The Maiden Without Hands

A Play

By Christopher Vened

Based On

A Grimms' Fairy Tale Of The Same Title

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# CAST OF CHARACTERS

The Narrator:	He/She speaks directly to the audience while narrating the story and invoking the action with
	gestures and movement at the same time.
The Maiden:	An innocent girl whose father sold her to the Devil
Miller:	The Maiden's Father
Miller's Wife:	The Maiden's Mother
The Devil:	He harasses the Maiden
An Angel:	She protects the Maiden
The Gardener:	He finds the Maiden in the Royal Garden
The King:	He marries the Maiden
Two Courtiers:	In the Royal Castle
The King's Mother:	A compassionate Old Queen
The Messenger:	He delivers wrong letters to the King
The Chamberlain:	He assists the King at the War Camp
An Old Man:	The Maiden meets him in the forest
The Son:	The Maiden's Son whom she calls, "Sorrowful"
Three Water Spirits:	In the Royal Garden

# Scenes

The Miller's House The Forest The Royal Garden The King's Palace A Brook A Cottage in The Forest

# Mythological

Time

## THE NARRATOR

Ladies and Gentlemen, this story is titled, "The Maiden Without Hands" and it is about the fears and hopes a girl experiences during puberty. At times this story is like a nightmare, at others, like a beautiful dream. Nothing is realistic about it but everything is true. Please, enjoy the story.

# SCENE 1

SET UP:

The Forest

The MILLER gathers wood in the forest. He cuts dry branches from a tree.

An old man, THE DEVIL, approaches.

# THE DEVIL

Why do you torment yourself with chopping wood, Miller?

## MILLER

I fell into poverty and now I have to gather wood in the forest.

# THE DEVIL

I will make you rich if you will promise me that whatever is standing behind your mill will be mine.

# MILLER

Behind my mill?

## THE DEVIL

Yes.

# MILLER

What can that be but my apple tree?

# THE DEVIL

Whatever is there now I will take it in three years from today.

#### MILLER

That's a deal, old man!

# THE DEVIL

Sign your promise in writing, Miller, to make our contract binding.

The Devil mimes pulling out a feather pen, a bottle of ink, and then unrolls parchment paper.

## MILLER

I will.

(writing on the parchment) If you make me rich, I will give you everything that stands behind my mill.

THE DEVIL (prompting him)

Right now.

#### MILLER

(writing)

... right now. Miller.

He signs the contract with gusto. The Devil rolls the contract and puts it into his pocket.

#### THE DEVIL

In three years I'll come and fetch what's mine!

The Devil goes away.

#### MILLER

If you deliver.

THE DEVIL I will deliver. Go home, Miller. And you will find that you are rich.

The Devil disappears.

#### MILLER

We will see.

(to the audience)

That was strange, wasn't it? Like a dream. Well, in case it was just a dream I'll take this bundle of wood and carry it home.

He picks up the bundle and flings it on his shoulders.

# SCENE 2

SET UP:

The Miller's House

THE MAIDEN, the Miller's daughter, is sweeping out the yard behind the mill. Then she stops, picks an apple from a tree, and eats it.

The Miller returns home; his WIFE comes out to meet him.

MILLER'S WIFE Tell me, husband, how did all this wealth suddenly get into our house?

# MILLER

Did it?

# MILLER'S WIFE

Yes. All at once I've discovered our chests and boxes are full. Nobody's brought anything, and I don't know how it's all happened.

#### MILLER

It's from a stranger I met in the forest.

#### MILLER'S WIFE

A stranger? What do you mean?

# MILLER

He promised me great wealth if I agreed in writing to give him what's behind our mill. We can certainly spare the large apple tree.

He points to the tree.

# MILLER'S WIFE

Oh, husband! That was the devil! He didn't mean the apple tree but our daughter, who was behind the mill sweeping out the yard.

#### MILLER

Oh, my God, I sold my own daughter unwittingly.

#### MILLER'S WIFE

Now what are we going to do, husband?