

Brave Irene

William Steig

Narrator: Mrs. Bobbin, the dressmaker, was tired and had a bad headache, but she still managed to sew the last stitches in the gown she was making.

Irene: It's the most beautiful dress in the whole world

N: said her daughter, Irene.

Irene: The duchess will love it.

Mother: It is nice,

N: admitted her mother.

Mother: But, dumpling, it's for tonight's ball, and I don't have the strength to bring it. I feel terribly sick.

Irene: Poor Mama, I can get it there!

Mother: No cupcake, I cannot let you. Such a huge package, and it's such a long way to the palace. Besides, it's starting to snow.

Irene: But I love snow.

N: Irene insisted.

Narrator 2: She coaxed her mother into bed, covered her with two quilts, and added a blanket for her feet.

N: Then she fixed her some tea with lemon and honey and put more wood in the stove.

N2: With great care, Irene took the splendid gown down from the dummy and packed it into a big box with plenty of tissue paper.

Mother: Dress warmly pudding.

N: called her mother in a weak voice.

Mother: and don't forget to button up. Don't you know its cold out there, and windy!

N2: And so, Irene put on her fleece-lined boots, her red hat and muffler, her heavy coat, and her mittens. She kissed her mother's hot forehead six times,

N: then once again, made sure she was tucked in snugly, and slipped out with the bib box, shutting the door firmly behind her.

N2: It really was cold outside,

N and N2: very cold

N2: The wind whirled the falling snowflakes about, this way and that, and into Irene's squinting face. She set out on the uphill path to Farmer Bennett's sheep pasture.

N: By the time she got there, the snow was up to her ankles and the wind was worse. It hurried her along and made her stumble. Irene resented this: the box was problem enough.

Irene: Easy does it!

N2: she cautioned the wind, leaning back hard against it.

N: By the middle of the pasture, the flakes were falling thicker. Now the wind drove Irene along so rudely she had to hop, skip, and go helter-skeltering over the knobby ground.

N2: Cold snow sifted into her boots and chilled her feet. She pushed out her lip and hurried on.

All: This was an important errand.