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*Dramatic Publishing*

# THE QUILTMAKER'S GIFT

A New Family Musical Adventure

Based on the book written by JEFF BRUMBEAU  
and illustrated by GAIL DEMARCKEN

Book by ALAN J. PREWITT

Music by CRAIG BOHMLER

Lyrics by STEVEN MARK KOHN



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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illustrated by Gail deMarcken

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Phoenix, AZ 85004  
under the direction of Michael Bernard

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## LIST OF SONGS

1. Panoverture
2. The Gifts I Share . . . . . Quiltmaker
3. Happiness . . . Chorus King, Tenor, Soprano, Alto, Bass
4. Soldier's Song #1 . . . . . Soldiers
5. Soldier's Song #2 . . . . . Soldiers, Alto, Old Man
6. Soldier's Song #3 . . . . . Soldiers
7. I Don't Mean to be Mean . . . . . Chorus King
8. A Very Lonely Day . . . . . Bear, Quiltmaker
9. Soldier's Song #4 . . . . . Soldiers
10. Soldier's Song #5 . . . . . Soldiers
11. "I" . . . . . Chorus King, Quiltmaker
12. Wind and Water, Earth and Sky . . . Chorus, Quiltmaker
13. The Gifts I Share — Reprise . . . . . Quiltmaker
14. Happiness At Last . . . . . Chorus King
15. Wealth Beyond Beyond . . Quiltmaker, Old Man, Ensemble

# THE QUILTMAKER'S GIFT

A Musical

For 2-3m., 1w., 1 child either gender, a chorus of 4  
(which may be expanded as desired)

## CHARACTERS

**THE CHILD:** The child may be male or female. He/she is 8-10 years old depending on stature, but should be small enough to believably play at being a “king.” The child is curious, imaginative and full of questions.

**THE OLD MAN:** The old man appears to be in his 60s. He is dressed in rags that appear to have been grand at one time. He is warm and gentle and speaks as if everything in life is a magical gift. He speaks with confidence and enthusiasm. There is no doubt that there is something special about him.

**THE QUILTMAKER:** The Quiltmaker appears to be in her 60s, silver-haired and simply dressed. She has an air of mystery about her. There is a timelessness about her that reminds everyone of their grandmother. She is earthy and has a magical connection with the forces of nature. She is focused on her life goal of making quilts for the poor and needy. To her, each quilt is a carefully constructed gift representing love and caring. “If someone is hungry the quilt may not feed them, but the pain of hunger is easier to bear if you know someone cares.”

**CHORUS KING:** One of five chorus members, this one plays the king throughout the play except in the first and last scene. This member is visibly transformed into the king by the other chorus members when the old man reaches that part of the story. The king is played at about age 45-50. He is lonely and sad, greedy and self-centered. He is in search of the one thing in the world that will make him happy.

**TENOR:** A male chorus member who sings as his name suggests. He is never referred to by name and plays many parts, as required.

**ALTO:** A female chorus member who sings as her name suggests. Also plays many roles.

**SOPRANO:** A female chorus member who sings as her name suggests. She also plays numerous roles.

**BASS:** A male chorus member who sings as his name suggests. He plays many roles as well, including “The Bear.”

Each chorus member starts in a base costume that is similar to the others. That base costume should have a “patchwork” appearance, but each should be unique. The chorus members will change hats and various costume pieces many times, so this base costume should be sleek and easily added to. These characters make everything happen in the play, rather like the clowns in a circus. They fill in the gaps, set up the scenes and then become a part of the action.

**THE SETTING:** When the audience enters they see what appears to be a large quilt covering most of the staging area. Clearly it is covering something for there are lumps, espe-

cially a large one upstage. There is a cyclorama or solid wall upstage for projecting lighting gobo images to help establish location of each scene. The one seen now is a “patchwork pattern” taken from a traditional quilt design. There is a large tree, or something that may be fashioned into one. There should be at least one limb that is suitable for two people to sit upon. It’s other limbs stretch out to make a proscenium that reaches across the front of the stage. Some of the other items needed in the play may be visible or may be under the large quilt, including crates, trunks, lengths of material, etc. These items are later used for building the bear’s cave, the island, or creating the water effect surrounding the island. The trunk may hold costume pieces or props.

