



2008

Old Dry Frye

Rebeca Wallin

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Snipes, Larry and Vivian. *Old Dry Frye*. Anchorage Press Plays, 2007. ISBN 9780876023853.
Contact publisher for details. 49 p.

Reviewer: Rebeca Wallin;

Reading Level: Intermediate;

Rating: Excellent;

Genre: Folklore; Plays; Ghost plays; Humorous plays;

Subject: Folk tale; Haunting; Food; Drama--Reviews;

Theme: It is better to share what you have.

Production Requirements: Flexible—painted flats and props, puppets.

Acts: 1

Run Time: 1 hour

Characters: 13

Cast: Variable, at least 2 males and 1 female

Time Period: 1800's

Loosely based on the folktale "Old Dry Frye", this play tells the story of a preacher (Dry Frye) in a small southern town. Frye dies but returns after his death to haunt his congregation due to their lack of sharing. While Frye is alive, he is known throughout the town for his huge appetite. When he comes to call, the families hide their food and do anything they can to avoid sharing with him. While eating dinner with the fourth family he visits one Sunday, he chokes on a chicken bone and dies. His body is haphazardly passed back to each family he has visited that day to avoid murder charges. The play is a flashback but it is also book-ended by a couple that has learned their lesson.

The play is well written with humorous and easy flowing dialogue. The accents and dialect capture the spirit of a small southern town. This play will definitely capture an audience's attention with its spooky beginning and comedic, action-packed scenes. The use of puppets is especially beneficial to the production. The puppets are endowed with characters in the writing and give lots of opportunity for physical humor. There is also audience participation with the recitation of "Everybody knows Old Dry Frye" each time a character says "the preacher man." One problem with the play is the question of a suitable audience recommendation. The dialogue, action, and puppets seem geared to an elementary school age level. However, the subject matter—a ghost and carrying a dead man around—is perhaps more suitable for an older audience.

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