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# **The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane**

Adapted by

**DWAYNE HARTFORD**

From the book by

**KATE DICAMILLO**

**Dramatic Publishing Company**

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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(THE MIRACULOUS JOURNEY OF EDWARD TULANE)

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“*The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* was originally commissioned, developed and produced at Childsplay in Tempe, Ariz. David P. Saar, artistic director; Steve Martin, managing director.”

*The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* was originally commissioned by and produced at Childsplay (David P. Saar, artistic director; Steve Martin, managing director) in Tempe, Ariz. The play was developed in Childsplay’s Whiteman New Plays Program and premiered on Oct. 26, 2013, at the Tempe Center for the Arts.

Cast:

The Traveler ..... Katie McFadzen  
The Musician ..... Kyle Sorrell  
The Man ..... David J. Dickinson  
The Woman ..... Debra K. Stevens

Production staff:

Director ..... David P. Saar  
Dramaturgy ..... Jenny Millinger  
Scenic design ..... Jeff Thomson  
Costume design ..... Addy Diaz  
Lighting design ..... Rick Paulsen  
Sound design ..... Christopher Neumeyer  
Rabbit design and construction ..... Jim Luther  
Original music ..... Kyle Sorrell  
Stage manager ..... Sarah G. Chanis

# **The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane**

## **CHARACTERS**

**THE TRAVELER:** The storyteller who portrays Pellegrina, Society Lady, Martin, Margory, Lolly, Jack, the Watchman, the Old Lady, Crow Pellegrina, Marlene, Lucius Clarke.

**THE WOMAN:** Portrays Abilene, Nellie, Lucy the dog, various other hobos, Star 1, Sarah Ruth, Neal, Doll, the Old Doll, the Shopper.

**THE MUSICIAN:** Plays guitar and is the voice of Edward's thoughts and emotions.

**THE MAN:** Portrays Abilene's Father, Amos, Lawrence, Bull, various hobos, Bryce, Star 2. Plays harmonica and perhaps other instruments.

## **PRODUCTION NOTES**

The story of Edward Tulane takes place over 20 years, starting in the mid-1920s. The Traveler is the leader of a group of timeless storytellers sharing this story. The actors and the setting are transformational. Actors change characters quickly and effortlessly. The costumes for characters within the story should be minimal pieces added to the actors' base costumes. The actors never leave the stage. Set pieces should be kept to a minimum, with the same pieces being used in different configurations for the different locations.

The Musician voices the thoughts of the china rabbit, Edward Tulane. The Musician and his music are, perhaps, the spirit or soul of Edward. I've indicated some possible places for the Musician to play; however, these are just suggestions, and his music shouldn't be limited to what is indicated in the script.

Edward is NOT a puppet. He is never manipulated to suggest that he can move by himself. Once the Musician starts voicing Edward's thoughts, he stays close to Edward. Due to the fast costume changes and the various states of repair, the play requires a number of Edward dolls. There were seven different Edward dolls in the original production.

The Traveler quickly switches from the role of storyteller to specific roles in the story, sometimes going back and forth. It is intended that these quick shifts won't always require costume adjustments, rather just a shift of focus and physicality for the actress; therefore, not all transitions are noted within the stage directions. All storyteller lines are marked Traveler.

If needed, the voice of Edward could be played by an actor separate from the Musician. In the original production, the Musician was sometimes joined by the Man playing the violin. If interested, the music from the original production is available for licensing from Kyle Sorrell ([kylesorrell@yahoo.com](mailto:kylesorrell@yahoo.com)).

Larger numbers of actors can be used to play the many characters; however, the Traveler and Pellegrina should always be played by the same actor. It is the playwright's preference that actors play multiple roles.