**CD MUSIC CUES:** If you are using the music CD to accompany your production, the CD track numbers will appear in the script, along the right side of the page, roughly where they should be initiated.

Anyone interested in doing the musical with an accompaniment CD, please contact: Managing Director, Phoenix Theatre, 100 E. McDowell Rd., Phoenix AZ 85004, Phone: (602) 258-1974.

## **PLAYWRIGHT’S NOTE**

The play is intentionally designed to be performed with either a small or large budget. The musical can easily be done in a “deconstructed” style or larger scale “Broadway musical” style. The most important thing is to keep the simplicity of intent and focus on the universal truth. Expanding the cast is simply achieved by adding chorus members or having various actors play the variety of roles. The playwright also encourages any organization to partner their production with a quilt or blanket drive for the homeless in their community.



# THE QUILTMAKER'S GIFT

SCENE

(track #1)

*House lights are dimmed. As the pantoverture is played, we see movement under the quilt. TENOR pops his head out, sees the audience and lets out a surprised expression of sound. It is the “language of the chorus.” It is “other-worldly” and consists of no recognizable words. He disappears under the drop. We see movement as ALTO pokes her head out. She runs to the edge of the stage, looks closely at the audience. She is joined by the CHORUS KING. They stick their heads under the quilt and scream a warning. Simultaneously, SOPRANO and BASS pop out and acknowledge the warning. They huddle to discuss and get organized when they notice TENOR is missing. They start pulling the quilt back in search of him. One member comes back to the audience to beg a moment. They fold back the quilt, pull it, push it and lift it to reveal the items underneath, including TENOR putting last-minute touches on the OLD MAN who appears frozen in time, pulling a small cart, on which there is an item covered with a multicolored but faded and dirty piece of canvas. TENOR is so busy at work he fails to notice the activity around him until all have completed removing the quilt from the playing area and organizing the trunks and crates. They stand and*

*watch him. He gestures to the tableau he has created for their approval. They all issue their own sound of delight, turn to the audience as if to signify they are ready. TENOR runs to BASS and audibly whispers in his ear. BASS reacts surprised, looks around and whispers to ALTO the same audible concern. By now the others have noticed and react. They race off in all directions. From offstage we hear sounds that indicate they have found something.*

TENOR & BASS. Ahhhh, ohhh yahhhh di da.

*(The TENOR and BASS carry on the CHILD, who also appears frozen. The others enter and run about the stage to gather a sword from one trunk and a crown from another. One gestures for smoke, it happens. One gestures for the upstage cyc to change, it does. Finally they turn to the audience, strike a pose as if presenting the scene, then they exit. Just as the overture is coming to a close, TENOR races back on with a standard that bears a banner that looks like a quilt piece which signifies "the road." He places the banner into the stage floor, repositions the CHILD's arm with the sword into the air, and snaps his fingers for a final light change, just as the music ends. The OLD MAN starts to move as the CHILD steps into his path.)*

THE CHILD. Hold there! I command you to halt in the name of the king.

OLD MAN. And what king would that be, young man?

THE CHILD. Why me, of course. What king do you think?

OLD MAN. Forgive me, young lord, for I have known so many kings in my life. Remind me again of your name.

THE CHILD (*looks about for a clue*). King...uh...King...

OLD MAN. Perhaps you wouldn't mind telling me why you have stopped me.

THE CHILD. I am in need of something...a fee so that you may pass this way.

OLD MAN. Oh. A toll? I saw no sign suggesting that this was a toll road. I used to travel this road often and I have never known it to be...

THE CHILD. Things change, and today *I* control the road. And *you* had better hurry and come up with something 'cause my mom expects me home soon.

OLD MAN. Oh, I see, King...uh...

THE CHILD. Rich!

OLD MAN. King Rich?

