Quinn.

FINN

Finn.

STANLEY

And Stanley.

QUINN

(Yawning, to the others.)

We had lots of fun today!

(The others nod their agreement.)

Time for bed, guys.

FINN

I'm plenty tired.

(Quinn and Finn plump up pillows and get comfortable. They both yawn. Stanley, who is still wide awake, starts fidgeting and bouncing up and down.)

QUINN AND FINN

(Quinn and Finn sit up and stare at Stanley.)

Whaaat?

(Stanley stops fidgeting and sits still.)

FINN

(To Stanley.)

That's better.

(To the audience.)

QUINN

Quinn counted sheep jumping over a fence to fall asleep.

(She watches the sheep jump as she counts.)

One. Two. Three.

(She yawns.)

Four. F....

(She is asleep.)

FINN

Finn hummed his favorite tune, Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, to fall asleep.

(He starts to hum. Gets to the middle of the first line and falls asleep.)

STANLEY

But no matter what he did, Stanley couldn't fall asleep.

(He tries counting sheep. He counts faster and faster until he reaches twenty, getting more and more excited, and more and more awake as he counts.)

Nope, that didn't work.

(Then he hums Twinkle, Twinkle, and tap dances with his fingers to the tune. The thumping of his fingers wakes the others.)

FINN AND QUINN

Stanley! We're trying to sleep.

STANLEY

Sorry.

QUINN

I wish you would go to sleep.

FINN

So do I!

STANLEY

I wish I could sleep too!

(Quinn and Finn go back to sleep.)

STANLEY

(To the audience.)

But no matter what he did, Stanley just couldn't fall asleep.

(He tries to settle in between Finn and Quinn, but there isn't enough room. He throws his pillow down by the others' feet and tries to plump it up like they did. When he does, he hits something hard that hurts his hand. He searches in the pillow case and finds the invitation, rolled up on two wooden dowels. He shows it to the audience.)

Have you seen this before?

(Audience says no.)

Neither have I. Shall I open it?

(Audience says yes.)

Ok!

(He unrolls the invitation. Sound of a trumpet fanfare. Finn and Quinn stir, but don't wake up.)

YOU ARE ALL INVITED...

(To the audience.)

There's lots of names here.

(To a kid.)

What's your name?

(He finds that name on the invitation.)

Yes! Your name's here.

(To another kid.)

And your name? Yep, you're here too!

(He asks more kids for their names.)

Yes, yes, yes! You know what? I think all our names are here. Here's my name, and Quinn and Finn!

(He unrolls more of the invitation. Sound of trumpet fanfare. Finn and Quinn start to wake up.)

YOU ARE ALL INVITED BY THE KING AND QUEEN, TO VISIT PILLOWLAND.

IF YOU DO, YOUR WISHES WILL COME TRUE!

(To himself.)

Even my wish that I could fall asleep like Finn and Quinn? I have to go!

(To the audience.)

Do you want to come too?

(Excited.)

Okay!

(Finn and Quinn sit up.)

FINN AND QUINN

Stanley! Did you wake us up again? We want to sleep.

STANLEY

Look! I found an invitation in my pillow. And all our names are on it.

(He shows them the invitation, sound of trumpet fanfare.)

YOU ARE ALL INVITED BY THE KING AND QUEEN TO VISIT PILLOWLAND.

IF YOU DO, YOUR WISHES WILL COME TRUE.

We have to go!

FINN

(To Quinn.)

Pillowland? What's that? I wish Stanley would let us sleep!

QUINN

Come on, Finn, this sounds like a great adventure.

(To Stanley.)

What else does it say?

(Stanley unrolls more of the invitation, and a map becomes visible.)

ALL THREE

A map!

(Stanley shows the map to the audience.)

STANLEY

(Points to what is written.)

“Map of Pillowland. “

(Shows the map to Finn and Quinn.)

Look! A castle.

QUINN

That must be where the King and Queen live.

FINN

What’s all that blue stuff around the castle?

QUINN

(Quinn reads.)

“The Bluest Ocean”.

