

PIPPY LONGSTOCKING

BY

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Shoobox Theatre
2015 Old Orchard Drive
Dallas, Texas 75208
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CAST OF CHARACTERS

PIPPI LONGSTOCKING:

Unusual little girl about 11 years old. Orphaned at a very early age. Self-taught. Philosophical. Strong. Strong-willed. Animated. A cartoon character. Misses having parents. Very imaginative.

MRS. LINDGREN:

TOMMY and ANNIKA's mother. Single mother. Serious and loving. Wishful. Feels trapped by her responsibilities. Is a mother-figure for PIPPI.

TOMMY:

Annika's brother. Self confident and smart. A rule player. Inhibited. Longs for adventure but finds it hard to let go.

ANNIKA:

Tommy's sister. Impressionable. Looks vulnerable but isn't. Completely enamored with PIPPI.

MR. PETERSON, SCHOOLTEACHER:

Appears in Fieldtrip Scene. Authoritative, but creative. Fanciful and fun. Takes students "on safari" to explore their imaginations.

THE RINGMASTER:

Grander than grand. Larger than life. Colorful, animated, magical, sensitive, a bit macabre.

BULLIES:

Children in the neighborhood who come to meet PIPPI and to see if she is as strong and as big as she is rumored to be.

CLOWNS:

Varied clowns in the Circus Parade that comes down PIPPI's street with RINGMASTER. Funny, happy, silly.

STUDENTS:

On an “exploration” field trip
with SCHOOLTEACHER. Wear pith
helmets, have spyglasses.
Serious and imaginative.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Astrid Lindgren was born in Vimmerby, Sweden. Her family lived on a farm. About her childhood she says, “I was one of 4 children and I cannot imagine any children having more fun than we had.” Mrs. Lindgren had 2 children of her own, who were always pestering her to tell them stories, and so she did. After an unfortunate accident that forced her to stay in bed with nothing to but write, she wrote and published her first book. She has written over 20 books, her best known being PIPPY LONGSTOCKING. Mrs. Lindgren won The Hans Christian Andersen International Book Award in 1958 for RASMUS AND THE VAGABOND and she was the first recipient of The Nils Holgersson Plaque, the Swedish equivalent of The Newberry Award.

NOTE FROM PLAYWRIGHT

For years people around the world have been laughing over Pippi’s outrageous escapades. Ms. Lindgren’s books are fantastical and outlandish, suitable for film and video. . . very ambitious for theatre. In writing this play, I tried to give depth to Pippi’s adventures while remaining true in ambiance to Ms. Lindgren’s style. Although not prevalent in the books, I chose as my theme “the importance of discovering and nurturing your authentic self”. The sooner a person finds a truthful path to follow, the sooner he will be a happy person. It is my belief that if we allow our children to be who they are instead of insisting they be little clones of our wanna-be’s, our world will be healthy and strong.

DEDICATION

To Jane Nesius. Artistic in everything she does. . . painting, cooking, gardening, decorating. I love her dearly and am grateful for her part in my life.

ACT I

SCENE I

SETTING: LINDGREN front porch.

AT RISE: Special light on MRS.
LINDGREN who is on her
front porch.

MRS. LINDGREN

In everyone's life, a special someone comes along to teach you what you already know....but have forgotten. It happened to me and my family in a very special way.

(Stands up to water flower pot)

Let me start at the beginning. Our move from one town to another wasn't the easiest. It was right before school started so I looked everywhere for a house in a nice safe neighborhood. That way the children could walk to school. I decided to take some time off from work, enough to get settled. I vowed to do the best I could to raise my two children, Tommy and Annika, on my own. I can't remember exactly how it all came about, but I do know this. When we moved into Pippi's neighborhood... right next door to her, as a matter of fact...well, we had no idea we were about to join in the greatest adventure any of us could have ever imagined!

(Fade to black. In blackout)

ACT I

SCENE II

SETTING: PIPPI's Treehouse

AT RISE: In darkness, PIPPI
speaks.

PIPPI

EEEEEEEE-HAAAAHHHHHHH!