THE CHILD. ...as in beyond my wildest dreams.

OLD MAN. Ah...I see. So you must be very wealthy!

THE CHILD. I would be if anyone ever paid their toll! I want to be wealthy more than anything. It would make me so happy...and my mother too. I could buy her a big house. We're sort of...well, without a home right now.

OLD MAN. Oh. Well, in that case I am very sorry not to have the toll for you today, Your Majesty, but as you can plainly see by my clothes, I have little to give. Unless you would like this cart?

THE CHILD. I've no use of that old thing. What about whatever is covered up there?

OLD MAN. Another old thing, I'm afraid. It's really nothing that would be of value to you. Just a trinket I have brought to an old friend. I have, however, thought of a little something you might like. It's very dear to me, but

I would be willing to part with it, considering the circumstances. *(He pulls out an old leather-bound manuscript, soft and tattered from age and use.)*

THE CHILD. That looks very old. What is it, a book? *(Interested, the CHILD draws to the OLD MAN's side.)*

OLD MAN. A story. Do you like stories?

THE CHILD. Oh I do very much. My mother tells me plenty, but mostly the same ones over and over.

OLD MAN. Then you should hear this one!

THE CHILD. How do I know I haven't already heard it?

OLD MAN. Oh, I can assure you you haven't. Here, see for yourself. *(He hands the book to the CHILD.)*

THE CHILD. Uh...well... *(Shyly.)* ...see, the thing is...I don't read very well. I can barely make out this handwriting anyway.

OLD MAN. Sorry. Allow me. *(Extends his hands to regain the book.)* I shall read it to you if you like. Better still, perhaps I will tell you the story. Would you care to take a journey with me?

THE CHILD. No, sir! I'd love to hear the story, but I know better than to go anywhere with a stranger.

OLD MAN *(laughs approvingly)*. You are exactly right, young man, but the journey I speak of happens right here... *(He points to his head.)* ...in your imagination.

THE CHILD. Oh sure, I get it. I go there all the time.

OLD MAN. Somehow, I was sure of that. I think you will enjoy this particular story for it happens to be about a king...a wealthy king.

THE CHILD. Really? Was he very wealthy?

OLD MAN. He was, but the story doesn't start there... *(He motions for the CHILD to sit at the base of the tree.)*  
Shall we?

THE CHILD. I so command.

OLD MAN. All right. Close your eyes and just try to imagine this. **(track #2)**

*(CHILD closes his eyes tight. There is a music cue. As the OLD MAN begins to tell the story the CHORUS comes in and sets the stage. The road banner is removed and replaced by one signifying the mountain home of the QUILTMAKER. The scene takes place just to the side of the CHILD and OLD MAN, though they have no interaction with the characters until later in the scene.)*

OLD MAN. Once in a kingdom, very near by, and closer than you may think, there was a Quiltmaker who kept a house in the blue misty mountains.

THE CHILD. Really? There's a nice older lady that lives on top of that mountain over there. I think she makes quilts too.

OLD MAN. You don't say? *(The OLD MAN looks in the direction the CHILD has pointed and smiles. He turns his attention back to the CHILD.)* This Quiltmaker lived quite simply and happily creating the most remarkable works of...warmth.

*(The QUILTMAKER enters, putting the finishing touches on one of her quilts.)*

### **“THE GIFTS I SHARE”**

QUILTMAKER.

**HERE IN MY MOUNTAIN HOME,  
FAR FROM THE WORLD DOWN THERE,**

**I SPEND MY DAYS IN THE MISTY HAZE  
MAKING THE GIFTS I SHARE.**

**QUILTS SO SOFT AND WARM,  
FASHIONED WITH LOVING CARE,  
TO SHIELD THE POOR FROM COLD,  
THESE ARE THE GIFTS I SHARE.**

**A SIMPLE GIFT FROM A LOVING HAND,  
A WARM EMBRACE IN THE NIGHT,  
A GENTLE TOUCH TO A SOUL IN NEED,  
TO MAKE EV'RYTHING ALL RIGHT.**

