



## The Star Talers

This little story is one of my favourites from the Brothers Grimm. It can be told as a winter story or a Christmas story. A taler is an old coin that was used in central Europe a long time ago – the word ‘dollar’ derives from it. You can use any cosy clothes you want in the story. Hold up each item as you name them. (It is probably best not to actually dress up in the clothes as you tell the story as it is quite serious and dressing-up tends to have a comical effect. However, you may want to put the ‘magical’ clothes on at the end. These should be a bit smarter than the other clothes if possible.)

Use a pouch or purse full of coppers for the ‘talers’ at the end of the story. Try to avoid letting people actually see the coins though or the magical effect will be spoiled!

Blowing gently through a whistle can make a good noise for the whistling wind. And if you tear up white tissue paper into tiny pieces this can be dropped to make ‘snow’ (or use confetti). An ice pack from the freezer is also good for conveying ‘cold’ but as these are not pleasant to touch I only use them when I am telling the story to people who I am sure are understanding all the narrative.

If you are telling the story as a Christmas story you could add at the end that the girl took the talers to the market. Then have a bag of nice sensory Christmas objects that she bought there to finish off the story (tangerines, tinsel, beeswax candles, party hats, party blowers, teddy bears and other toys etc.)

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There was once a wee girl who was so poor that she owned nothing in the whole world but her clothes.

One cold day she put on...

...her thin cotton dress

...her warm woolly hat

...her thick cosy shawl

...and her mittens.

Then she set off along the road.

After a while she passed a child who was shivering with cold.

So she gave the child her hat.

And went on along the road wearing...

...her thin cotton dress

...her thick cosy shawl

...and her mittens.

A little further along she passed another child begging by the side of the road. The child was so cold that her teeth were chattering.

So she gave the child her shawl.

And went along the road wearing...

...her thin cotton dress

...and her mittens.

Not long after that she passed a third child, white-faced and freezing with cold.

So she gave the child her mittens.

And went along the road wearing nothing but her thin dress.

The wind whistled.

A little snow began to fall.

She went in to a forest, thinking perhaps she could gather some leaves to keep herself warm.

Then, as she walked through the trees, stars began to fall from the sky.

She looked up as they fell.

She looked down.

The stars lay all around her feet.

But when she bent to pick them up they were talers, bright silver coins. She began to gather them up and as she did so she saw she was wearing...

...a warm woolly hat

...a thick cosy shawl

and a pair of mittens.

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Retold from the 'The Star Talers' (The Complete Grimm's Fairy Tales, Pantheon Books, New York, 1972), pp. 652- 654

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I would love to hear your feedback or comments on this story – please email me if you get a chance: [info@flotsamandjetsam.co.uk](mailto:info@flotsamandjetsam.co.uk)