

*A never-before-published children's book from*

**MARK TWAIN**

*brought to life by*

**PHILIP STEAD**

AND

**ERIN STEAD**

*creators of the Caldecott Medal-winning  
A Sick Day for Amos McGee*



Bring this book to life with a round of Readers' Theater

**THE PURLOINING OF  
PRINCE OLEOMARGARINE**

**RETAIL AND LIBRARY**

**Readers' Theater**

**EVENT AND MERCHANDISING KIT**

**CONTENTS INCLUDE:**

- Tabletop easel with bookmark pocket
- Mini character props
- Double-sided shelftalker
- Bookmarks for consumer giveaway
- Readers' Theater decoration and event guide
- Customizable event poster

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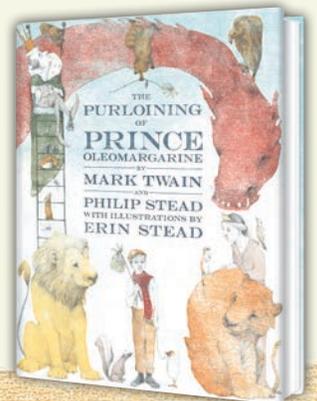


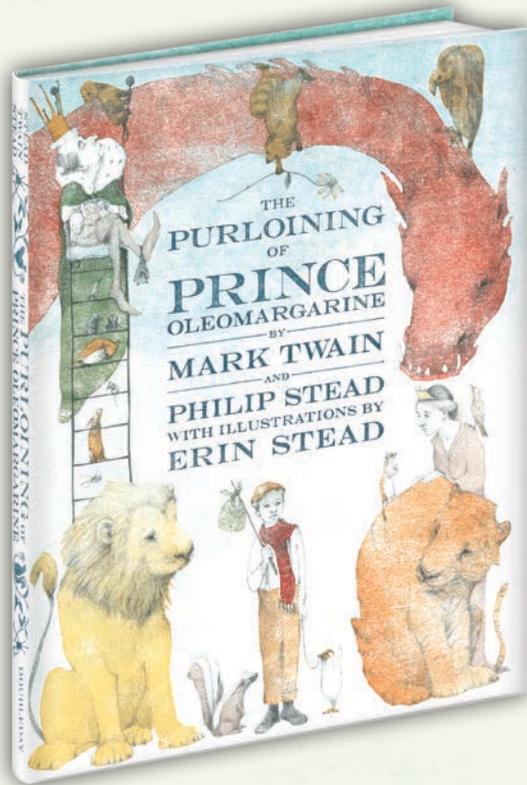
THE  
PURLOINING  
OF  
PRINCE  
OLEOMARGARINE

Readers' Theater  
EVENT GUIDE

In this guide, you'll find everything you need to host a *The Purloining of Prince Oleomargarine* Readers' Theater event, including:

- The History Behind  
*The Purloining of Prince Oleomargarine*
- Decoration and Refreshment Suggestions
- A Readers' Theater Script





**I**n a hotel in Paris one evening in 1879, Mark Twain sat with his young daughters, who begged their father for a story. After the girls chose a picture from a magazine to get started, Twain began telling them the tale of Johnny, a poor boy in possession of some magical seeds. Later, Twain would jot down some rough notes about the story, but the tale was left unfinished . . . until now.

Plucked from the Mark Twain archive at the University of California at Berkeley, Twain's notes now form the foundation of a fairy tale picked up over a century later. With only Twain's fragmentary script and a story that stops partway as his guide, author Philip Stead has written a tale that imagines what might have been if Twain had fully realized this work:

Johnny, forlorn and alone except for his pet chicken, meets a kind woman who gives him seeds that change his fortune, allowing him to speak with animals and sending him on a quest to rescue a stolen prince. In the face of a bullying tyrant king, Johnny and his animal friends come to understand that generosity, empathy, and quiet courage are gifts more precious in this world than power and gold.

Illuminated by Erin Stead's graceful, humorous, and achingly poignant artwork, this story brings us a new book from America's most legendary writer, envisioned by two of today's most important names in children's literature.

# Bring *The Purloining of Prince Oleomargarine* to life with a round of **READERS' THEATER!**

## THE WEEKS BEFORE YOUR EVENT

Publicize your event! Hang up the poster included in this kit and make sure customers know about all the fun to come!