# The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane

## ACT I

*(Scene. Lights rise as THE MUSICIAN, THE TRAVELER, THE MAN and THE WOMAN enter. The MUSICIAN carries a guitar on his back, and the TRAVELER carries a large suitcase. The four stop and look at the audience. The TRAVELER nods to the others. They move to their places. The MUSICIAN adjusts the guitar and begins to play. The TRAVELER removes a large china rabbit from the suitcase. The beautiful toy is dressed in a specially made, expensive-looking suit. The music stops.)*

TRAVELER. Once, in a house on Egypt Street, there lived a rabbit made almost entirely of china. But how did such a thing come to be? Did the rabbit belong in this fine house? Was this the rabbit's home? Ah. Now that is an interesting question.

*(The TRAVELER becomes PELLEGRINA. The WOMAN becomes ABILENE.)*

ABILENE. Grandmother! You're back!

PELLEGRINA. You didn't think I would miss your birthday, did you?

*(PELLEGRINA offers the china rabbit to ABILENE.)*

ABILENE. Oh, grandmother! For me?

PELLEGRINA. Yes, Abilene. Happy birthday.

*(ABILENE takes the rabbit.)*

ABILENE. He is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen.

PELLEGRINA. You are the most beautiful. But, yes, he is indeed quite handsome.

ABILENE. What's he made of?

PELLEGRINA. China. The finest china. His ears and tail are made of real fur.

ABILENE. They are so soft! And look! His ears bend!

PELLEGRINA. He was made especially for you by the best doll maker in Paris.

ABILENE. I love his clothes. They are so stylish. And look at his shoes!

PELLEGRINA. He must always look his best if he's going to be seen with you, my lady. This isn't his only suit either. He has an entire wardrobe. His trunk is in your room.

ABILENE. Thank you! I love him. I will always love him.

PELLEGRINA. I'm glad. I thought you could use some company in this big old house. A special friend. Now what shall be his name?

ABILENE. Edward.

PELLEGRINA. Why Edward?

ABILENE. Just look at him. He's so dignified and refined.

*(PELLEGRINA takes the rabbit and gazes into his eyes.)*

PELLEGRINA. Edward. Yes, you do look like an Edward.

ABILENE. Edward Tulane.

PELLEGRINA. Oh. You've already made him part of the family, have you?

ABILENE. Of course.

PELLEGRINA. Well, Edward Tulane. I hope you realize how fortunate you are.

ABILENE. I want to show Mother and Father!

*(ABILENE hugs PELLEGRINA, takes EDWARD and moves away. The MUSICIAN begins to play.)*

TRAVELER. And so it was that Edward Tulane came to live at the house on Egypt Street.

*(ABILENE appears with EDWARD.)*

ABILENE. And this is the parlor. This is where we entertain. We'll have tea here this afternoon. Come on. I'll show you the garden.

*(ABILENE carries EDWARD away.)*

TRAVELER. He was very fortunate indeed.

*(ABILENE appears with EDWARD.)*

ABILENE. What's that, Edward? Oh, I would be delighted to dance with you.

*(ABILENE and EDWARD do a courtly dance.)*

ABILENE *(cont'd)*. You dance divinely, Lord Edward.

TRAVELER. As she said she would, Abilene loved the china rabbit.

*(ABILENE holds EDWARD as if they are in an airplane.)*

ABILENE. Hang on, Edward. We're going to loop the loop!

*(The MAN appears as ABILENE's FATHER.)*

FATHER. Abilene, it's time to get ready for bed.

ABILENE. But we're in the middle of the Trans World International Air Show.

FATHER. Land the plane. Grandmother Pellegrina will be up soon to tuck you in.

ABILENE. Come on, Edward. Time to put on your silk pajamas.

*(ABILENE and her FATHER step out of the scene.)*

TRAVELER. So fortunate. How many china rabbits have their own silk pajamas?

*(ABILENE appears with EDWARD in silk pajamas.)*

ABILENE. Good morning, Edward! Now, would you like to wear your blue pinstripe or your gray suit today?

TRAVELER. Of course, Edward didn't answer. He never did. He couldn't, you see. His mouth was painted on his china head, as was the rest of his face. But still he had his thoughts.

