

CHIMPO GALABAD IN

TINY SWORD

by Greg Hildebrand

Galabad: One of the King's Chimpo Squires

Hurlin: The King's sorcerer

Wally: Galabad's pal

ACT ONE

[Curtain opens on an elderly sorcerer named Hurlin and a medieval sentry standing guard with their backs to a dungeon entrance. Torches are burning on the wall behind them.]

Galabad: I've heard it said by some that his armor is of a reasonable price because it is made of cloth, paper and glue?

Hurlin: Well, actual child-sized suits of armor are only made for royals, who, sadly, rarely die in battle. So, no child-sized suits are just lying around. It seems to me your options are limited.

G: But is it true about the paper armor?

H: You need to be looking at this as the chalice half full, you'd be advantageously quick, in a featherlight suit of armor. I'm sure you'd agree that must be an advantage.

G: Of course, I feel like jumping on my steed and joining in on all the nightly knightly rescuing of damsels in distress and the slaying of the odd dragon, but, let's face it, if a dragon so much as burps on me, my non-flame-

retardant armor would cook me quick. Maybe we should just light me on fire right now to see how much ale we'd need to sacrifice to get me to burn quickly and evenly.

H: Are you kidding? Do you even know how many knights have been cooked mid-slay right in their metal suits of armor? You need only carry a bottle of water, and then when you get to the dragon's lair, you simply douse yourself, making you fire-proof. Then you slay the dragon and you're the hero!

G: So, we're assuming my sword wouldn't be made of paper, glue and cloth?

H: I've got swords, swords of all shapes and sizes.

G: Do you?

H: Generously left behind by previous dragon slayers. You can have your pick. Though I'd suggest a tiny sword, firstly, because it's light, and it's quite a hike up to the dragon's lair, and secondly, a light sword would be quicker.

G: Like the paper armor.

H: Take advantage of every advantage offered, would be nothing if not an advantageous idea.

G: Sounds like you're starting to talk in riddles again. Except this time I think I understand you. You say he'll take payments for the suit, so if the King's Men won't let me ride with paper armor, I can return the suit and get my deposit back.

H: Deposit returned, no, it's a custom suit of paper armor, the operative word here being "custom". He couldn't resell the thing because it was made for you, but I'm telling you . . . you're in. Young boys, Chimpos, girls with mustaches drawn on their faces and their hair cut short, they needn't have gone to all the trouble because all they really needed was the suit of armor.

G: Yeah, speaking of that, would you know of a rental or rent-to-own suit of armor shop?

H: Where's the pride of ownership; you could die in someone else's suit, and to add insult to injury, you'd still owe the remainder of the payments!

G: Or, what? They'd put my dead body on the rack, or they wouldn't feed me for a month or two?

H: Unspeakable acts, and that's all I'm going to say, because it's worse than words can convey. I think that's why they call them "unspeakable".

G: As far as I'm concerned, death, especially my death, is the "be all and end all" because it's where my story ends or at the very least, my telling of it.

H: That's the attitude, squire. If you believe you can slay the fair maiden, you're half way through her heart.

G: Uh, huh. . . but, about the dragon, to let's say, even up the odds, how about you fix me up with a potion or two; how about something that will make me a hundred feet tall, invisible, and, make me able to fly.

H: Humm. . . I could give you a growth potion. I have an extra I made for a friend, who'd lost his manhood. But the sadness killed him before I could get it to him.

G: And, it will make me grow?

H: It makes you "grow back" in case you lose something.

G: Lose something?

H: In case a part of you is cut off, burnt off, falls off due to a communicable disease, there are any number of reasons to use growth spells. And, it's the only potion I have ready, at this time, unless you have some eye of newt, and/or bottled yak's breath, we're going to have to go with what we have. I'm very busy, you know, with my origami classes and my dog walking services, and that's just Tuesdays.

G: I can appreciate that. I'm guarding the dungeon seven days a week, and it gives me very little free time. Happy for the steady work though, job security.

[Galabad reaches back and pats the dungeon door.]

H: You mean there's no one in there?

G: No, it's empty. I'm just guarding to make sure no one breaks in.

H: Why would anybody do that?

G: Well, they wouldn't, because I'm standing right here. But I could just as easily sleep on the job as stand here, because if anyone tried to, say, steal the dungeon door, I'd surely hear them.

H: Why would anybody do that?

G: Well, as dungeon doors go, this one is very nice.

H: But why would anybody need a dungeon door? Wouldn't anybody with a dungeon already have a dungeon door?

G: Well, that seems like that might be a good question, because we don't have much of a need for a door, ourselves, but not having one seems silly, if you think about it, on the other hand, it seems more prudent to have a dungeon door and not need it than to need a dungeon door and not have it.

H: I suppose, the only reason I have one at home, is to safely store my collection of antique torture equipment, maybe you can come over and try them sometime. Until you've had your back straightened on the rack, you've never really had a proper straightening.

G: Well, that all sounds pretty nice, but my back's fine. I've always wondered what it would be like to hang upside down with my ankles chained to the wall, though.