## THE DAYS BEFORE YOUR EVENT

Set the stage! Follow the instructions on the next page to set the scene for your Readers' Theater event by preparing decorations and refreshments to brighten up your space and put your guests in a *Purloining of Prince Oleomargarine* mood.

## AT YOUR EVENT

- Pass out the scripts! Make enough copies of the script in the following pages for each guest at your event. (Note: The script is based on chapters nine and ten of the book.)
- Assign roles: Write the names of all the characters in this scene on slips of paper and put them in a basket or a hat. There are fourteen roles in this script—but since the roles of the king and Johnny are the largest ones, two people could share these roles, expanding your cast to sixteen. For smaller groups, there may be more parts than people in the group. Let your talented guests perform more than one role until all the parts are filled!

The roles are (in order of appearance):

- The King
- The Eagle
- The Snake
- The Bat
- Johnny
- The Owl
- The Antelope
- The Queen
- The Buzzard\*
- The Gull
- The Reindeer
- The Tiger
- The Alligator
- The Mouse

\*Note: The Buzzard isn't a speaking part; consider letting the guest who draws the Buzzard pick a second role to give him or her a chance to speak.

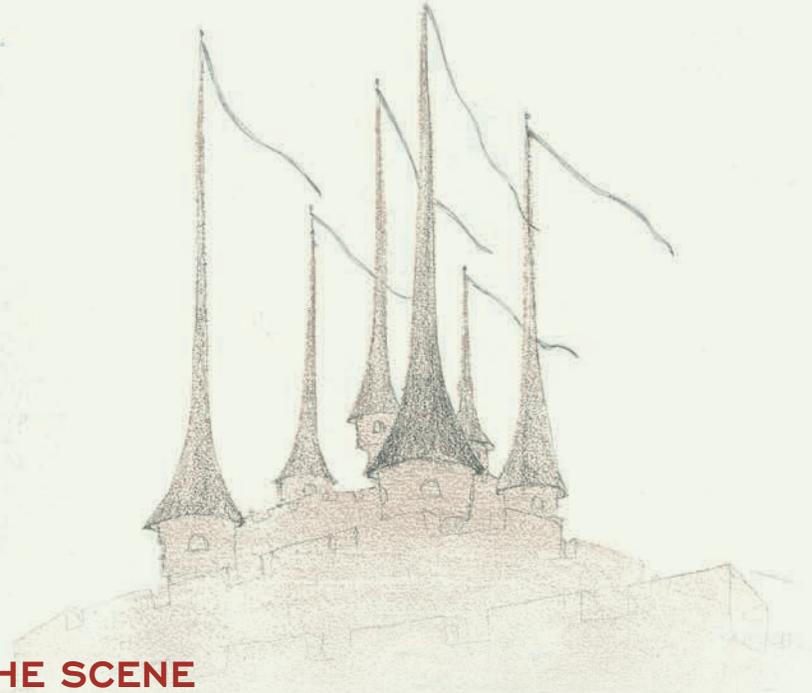
- Pass around some highlighters, and encourage each cast member in your group to highlight his or her lines. This will make it easier for everyone to know when his or her part is coming up.
- Do a few warm-up exercises to get everyone's voices ready and to get any stage fright out. Do some deep breathing: instruct your guests to breathe in through the nose, then blow out through the mouth (repeat four times). Try a tongue twister, too: "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers." (Repeat ten times; it gets pretty funny at five.)
- Before you start, have everyone in the group practice their final bow (from the script) in unison.
- Be sure to lead the story, reading the introduction from the script aloud and using a loud stage whisper to narrate any stage directions.
- Now: quiet on the set! Let the performance begin!

Note: If your group is full of younger picture-book readers, consider assigning each child a sound or action to accompany his or her part, rather than asking the child to read the lines. Then read the entire script aloud and point to each child when his or her animal's part comes up in the script for an interactive readers' theater activity with even the youngest group! You could even group your guests to make a loud racket for each animal's sound!





## DECORATION AND REFRESHMENT SUGGESTIONS



### SET THE SCENE

Publicize your event! Hang up the poster included in this kit and make sure customers know about all the fun to come!

