

**THUMBELINA**  
A Hans Christian Andersen Tale  
Play adapted by Carole L. Cooney

**Setting:** The woods, a lake, a forest, a warm country

**Characters:**

<b>Narrator</b>	<b>Mr. Mouse</b>
<b>Thumbelina</b>	<b>Sparrow</b>
<b>Mrs. Toad</b>	<b>King</b>

**Narrator:** Once upon a time a pretty girl strolled quietly beside the crystal blue waters of a little brook in a friendly wood. Her name was Thumbelina. Do you know why she was called Thumbelina? It's because she was no bigger than your thumb. Imagine that!

**Thumbelina:** (yawning) Oh, my! My eyes are ready to close. I am *so sleepy*. Where shall I make my bed? This fine brown walnut-shell is perfect! Now I'll just lay this lovely violet-petal in the bottom for my mattress and then snuggle under this comfy rose-leaf blanket.

**Narrator:** In a blink, Thumbelina was asleep. Her little walnut-shell rocked gently through the night and when she awoke in the morning, she leapt into a tulip-petal boat and rowed into the lake. After a day rowing leisurely back and forth, she returned to her walnut-bed and fell asleep at the water's edge. Very quietly someone hopped right up to the boat.

**Mrs. Toad:** Ribbit! Ribbit! Who have we here? She is quite beautiful, indeed! She would make a lovely wife for my friend. Ribbit! Come, my pretty. I'm taking you home. Ribbit! Ribbit!

**Narrator:** Mrs. Toad guided Thumbelina's little bed onto a water-lily leaf in the middle of the lake, tied it securely and left. The next morning, when Thumbelina awoke, she saw Mrs. Toad smiling broadly as she sat on a nearby red rock.

**Thumbelina:** (crying) Oh, my! Oh, my! Where am I? There's Mrs. Toad staring at me! How can I escape?

**Narrator:** Suddenly, blue fishes rushed to help Thumbelina. Swiftly they chewed through the water lily's stem, freeing Thumbelina to float on the lily-leaf across the lake into a distant forest.

**Thumbelina:** I shall love living in this forest. There are plenty of grasses for my bed and delicious flowers for my food!

**Narrator:** Yes, Thumbelina was very happy all Summer and Autumn! Then a freezing cold Winter came. Every flower and blade of grass faded and shriveled so that she had to search for a new shelter. Walking in the falling snow, Thumbelina stumbled upon a field mouse's house.

**Thumbelina:** Please help me, Mr. Mouse. I am freezing and have no where to go.

**Mr. Mouse:** (Squeak, squeak!) Of course, my dearie. Come into my warm home. You may stay here all Winter long if you keep my rooms neat and tidy. And let me introduce you to my friend, Mr. Mole. His house is warmer than mine and with his riches, he would make a worthy husband for you. (Squeak!)

**Narrator:** Thumbelina was horrified because she didn't want to marry Mr. Mole. He lived deep in the ground and if she married him, she would never see the sun or flowers or the beautiful lake again. One day, a poor sparrow fell to the ground very sick from the bitter cold. Thumbelina quickly nursed the sparrow back to health. A few days passed when suddenly, Mr. Mole asked Thumbelina to marry him.

**Thumbelina:** Oh, no! What am I to do, sweet sparrow? I can't marry Mr. Mole.

**Sparrow:** Come with me, Thumbelina! You can sit on my back and we will fly to a warm country where it is always summer and the flowers are always blooming.

**Thumbelina:** Oh! That would be wonderful! Do you really think I should go? Oh my! I know I can't live without the sun and the beauties of nature. Oh, this is so hard to decide but... Yes! I will go with you, dear sparrow!

**Narrator:** And so Thumbelina climbed onto the sparrow's back, tied her sash tightly to his feathers and was lifted up, higher and higher into the air. At last they reached a warm country where lush green trees grew beside a blue lake.

**Sparrow:** Thumbelina, climb down and stand on the middle of that beautiful red rose petal. Close your eyes and count to three.

**Thumbelina:** One, two three! Shall I open my eyes?

**Sparrow:** Yes!

**Narrator:** There, standing before her, was the handsome King of the Flower Spirits.

**King:** In all my days, fair maiden, I have never seen one so beautiful. Please tell me your name?

**Thumbelina:** My name is Thumbelina.

**King:** May I be so bold as to ask you to marry me for you have won my heart.

**Thumbelina:** In my heart, I know that you are the one who is to be my husband. This I know for certain. Yes, noble King, I shall be most happy to marry you.

**Narrator:** And so, the King lifted his golden crown from his head and placed it on Thumbelina's. From that day on, Thumbelina and the King were very happy. And the friendly sparrow, who made his nest in the tallest tree that overlooked the palace, sang sweetly of their happiness every day.