*(The TRAVELER nods to the MUSICIAN, who then moves near EDWARD. Throughout the play, the other characters always relate to the rabbit, EDWARD, and never to the MUSICIAN as he voices EDWARD's thoughts.)*

EDWARD. What? Oh. The gray suit. And the dark red tie. Yes. The gray suit today.

ABILENE. I agree. The blue pinstripe it is.

EDWARD. Oh dear. Well, don't forget the hat. I am devilishly handsome in the hat.

*(ABILENE and EDWARD leave. Her FATHER appears.)*

FATHER. Abilene! Come along now. You'll be late for school, and I'll be late for work.

*(ABILENE approaches with EDWARD, now dressed.)*

ABILENE. I'm almost ready, father. I just have to put Edward in his chair.

FATHER. Oh, I know. Edward must be at his station to keep watch.

ABILENE. Father?

FATHER. Oh. Good morning, Edward. You're looking dapper as always.

*(ABILENE holds up EDWARD to her ear.)*

ABILENE. What's that, Edward? Oh. *(To her FATHER.)* He says thank you, and that you look rather dapper yourself.

FATHER. Thank you, Edward.

*(FATHER exits.)*

TRAVELER. Now, Edward didn't say any such thing. He couldn't, with his painted mouth after all. And what he was really thinking was ...

*(ABILENE sets EDWARD in the chair.)*

EDWARD. What? Oh, right. I do look good. Somehow I make the pinstripe work, don't I? Now be careful you don't wrinkle my jacket. And fix the tie. I'm sure it's crooked. You really should be more careful with the tie.

ABILENE. Oh, your watch. I remember.

*(She removes a pocket watch from one of his pockets. She winds it and sets it on one of his legs.)*

ABILENE (*cont'd*). There you are. Now remember, when the big hand is on twelve and the little hand is on three, I will come home to you. You'll see me coming right up that walk. Have a pleasant day looking out the window.

(*FATHER reappears.*)

FATHER. Abilene.

(*ABILENE and FATHER leave. EDWARD calls after them.*)

EDWARD. The tie! Fix the tie! Oh, dear.

TRAVELER. And so Edward Tulane spent his days, staring out upon Egypt Street, listening to the ticking of his watch. And at three o'clock Abilene would return.

(*ABILENE appears.*)

ABILENE. Hello, Edward. I'm home. And how was your day?

EDWARD. What? Oh, you're back.

(*ABILENE picks up EDWARD.*)

EDWARD (*cont'd*). What are you doing? Don't move me now. It'll be dark soon, and I'll be able to see my reflection in the window.

ABILENE. Oh, Edward. I wish everyone were as considerate and as nice as you.

EDWARD. Uh-huh.

ABILENE. Cynthia Worthington is so mean. She wouldn't let me have a turn at recess today.

EDWARD. You don't say.

ABILENE. You're right, Edward. It doesn't matter. I'm home with you now. Let's go for a walk in the garden and forget all about Cynthia Worthington.

TRAVELER. Life continued this way for quite some time, a few years in fact. Abilene shared all of her thoughts and secrets with Edward. And she made sure that other members of the family included Edward in their conversations as well.

*(FATHER appears. He sits with ABILENE. They are having tea. EDWARD sits between them. FATHER is speaking to others who are unseen by the audience.)*

FATHER. And so tomorrow, I'm going to have lunch with the gentleman.

ABILENE. Excuse me, father. I don't believe Edward heard what you just said.

FATHER. Oh. Pardon me, Edward. I said I was having lunch tomorrow with the president of the bank. I'm quite looking forward to it. You see, he should be able to tell me if it's possible ...

*(FATHER continues in pantomime during the following.)*

EDWARD. Blah, blah, blah. Must he go on so? I mean really.

*(ABILENE, her FATHER and EDWARD leave.)*

TRAVELER. Yes, Edward had little patience for people. What they said didn't interest him, unless they were talking about him, of course. Now, nobody knew this. Nobody could read his thoughts. That is, nobody except for perhaps one.