- **Castle Door**

Use a sponge to paint rectangular pieces of cardboard gray. Arrange in an arch on either side of the main doorway in and out of your event space, and continue as far down the walls on either side as you'd like.

- **Royal Flags**

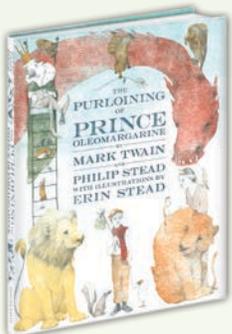
Cut colored triangles from construction paper and adhere the bottom of each to a string or ribbon. String your garlands across the ceiling to brighten up the “main hall” of your castle event space.

- **Wall Torches**

Fill a plastic cup and with yellow and orange tissue paper, pulling it out at the top to look like a flame. Attach a band around the cup in another color, and tape or tack the entire piece to the wall of your space to give it a royal glow. Assemble the mini character props included in this kit, and use the props throughout your event or as additional decoration around your space!

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*The Purloining of Prince Oleomargarine* • Written by Mark Twain and Philip Stead • Illustrated by Erin Stead



## FUEL YOUR QUEST

- **Trek Mix**

Help fuel your guests for their journey through the kingdom. Set out bowls of raisins, candies, pretzels, and other trail mix foods, and give each guest a small treat bag to fill with their own custom trail mix in any combination they choose! Don't forget to include blue chocolate candies or jelly beans so each guest can include magic beans in their treat bags!

- **Tea**

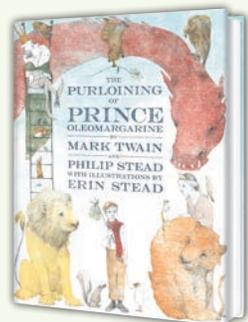
Serve up a bowl of punch or tea, just like Twain drinks in the *The Purloining of Prince Oleomargarine*. To make your event even fancier, serve beverages to your guests in teacups.

- **Animal Crackers**

*The Purloining of Prince Oleomargarine* has all sorts of different animals! Serve your guests animal crackers and see if they can remember how many of the animals in their serving were featured as characters in the book.

- **Kingdom Towers**

- Melt  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter in large saucepan over low heat. Add four cups miniature marshmallows, and stir until melted and blended. Cook two minutes longer, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Add five cups rice cereal, and stir until well coated. Press mixture evenly and firmly in buttered 13"x9" pan using wax paper. When cool, cut into 2"x 2" squares when cool.
- Slice the tops off three strawberries and skewer together with the tips pointing up. Push each skewer into a stack of two marshmallow squares to form a tower.
- Add a royal flag to the top of each skewer to match your garland.





## THE SCRIPT

Once upon a time, there was a boy named Johnny.  
One day, a mysterious old woman gave Johnny some magic seeds.  
He planted them and they grew into a flower, which Johnny ate!  
Suddenly, he realized he was able to talk to animals.  
Let's imagine that we can all talk to animals, too.

Johnny's new animal friends tell him about a prince who has been stolen. Johnny goes to visit the mean, angry king to explain that he and the animals plan to find his son and bring him home to the castle. The king has a hard time believing that Johnny can really understand the animals. And that is where our story begins. . . .

### KING

These? These are your witnesses?

*(The lion gives a mighty roar, rattling the bones of the entire assembly.)*

### JOHNNY

He tells me they are ready to testify.

### KING

Who? Who tells you?

### JOHNNY

The lion, Your Highness.

*(There follows a moment of befuddlement inside the hollow sitting room of the little king's noggin.)*

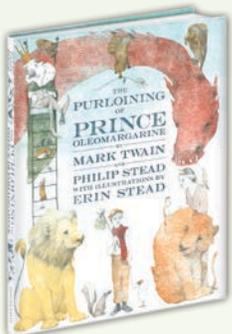
### KING

I cannot believe it. Give me proof. Speak to that bird over there, the unattractive one with the disagreeable look on its face.  
Tell it to place a feather in my royal guard's cap.

*(The buzzard takes flight, landing on the guard's shoulder and plucking a long yellow hair from inside his ear.)*



Illustration © 2017 by Erin E. Stead



**KING**

Marvelous! If he weren't but a poor, dumb bird,  
he just might've got it! Now order your lion to chase its tail.

