



2003

My Very Own Story

Sarah Ratliff

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Ayckbourn, Alan. *My Very Own Story*. Faber and Faber, 1998. ISBN 0571194575. contact publisher for price. 92 pp.

Reviewer: Sarah Ratliff

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Fairy Tale; Plays; Fantasy Play; Contemporary Realism

Subject: Drama--Reviews; storytelling;

Theme: Every story has an ending.

Production Requirements: This is a very prop heavy show. A keyboard is also required

Acts: 2

Run Time: approximately an hour and a half

Characters: 21

Cast: adults

Time Period: Here, there and everywhere, any time.

Percy, Peter, and Paul have all been commissioned to tell their "very own story" for a night. Unfortunately for them, they have been commissioned for the same night. Percy begins to tell his story of a man, Rupert, who is stranded and taken in by a cursed family. He is instantly smitten with the lady of the house, but he is not too pleased with her brother, Frederick. Rupert finds a donkey in a hidden paddock and he tries to ride the donkey to town, but the donkey throws him off. As Peter continues the story we find out that the donkey is Frederick, who was cursed years before, after he fell in love with a beautiful girl named Cecilia, who lost her looks after the marriage. He later kissed Cecilia's once ugly sister who has become beautiful, Emilia, resulting in the curse performed by the girls' father and sorcerer, Varius. It is only when Cecilia finds unselfish love that the curse will be lifted. Percy's and Peter's stories are equally delightful.

Ayckbourn has a wonderful gift for storytelling. He is able to create a believable imaginary world within the world we currently live in. It is magical and intriguing. His use of comedy is wonderful, too. His three storytellers are charming, as are the stories they tell. This play can be simply performed. However, it does require a number of props, mostly just for distinguishing between the characters in the stories. The play is amusing and audiences should be entertained.