*(The TRAVELER becomes PELLEGRINA. ABILENE enters, carrying EDWARD, who is in his pajamas now. PELLEGRINA tucks ABILENE into bed.)*

ABILENE *(yawning)*. I'm not really that sleepy, grandmother.

PELLEGRINA. I can see that, but nonetheless, to sleep you must go. You have school in the morning.

ABILENE. Edward isn't sleepy either.

EDWARD. Don't hold me so tightly. You'll wrinkle the silk.

*(PELLEGRINA looks at EDWARD. She picks him up.)*

PELLEGRINA. China rabbits don't need as much sleep as little girls. I imagine that Edward spends the hours remembering how lucky he is to have you.

EDWARD. What's that supposed to mean?

ABILENE. Will you tell us a story tonight?

PELLEGRINA. Hm? Oh. Not tonight, lady, but soon. Soon there will be a story.

EDWARD. Why does she stare at me like I'm some criminal?

*(PELLEGRINA lays EDWARD on his back next to ABILENE.)*

EDWARD *(cont'd)*. And why can't she ever lay me on my side so I can look out the window? There are stars out there.

ABILENE. Good night.

PELLEGRINA. Good night, my lady. Pleasant adventures in the land of Nod.

*(PELLEGRINA leaves.)*

ABILENE. I love you, Edward. Good night.

*(ABILENE rolls over to go to sleep.)*

EDWARD. Wait! Turn me on my side! What is so difficult to understand? Oh, that Pellegrina. She does this on purpose, I know it. And that staring ... how ... how rude!

TRAVELER. One day it was announced that the family would take a voyage on a great ship.

*(ABILENE sits up in bed as PELLEGRINA enters.)*

ABILENE. But why won't you sail to London with us tomorrow?

PELLEGRINA. Because I will not. That's why.

ABILENE. But I'll miss you.

PELLEGRINA. I'm glad.

ABILENE. You're glad?

PELLEGRINA. Yes. When those we love are not with us, we miss them. I will miss you. But instead of feeling sad, I will look forward to the wonderful moment when we see each other again.

ABILENE. It seems to me that it would be better to stay together in the first place.

PELLEGRINA. We are all on our own journeys, my lady. We can't always be with those we love.

ABILENE. Well, we can try!

*(PELLEGRINA laughs.)*

PELLEGRINA. Yes, we certainly can! Now, tell me, will you take Edward on this voyage?

ABILENE. Of course! How could I possibly go on a journey without Edward?

PELLEGRINA. Hmmm. Yes. How could you possibly?

*(PELLEGRINA picks up EDWARD.)*

ABILENE. Edward watches out for me.

PELLEGRINA. Does he? I see.

EDWARD. There she goes staring at me again.

ABILENE. Will you tell us a story tonight, grandmother?

PELLEGRINA. Yes. I believe tonight there will be a story.

ABILENE. Shall Edward listen too?

PELLEGRINA. Oh yes. Edward should pay particularly close attention.

EDWARD. I don't like the sound of that at all.

*(PELLEGRINA hands EDWARD to ABILENE. The following story may be told as simply or as complicatedly as desired. Perhaps PELLEGRINA uses puppets, dolls or shadow puppets in the storytelling.)*

PELLEGRINA. This story begins with a princess.

EDWARD *(not interested)*. A princess?

ABILENE. A beautiful princess?

PELLEGRINA. A very beautiful princess.

ABILENE. How beautiful?

PELLEGRINA. You must listen—both of you. Once there was a princess who was very beautiful. She shone as bright as the stars on a moonless night.

EDWARD. Bright as the stars on a moonless night. That's kind of nice, actually.

PELLEGRINA. But, what difference did it make that she was beautiful? None. No difference.

ABILENE. Why did it make no difference?

PELLEGRINA. Because she was a princess who loved no one and cared nothing for love, even though there were many who loved her.

*(PELLEGRINA stares at EDWARD.)*

PELLEGRINA *(cont'd)*. And so ...