*(Lion growls.)*

**JOHNNY**

He refuses your request. It is beneath his station.

**KING**

Let the evidence proceed!

**TIGER**

I lay in my lair and saw two strong men pass by with the prince.

**KING**

As I suspected—giants!

*(The queen sighs and shakes her head.)*

**TIGER**

I could not manage the precipice, so I notified  
the eagle overhead. He followed them.

**EAGLE**

I followed them till dark, then notified the owl.

**OWL**

I followed them till I came to the sea, then notified the gull.

**GULL**

I followed them across the waters, then tired as they entered the reedy marsh.  
I asked for the alligator.

**ALLIGATOR**

I followed them to the edge of the hot desert, then notified the sand snake.

**SNAKE**

I followed them to the grassy plain, then notified the antelope.

**ANTELOPE**

I followed them to the snowy highlands, then notified the reindeer.



## REINDEER

I followed them up the summit, then notified the mouse.

## MOUSE

I slipped past two mighty dragons that guarded the mouth of a dark cave,  
then called for the bat.

## BAT

I followed them in. I know the place. The prince is there still.

## KING

Go now! Find my son and bring him back! You shall have your reward!

## QUEEN

Wait. Before you go, child, come here.

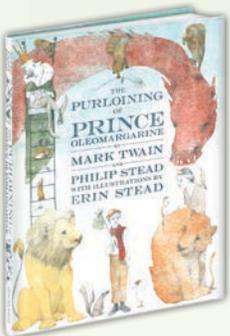
*(Johnny steps forward, and the queen places a red scarf  
around his neck and kisses him softly.)*