(Lights up. PIPPI is in Treehouse.
Music cue)

SONG - NO ONE REALLY KNOWS/PIPPI

WHO'DYA THINK I WAS IS WHO I BE
WHAT'CHYA THINK I DID IS WHAT'CHYA THINK YA SEE
WHERE'DYA THINK I WAS IS WHERE I AM BUT
NO ONE REALLY KNOWS THE REAL ME

(Music continues to underscore monologue)

PIPPI

There's a lot of people in this world who think there's just one way of doin things. Now, I've thought about that and it doesn't seem to me that's exactly right. For one thing, I've climbed up this old treehouse a zillion different ways and I get here just the same every time. Then again, I've made the same cherry pie recipe over and over and it always turns out different. And what do I make of that? Why, I think it's the way of the world, I do.

(Makes her way down the treehouse)

We're all different, you see.

(Points to audience)

You are different from me. And I am most agreeably different from you. And that makes the world interesting and beautiful!
I love being different. But some folks think different is dreadful. Not me! I think it's the way of the world, I do.

(Picks up a scrub brush. Begins scrubbing porch)

If you want to meet different, meet my new neighbors...Tommy

(Enter TOMMY, bouncing a basketball)

PIPPI

...and Annika.

(Enter ANNIKA, doing hopscotch)

TOMMY

Annika!

ANNIKA

What?

TOMMY

Have you met the new neighbor yet?

ANNIKA

You mean the little girl with the crazy socks?

TOMMY

Shhhhhhh! She'll hear you.

(PIPPY sneaks up behind TOMMY)

ANNIKA

I don't care.

TOMMY

Mother says to be polite!

ANNIKA

I am being polite. I'm just repeating what Mother said.

TOMMY

Well, I think you should keep it down, anyway. Besides,

PIPPY

Besides what?

(TOMMY jumps)

PIPPI (Cont'd)

Besides, the old girl is crazier than her socks? Besides, she looks like the daughter of an old salty sailor? Besides, I'M AFRAID TO MEET HER FACE TO FACE?!

TOMMY

Of course not!

(Gulps)

I'm meeting you right now.

(Shakes PIPPI's hand)

TOMMY

I'm Tommy Lindgren. Pleased to meetchya.

PIPPI

EeeeeeeeeHHHHaaaaaaa! Well, I never met a more pleasant fellow. Except maybe when I met King Heebjeebee. Yep. It was in Bora Bora. What an experience that was.

TOMMY

Bora Bora?

ANNIKA

Bora who?

PIPPI

Bora Bora. It's an island somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. Nothing but natives there. My daddy went there on a ship and never returned. I received letters and more letters about his regretful death. With my mother already gone, I was horrified at first, but then I got used to the idea and well, here I am on my own. Yes. My father is a hero, and now I must live up to his memory.

(Reaches out her hand to shake)

I am Pippi Longstocking and it's a pleasure to make your acquaintance. Won't you please join me for a cup of tea.

(TOMMY and ANNIKA shake hands with her and follow her toward her house)

ANNIKA

(Whispers to TOMMY)

Where are we going?

PIPPI

To Villa Villekulla!

TOMMY & ANNIKA

(THEY stop)

Huh?

PIPPI

Villa Villekulla.

(Music cue)

Once you've been there, you'll never long for anywhere else!

SONG - VILLA VILLEKULLA/PIPPI, TOMMY, ANNIKA

PIPPI

IN A DISTANT LAND I KNOW OF
LIVED A MAN WHO SAILED THE SEA
HE WOULD ASK EACH PERSON, "CAN YOU TELL ME JUST EXACTLY WHERE
COULD VILLA VILLEKULLA BE?"

EVERYBODY LAUGHED TO HEAR IT
EVERYBODY LAUGHED BUT ME
"I CAN TELL YOU, SIR, THE WHEREABOUTS AND JUST EXACTLY WHERE THE
VILLA VILLEKULLA BE."

(Dancing toward her house as SHE sings)

TWO STEPS HERETHREE STEPS THERE
TWIRL AROUND WITH ME
CLOSE YOUR EARS OPEN EYES
LOOK AND YOU WILL SEE
VOILA!

SONG – VILLA VILLAKULLA (Cont'd)

PIPPI

NOW YOU KNOW THE STORY BETTER
THAN THE OLD MAN OUT TO SEA
WHEN THEY ASK YOU YOU CAN SAY YOU KNOW EXACTLY ON THE SPOT
WHERE VILLA VILLEKULLA BE

(KEY CHANGE...DANCE 16 CTS)

PIPPI, TOMMY & ANNIKA

NOW WE KNOW THE STORY BETTER
THAN THE OLD MAN OUT TO SEA
WHEN THEY ASK US WE CAN SAY WE KNOW EXACTLY ON THE SPOT
WHERE VILLA VILLEKULLA BE!