H: Why, do Chimpos sleep upside down?

G: No. I don't want to stay chained up all night or anything. I was just wondering how it would be to live your life upside down. There'd be things you'd have to relearn.

H: Well, maybe on your next day off?

G: I'll let you know.

H: Do that, maybe I could help you with the costs of your paper armor. If you could be a guinea pig with some potions I'm working on.

G: What's a guinea pig?

H: A helper.

G: Is this "guinea pigging" something I could do in my off hours?

H: Come up to the tower after your shift ends.

[Hurlin exits stage right as Galabad stands at attention guarding an empty dungeon, as the flames of the torches on the dungeon wall fade to darkness, curtain closes.]

ACT TWO

[Curtain opens on a sorcerer's den. Galabad enters from stage left to find Hurlin stirring a large, black caldron, at the same time putting a pinch of something into the caldron that makes a cloud of smoke, causing Hurlin to step back.]

Hurlin: Galabad, so good of you to come up.

[As Galabad steps past the thick wooden door into the sorcerer's den, a tiny, squeaky voice shouts to him. . .]

Wally: Hey, G-bad.

[Galabad stops and looks around until he sees, just a few feet away, at eye level, a tiny pal who had just stepped out of a shoebox which was sitting on the shelf. The shoebox was painted to resemble a tiny house. Galabad's tiny pal was waving. Wally Whippet, called Wally Whippet on account of his name being Wally and his long skinny build being similar to a whippet.]

Galabad: Wally, is that you?

W: Yea it's me, I'm the sorcerer's apprentice now. Pretty cool, huh?

[Wally's tiny smile beamed.]

G: But. . . you're all tiny.

W: Hurlin's gonna make me big again. He's working on it, but he's very busy.

G: So, I've heard. . . well, nice to see you again, even if I need a magnifying glass to do so.

W: I'll be good as new in no time, we're just waiting on some wormwood and a platypus spleen.

G: A platypus?

W: I don't pretend to understand Baddy, but I'll tell you this, being small, it's the best thing that's ever happened to me. I'm the hit of every party. Last week I spent the whole day in the King's pocket. He really got a kick out

of asking his subjects to look into his pocket, and when they did, I'd jump up and say "Boo!" His majesty loved it, big belly laughs every time, until one of the Ladies in Waiting fainted. The King still laughed, but it put an end to the "Booing" for the day. I'm excited to say I overheard a conversation that same day where the King said he wished the scare had killed her, so I don't think a knighthood for yours truly would be out of the question, considering service to the crown for the whole day and all that that entails!

G: What do you mean?

W: The King is very much a man's man. . .

G: I'm still not sure?

W: The King is living a life of Reilly. He's a non-stop party person.

G: Huh?

W: He hasn't the time in his busy schedule, what with the jousting, merry-making, ribaldry. . . he seems to have no time to bathe.

G: So . . . what are you saying?

W: He stinks. And that's being polite about it. I'm not sure what else might have spent the day in that royal pocket, but I'm gonna guess, three-day old Sardines, the rotting flesh of something that's so rotten that it's anyone's guess what it once was, but now it's making popping and gurgling noises, as the gasses trapped inside make their escape, and if that weren't gross enough. . .

G: No, no, that's gross enough! I get it! Not a pleasant odor to HRH. No one to tell him it's bath time, I guess. Still, to spend the day with, and joke around with HRH—cherished memories, I'm sure. Luckily, he didn't carry you around in his back pocket, because, you know, if he were to have sat on you, he would have laughed, and laughed, and laughed about it. Probably would have sent him into a laughing fit.

W: Yes, that sounds like him. Well, hopefully he's tired of that gag, and hopefully I'll be back to full size soon, huh, Hurlin?

[Hurlin ignored Wally's question.]

H: Galabad, give this a taste.

[Hurlin then lifted the giant spoon and held it up towards Galabad.]

G: Is this the "growing potion" I've heard so many nice things about?

[As he took the few remaining steps toward Hurlin, Galabad was licking his lips and rubbing his paws together. Galabad snatched the giant spoon from Hurlin's hand and before Hurlin had a chance to warn him to take just a small sip, he had gulped down an entire mouthful. Hurlin gasped, and reached out to grab the spoon, and just a second before his hand reached the spoon, Galabad disappeared, and the spoon seemed to be floating, before Hurlin snatched it out of the air. The Chimpo named Galabad, who moments before, was full sized for a Chimpo, was now one inch tall.

Hurlin had to get down on his hands and knees to pick him up, and as he did, Hurlin was repeating. . .]

H: That's not right, that's not right.

[Hurlin picked Galabad up. Galabad was in shock, so he'd gone stiff and silent like an angry toy soldier.]

H: You're tiny, not a zombie. . . snap out of it!

G: I'm TINY.

[Galabad was nearly weeping.]

W: You're the tiniest Chimpo that ever was. That's something special, isn't it?

[Galabad was still in shock, and even though he eventually snapped out of it, and got his voice back, he had been locked into a tiny golden cricket cage on the other side of the den, where he lived his life out as the tiniest Chimpo ever.]