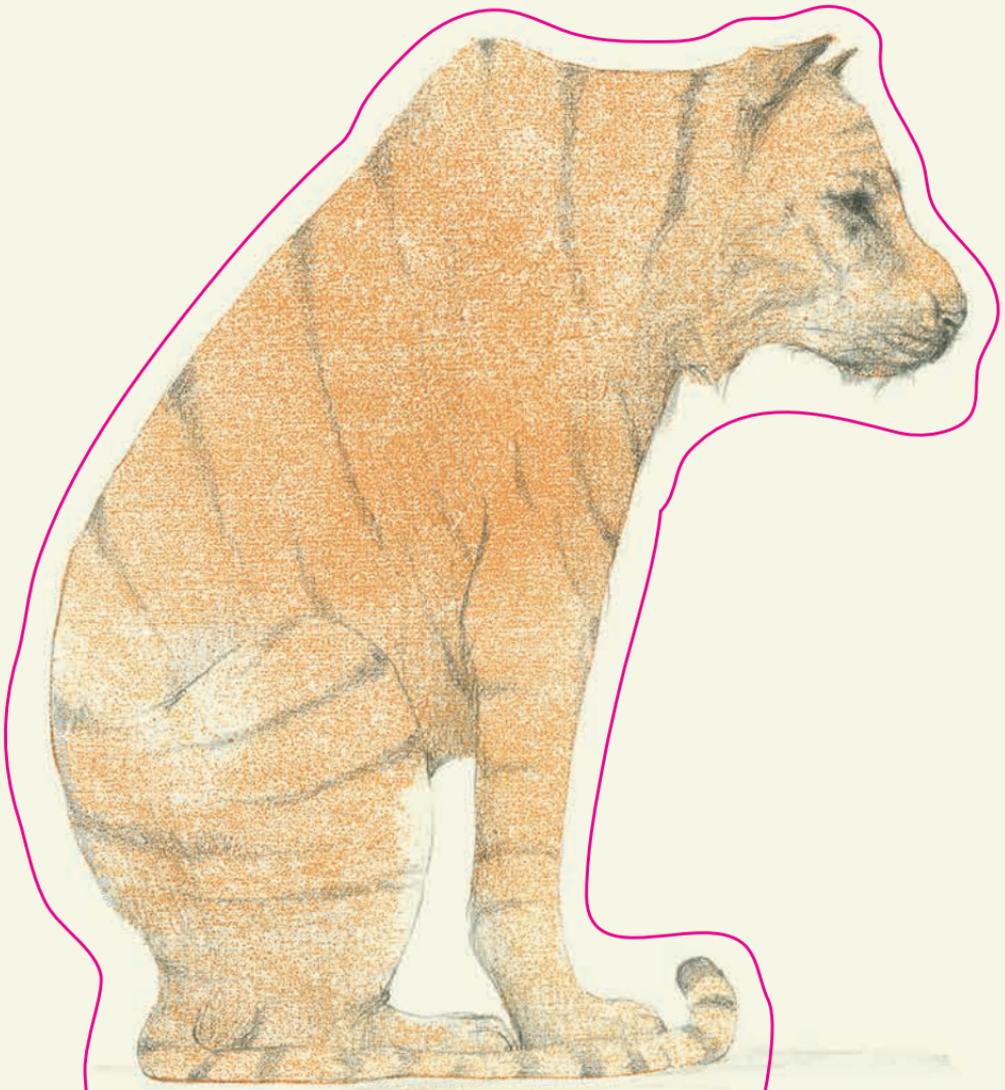
## QUEEN

Good luck.

*(Queen departs.)*

*(Johnny and the animals bow and depart.)*





**TIGER**



Illustration © 2017 by Erin E. Stead

**JOHNNY**



**KING**

Illustration © 2017 by Erin E. Stead

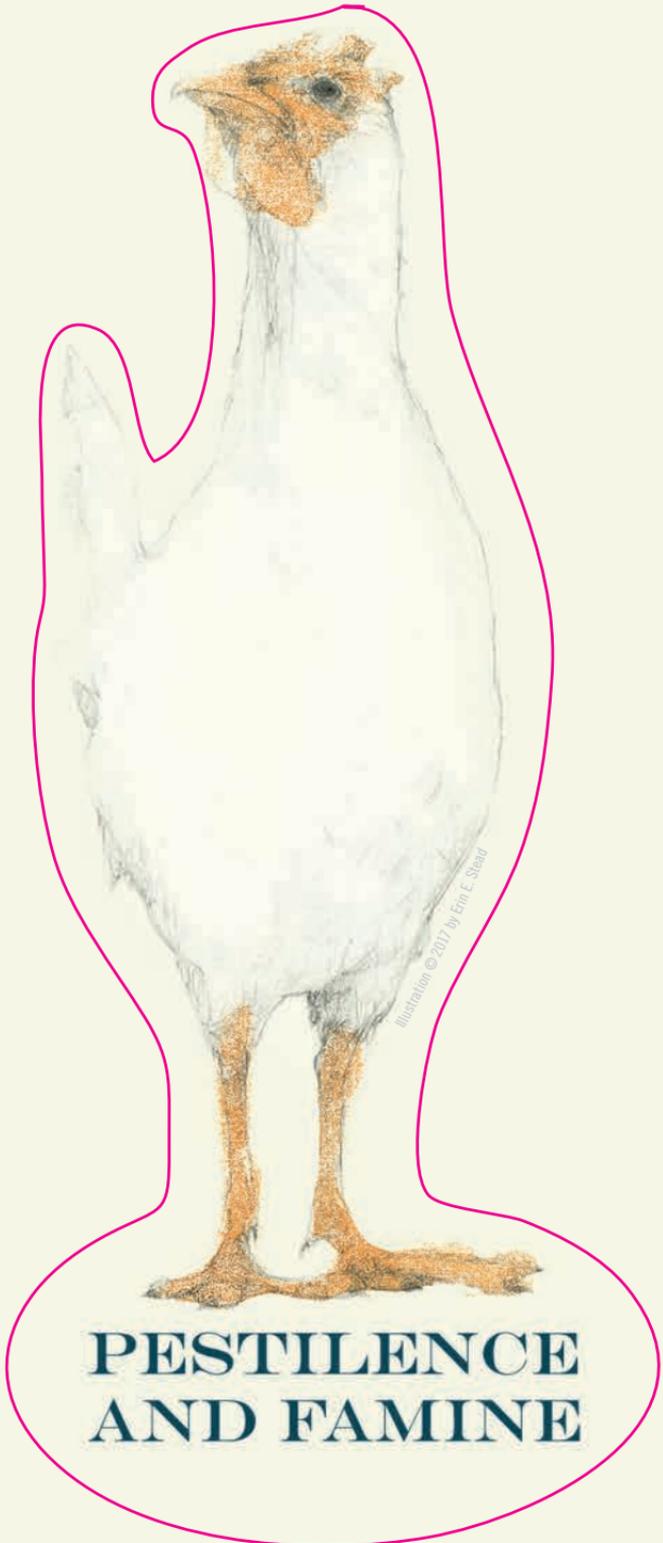
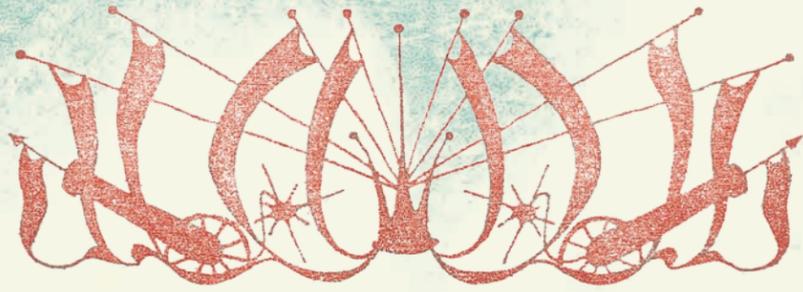