**THIS IS THE WORK I KNOW  
AND AS LONG AS I SHALL LIVE,  
I WILL BRING MY COMFORT TO THOSE  
    BELOW,  
FOR THESE ARE THE GIFTS I GIVE.  
FLY TO ME, BIRDS,  
BRING A PATCH OF BLUE FROM THE SKY.  
BRING ME THE GREENS FROM A FIELD OF  
    GRASS.  
AND COME TO ME NOW  
WITH THE FLOW'RS THAT BLOOM IN THE  
    GLEN.  
BRING THEIR COLORS TO ME,  
AND I'LL SHARE THEM AGAIN AND AGAIN.**

*(The music continues under the following scene.)*

OLD MAN. People used to make the long trek up the mountain, their pockets filled with gold, each asking to purchase one of her magnificent quilts. But her answer was always the same.

*(The CHORUS has entered in a more dimly lit area of the stage and takes costumes from a trunk and dresses in preparation for the following scene. BASS enters in an exaggerated vest and top hat, holding a cane.)*

BASS. I am prepared to give you as much as twenty pieces of gold for one of your quilts.

QUILTMAKER. I have told you before, sir, they are not for sale.

BASS. Oh all right, thirty pieces if I must!

QUILTMAKER. You know very well I make them only for the poor and homeless. You appear to be neither.

BASS. Name your price then. I will have one.

QUILTMAKER. When you are cold and hungry, when you have nothing to hold onto at night, then you shall have one of my quilts, this I can promise, but today I bid you goodbye.

ALTO *(has been visibly dressed in a dress bustle with a train and feathered hat, holding a parasol)*. That, my darling, is simply divine. I want it, I'll have it, that quilt shall be mine. In fact, I'll take two.

QUILTMAKER. These quilts are only for those in need and it appears you are not!

ALTO. That's certainly true and I never intend to be.

QUILTMAKER. Then just as certainly, you will not know warmth from one of my quilts. Find your warmth in money...if you can.

ALTO. Well!

*(SOPRANO enters dressed as a little girl. Skirt, bow in her hair and carrying a lollipop or a richly dressed doll. She is dragging her father [TENOR] along.)*

SOPRANO. Look, Daddy, there she is. Get me one of those. I want one now.

TENOR. I'll buy you whatever you want, dear. *(To the QUILTMAKER.)* Tell me, what's your price?

QUILTMAKER. There is no price. They are not for sale. *(To OLD MAN and BOY.)* Why is it so hard for the wealthy to understand?

SOPRANO. Daddy, I'm waiting. Give her some money and let's go.

TENOR. Just a moment, dear. You see, old woman, you have made her very unhappy. Now please, just name your price.

QUILTMAKER. You would both find some happiness if you learned to be nice. Now leave before I ask the wind to carry you away. *(TENOR backs away and drags the squealing girl off with him. QUILTMAKER sings.)*

**THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN CASTLES OF  
STONE.**

**THEY HAVE ALL THAT THEY NEED AND THEY  
STILL WANT MORE.**

**BUT THERE ARE OTHERS WHO ARE POOR AND  
ALONE.**

**CAN'T YOU SEE THEY ARE CALLING TO ME?**

*(Two forlorn travelers cross the stage. The QUILTMAKER wraps a quilt around them.)*

**SLEEP, MY DARLINGS, SLEEP, FAR FROM YOUR  
WORLD OF CARE.**

**LET SORROW CEASE, FOR A MOMENT'S PEACE.  
THIS IS THE GIFT I SHARE.**

*(As the song ends the OLD MAN and CHILD cross beside the QUILTMAKER. She is in tableau as the CHILD examines the quilt she holds.)*



THE CHILD. These really are beautiful quilts, but I thought this story was about a king? Where's the king come in?