PIPPI

Welcome to Villa Villekulla!

(TOMMY & ANNIKA walk with wonder in
PIPPI's yard)

TOMMY

What a strange and wonderful home you have!

PIPPI

Thank you. Most folks think just the same as you.

(SHE walks backward and out the gate.
TOMMY and ANNIKA follow)

ANNIKA

Why did you walk backward?

PIPPI

Well now, can't a person walk any way she wants to? For that matter, let me tell you
that in Egypt everybody walks that way, and nobody thinks it's the least bit strange.

TOMMY

How do you know? You've never been in Egypt, have you?

PIPPY

Indeed I have. I have been all over the world and seen many things stranger than people walking backward. Would you like to have breakfast with me?

ANNIKA

Sure.

TOMMY

We must ask Mother first.

PIPPY

Why?

TOMMY

She needs to know where we are.

ANNIKA

She knows where we are.

PIPPY

She does?

TOMMY

Not exactly.

ANNIKA

Yes she does. I told her we were going to visit the girl with the crazy socks and so we are.

TOMMY

Annika!

PIPPY

Done! We are bound for breakfast at Villa Villekulla. Those opposed will be forced to walk the plank. Aye ye shwabs. Walk this way!

(Silly walking, as if with a peg leg. Playing "follow the leader". They arrive at the house. A horse is looking out the porch window)

TOMMY

Why do you have a horse on the porch?

PIPPY

Well, he'd be in the way in the kitchen and he doesn't like the living room.

ANNIKA

Do you live here all alone?

PIPPY

Of course not! The horse lives here with me!

ANNIKA

I mean, don't you have any mother or father here?

PIPPY

No, not the least little bit of one.

TOMMY

But who tells you when to go to bed at night and stuff like that?

PIPPY

I tell myself. First I tell myself in a nice friendly way, and then, if I don't mind, I tell myself again more sharply and pretty soon, well, I just make myself go to bed...like any good girl would do.

TOMMY

Well I'll be...

PIPPI

You'll be in trouble if you don't check in with your mother, I reckon. Go on home now, because I like you and I would like it if you would come over tomorrow.

TOMMY

Tomorrow we go to school.

PIPPI

School! Why would you go to school?

ANNIKA

We go to school to learn.

PIPPI

Learn what?

TOMMY

History, Spelling, Mathematics...

(PIPPI sneezes and wipes her nose with her sleeve)

Manners...

PIPPI

Be off then. But I warn you that school can be a dangerous thing.

ANNIKA

Why is that?

TOMMY

Hush now, Pippi Longstocking. It will be Annika's first day in a new school.

PIPPY

Hmmmmph. Well, just remember, Missy. Learning only happens if you listen.

TOMMY

I think we'd better go now. Thank you, Miss Longstocking, for a most unusual morning.

ANNIKA

Thank you.

(Curtseys)

PIPPY

(Curtseys)

Thank you, Lady and gentle man. I should hope to enjoy your company again. That is, if you are interested in African Safaris!

TOMMY

(Leaving. Stops dead in his tracks)

Safaris!

ANNIKA

Safaris!

PIPPY

Don't say I didn't warn you. Life is a strange and beautiful thing. Go on home now. I've no more time for play. I must get ready for my visitors.

ANNIKA

Visitors?

PIPPY

Yes. Be off! I'll see you in the funny papers!

(TOMMY and ANNIKA walk toward their house. ALL
reprise "VILLA VILLEKULLA", LAST VERSE AND TAG)
BLACKOUT



ACT I

SCENE V

SETTING: The neighborhood

AT RISE: PIPPI is in the treehouse.
MRS. LINDGREN comes out of her house, onto the porch.
PIPPI has everything set for tea. SHE is busily getting ready. MRS. LINDGREN shows an internstruggle as to whether SHE should go. When SHE looks at her watch, PIPPI sings "The Alphabet Song" to her, not even looking at her.

PIPPI

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, LMNO....P IS FOR PUNCTUALITY!

(MRS. LINDGREN walks hesitantly over to PIPPI's. Stops just outside gate. PIPPI stops what SHE is doing and speaks as if surprised to see her)

PIPPI

Why, Mrs. Lindgren, how nice of you to come! Everything is nearly ready. The tea is steeping and I've made a batch of exotic carrot muffins just for the occasion. Come on up!