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**PESTILENCE  
AND FAMINE**



JOIN US

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THE  
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Readers' Theater

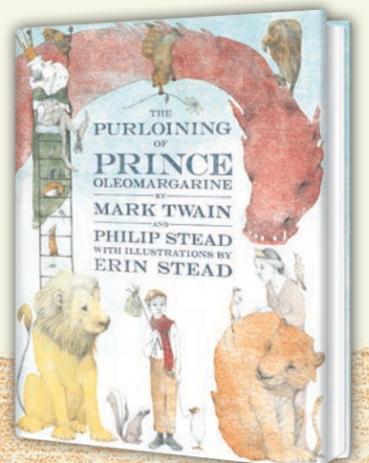
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AT:

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**"TANTALIZING."**

—THE NEW YORK TIMES

*"The duo are **ONE OF THE MOST NOTABLE NAMES IN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE.**"*

—ABC NEWS on Philip and Erin Stead

*"The new tale contains **TWAIN'S TRADEMARK WIT and adventure.**"*

—ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

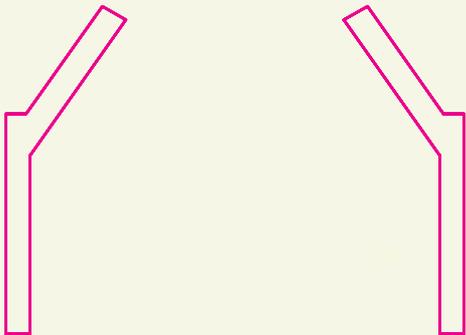
★ BOOKLIST

★ KIRKUS REVIEWS

★ PUBLISHERS WEEKLY



**A  
MUST-HAVE  
FOR EVERY  
HOME  
LIBRARY**



*The story of a boy, his chicken, some magic seeds, and the search for a stolen prince.*



# WOLVES

THE  
PURLOINING  
OF  
PRINCE  
OLEOMARGARINE  
— BY —  
MARK TWAIN  
— AND —  
PHILIP STEAD  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
ERIN STEAD



Illustration © 2017 by Erin E. Stead



Discover the story  
**OF A BOY,**  
**HIS CHICKEN,**  
**SOME MAGIC**  
**SEEDS,**  
and the search for a  
**STOLEN**  
**PRINCE.**





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Merchandise with other picture book titles written by Philip Stead and illustrated by Erin Stead.

Merchandise with other books by Mark Twain.



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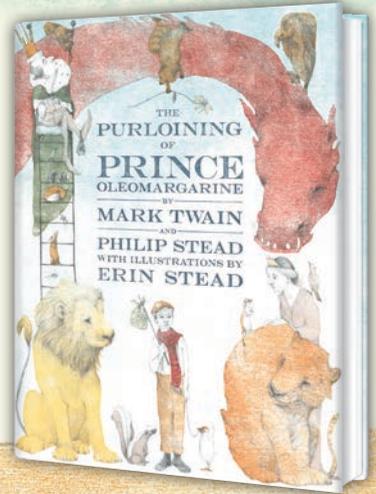


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