FINN

We have to cross an ocean to get to Pillowland? I don’t know...

QUINN

See the sailboat at the shore? It’s just waiting to take us to the castle.

STANLEY

Great. LET'S GO!

FINN

Wait a minute! How do we get to the ocean?

STANLEY

Hmmm.

(Stanley paces around the bed and accidentally tips over another pillowcase. A glowing star becomes visible. If the audience doesn't see the star, Quinn points to it.)

QUINN

What's that?

(Stanley pulls the star out of the pillowcase revealing a long lighted rope attached to it. The star starts pulling him around the room.)

STANLEY

Whoa! This star is in a hurry. The King and Queen of Pillowland must have sent it to take us to the ocean. Grab on, guys,

(The other actors grab the rope, one in the middle and the other at the end. To the audience.)

Grab on, everyone. We're on our way to Pillowland!

(The actors move around the room until all the kids have grabbed the rope. Stanley pushes aside the pillows under the canopy, and with his foot, opens the door to the playing space.)

SCENE ONE

(We see a magical light in the space beyond. Actors improvise instructions to the kids and their caregivers as they enter the playing space. The star travels around the room on a lighted path that separates the central round playing space from the audience spaces. Kids are seated on mats in four quadrants around the circle,

adults either sit with the kids, or on chairs behind. There are miniature pillows on the mats for the kids' use. Stanley stows the star somewhere on the set.)

STANLEY

(To the audience.)

Don't let me forget where I put the star. We'll need it to get back home.

(The central playing space is covered by a round mat. Light shines out of a hole in a volcano-like structure in the middle. Quinn looks in and pulls out a sheet.)

QUINN

Our sail.

(Finn and Stanley raise the sail. Quinn becomes the figurehead at the prow. She has a telescope which she points in all directions as they sail. The actors improvise the sound of the ocean, birds calling, and fish splashing.)

STANLEY

(To the audience.)

Next stop, Pillowland!

(The sail stays limp.)

There's no wind.

FINN

We can't sail without wind. Maybe we should go home.

QUINN

(To the audience.)

When I count three, everyone blow as hard as you can. Ready? One, two, three!

(The audience blows. The sail moves a little.)

STANLEY

It's working. We're moving! Keep blowing!

FINN, QUINN AND STANLEY

(Sing.)

HEAVE HO!

THE MORE YOU BLOW,

THE FASTER WE GO,

HEAVE HO!

(To the kids.)

Sing with us.

HEAVE HO!

THE MORE YOU BLOW,

THE FASTER WE GO.

HEAVE HO!

(Stanley and Finn turn the sheet into a billowing ocean.)

The action continues in miniature to underscoring.

(Quinn finds a toy sailboat in the volcano. She moves it up and down on the sheet. When Finn stows the sheet, Quinn shifts the boat to the small pillows in front of each kid. Stanley shows the kids how to move their pillows, and make whooshing sounds, as if the pillows are waves, when Quinn reaches them with the toy sailboat. He also shows the kids how they can turn their pillows into fish. Finn reveals a miniature castle, which was hidden upstage, as Quinn finishes her rounds of the kids.)

QUINN

(To the audience, pointing.)

Great job. We did it.

STANLEY

There's the castle!

(Quinn brings the boat up to the castle, which rests on three pillows. Finn and Quinn stow the castle and the boat.)

End of miniature sequence.

(Each actor takes a pillow to use as a stepping stone to the castle door.)

STANLEY

(Throws his pillow into the water and eagerly steps on it. He waves to the others to imitate him.)

Come on, guys. One.

QUINN

(Throws her pillow and jumps on it.)

Two.

FINN

(Hesitates, looks at the others, drops his pillow and gingerly steps on it.)

Three, I guess.

(They arrive at the door to the Castle. They look up and up in awe.)

STANLEY

(Narrating to the audience.)

The castle door was very tall. It was the tallest door Stanley had ever seen.

QUINN

(To the audience.)

Should we go in?

(Kids say yes.)

FINN

Better knock first.