MRS. LINDGREN

Up?

PIPPI

Sure. You're not afraid of heights, are ya? Well, if you are, no time like the present to get over that! You miss out on a whole different perspective going around down there at sea level.

(PIPPI goes back to business. MRS. LINDGREN makes her way, clumsily up into the treehouse)

1-5-18

PIPPY

Watch that last step, it's a

(MRS. LINDGREN slips and catches herself)
doosey...

MRS. LINDGREN

Not exactly convenient.

PIPPY

Life never is, is it? And so we have to make the most fun when the inconveniences get in the way.

(Sets a timer for 1 minute)

There we go!

MRS. LINDGREN

What are you doing?

PIPPY

In exactly one minute, the tea will be finished and that means the Safari will begin. 40 seconds!

MRS. LINDGREN

What Safari are you talking about?

PIPPY

Why the annual "first day of school" Safari! Mr. Peterson ALWAYS leads his classes on a hunt and they ALWAYS come right down our street. It's a grand affair. 30 seconds!

MRS. LINDGREN

It's hard to imagine a Safari being conducted in this neighborhood. Sounds a little like a story to me.

1-5-19

PIPPI

25 seconds. Could be, but it's not. And it's EASY to imagine when you're a child. That's exactly what this Safari is all about. Exploration of the mind! Use your imagination, Mrs. Lindgren and you will see the wildest of animals, the thickest of jungles. Why, you could be the bravest hunter of them all.
10 seconds!

MRS. LINDGREN

I don't think I'm following this. Maybe I should go on home.

PIPPI

Nonsense! Counting 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.

(Music cue)

SAFARI!

(Enter MR. PETERSON and STUDENTS wearing pith helmets and carrying magnifying glasses. Silly walking as they enter)

MR. PETERSON

Left, right, left, right, right, left, right, STOP!

(STUDENTS stop bumping into one another in line)

MR. PETERSON

Now class, we begin our instruction today in a very special way. Observe.

(Takes his magnifying glass and looks very closely at the ground)

Aha! Just as I suspected!

STUDENTS

What?

1-5-20

MR. PETERSON

There's nothing there.

STUDENTS

Aww....

MR. PETERSON

(Holds up his hand for silence)

Not to worry! There will be. All we need is a little imagination...Imagination is the core of everything. You are only as interesting as your mind will let you be. Heads up, students!

(STUDENTS mimic MR. PETERSON who looks straight up at the sky through his magnifying glass)

MR. PETERSON (Cont'd)

What do you see?

STUDENTS

Ahhhhh....

MR. PETERSON

I'll tell you what I see.

(MUSIC CUE - 8 CTS OF INTRO)

I see dirigibles and giant birds winging through the sky.
I see lions and their babies waving me goodbye.
I see parrots, I see tucans,

(STUDENTS make bird noises)

MR. PETER

I see snakes a mile long...

(STUDENTS and MR. PETERSON look straight on at audience through magnifying glass)

MR. PETERSON

If I didn't know much better I'd say next will be a song...

1-5-21

SONG - ON SAFARI/MR. PETERSON & STUDENTS

MR. PETERSON

DAY-UM DAY-O DAY-UM DAY-EE-O

STUDENTS

DAY-UM DAY-O DAY-UM DAY-EE-O

(RHYTHM 16 CTS)

ALL

DAY-UM DAY-O DAY-UM DAY-EE-O

DAY-UM DAY-O DAY-UM DAY-EE-O

LOOK IN YOUR MIND

SEE WHAT YOU FIND

DAY-UM DAY-EE-O DAY-UM DAY-O-UM DAY

(RHYTHM 8 CTS)

MR. PETERSON

DAY-UM DAY-O DAY-UM DAY-EE-O

STUDENTS

DAY-UM DAY-O DAY-UM DAY-EE-O

ALL

TREASURES TO SEE

FOR YOU AND FOR ME

DAY-UM-DAY-EE-O DAY-UM-DAY-O-UM-DAY

(KEY CHANGE WITH RHYTHM - 8 CTS)

DAY-UM DAY-O DAY-UM DAY-EE-O

DAY-UM DAY-O DAY-UM DAY-EE-O

PLAY WITH YOUR MIND

SEE WHAT YOU FIND

DAY-UM DAY-EE-O DAY-UM DAY-O-UM-DAY

DAY-UM DAY-EE-O DAY-UM DAY-O-UM-DAY

(Blackout)