OLD MAN. Just now, as luck would have it. **(track #3)**

*(They cross from the QUILTMAKER as a CHORUS MEMBER comes and initiates her exit. Meanwhile, the others are hurriedly setting up another area of the stage for the KING. They have set up a throne room, placed the standard in the floor and dressed the CHORUS KING after some confusion as to who shall play him.)*

Imagine if you will that in this same kingdom lived a very powerful king. He spent his days acquiring as many "things" as he could, but the hundreds of beautiful gifts he received on holidays and birthdays weren't enough. Everything he had acquired was stored everywhere, and still it was not enough. He wanted more, because he was searching for that one thing that might make him happy.

**"HAPPINESS" (track #4)**

CHORUS KING.

**I AM THE KING OF EV'RYTHING I SURVEY,  
FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO THE VALLEY TO  
THE DISTANT BAY.**

**I HAVE SERVANTS TO INDULGE MY EV'RY  
WHIM**

**AND OF COURSE THE ROYAL TREASURY TO  
SKIM.**

**WHEN I RAISE MY BOOMING VOICE  
MY SUBJECTS COWER AT MY FEET!**

**WHICH AIN'T THE THRILL IT USED TO BE,**

**BUT STILL IT'S KIND OF NEAT.  
YET WITH ALL THE LORDLY POWER I  
COMMAND,  
THERE IS SOMETHING I DON'T SEEM TO HAVE  
IN HAND.**

**HAPPINESS AND JOY.  
THESE ARE ALL I'VE EVER WANTED SINCE I  
WAS A LITTLE BOY.  
OH A GIDDY AND CHEERFUL FRAME OF MIND,  
SEEMS TO ME TO BE THE HARDEST THING TO  
FIND.**

**HAPPINESS AND GLEE,  
WON'T YOU COME ALONG AND SPEND SOME  
TIME WITH ME?  
HEAR MY CALL, HEAR MY PLEA, TAKE MY  
CASE,  
PUT A SMILE UPON THIS SOUR ROYAL FACE.**

**I WAKE UP IN THE MORNING ALL DEPRESSED.  
MY THERAPIST HAS TOLD ME I'M EXTREMELY  
STRESSED.  
SO I ASK HIM "WHAT ON EARTH'S A KING TO  
DO?"  
AND HE TELLS ME HE HASN'T GOT A CLUE.  
I LAY MY HEAD UPON MY GOLD EMBROIDERED  
PILLOWCASE AND WEEP.  
AT TIMES I FIND IT VERY, VERY HARD TO  
FALL ASLEEP.  
OH, THIS MISERY DOES NOT BEFIT A KING.  
MY REGAL WORLD IS MISSING JUST ONE  
THING.**

**OH, HAPPINESS, COME QUICK.  
I'M NOT GETTING ANY YOUNGER AND I'M  
FEELING A LITTLE SICK.  
BRING ME PEACE OR CONTENTMENT OR  
DELIGHT.  
BRING ME ANYTHING TO CALM THE LONELY  
NIGHT.**

**BUT WHAT AND WHERE AND HOW SHALL I  
FIND IT,  
THAT GLORIOUS THING I MUST POSSESS?  
OUT THERE, SOMEWHERE, MY TREASURE IS  
WAITING.  
WHEN I WRAP MY HANDS AROUND IT,  
THEN AT LAST I'LL KNOW I'VE FOUND IT...  
YES!**

*(Spoken over music.)* Guard! Guard!

BASS *(entering)*. Yes, my liege.

CHORUS KING. I am making a royal decree. Take this  
down. *(Sings.)*

**TO MY SUBJECTS NEAR AND FAR ACROSS THE  
LAND,  
YOUR KING, WHOM I KNOW YOU ALL HOLD  
DEAR,  
IN THE INT'REST OF PERSONAL IMPROVEMENT,  
SHALL CELEBRATE HIS BIRTHDAY TWICE A  
YEAR!**

**FROM THIS DAY FORWARD IT SHALL STAND,  
BY ORDER OF THIS BINDING DECREE,  
THEY SHALL GATHER UP THE FINEST  
PRESENTS THEY HAVE  
AND BRING EV'RYTHING THEY HAVE TO ME!**

*(Spoken.)* I just love birthday presents.