



2009

# The Frog Prince

Rebeca Wallin

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Mamet, David. *The Frog Prince*. Samuel French, 1982. ISBN 9780573652202. \$5.50 / script; \$35 / performance fee. 38 p.

Reviewer: Rebeca Wallin

Reading Level: Intermediate, Young adult

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Plays; Fantasy plays; Humorous plays;

Subject: Fairy tales--Juvenile drama; Princes--Juvenile drama; Medieval times--Juvenile drama; Drama--Reviews;

Theme: Not every story has a happy ending

Production Requirements: Minimal props, forest backdrop

Acts: 1

Run Time: 45-60 minutes

Characters: 4

Cast: 2 male, 2 female

Time Period: Medieval

Although the basic facts remain the same—the prince is turned into a frog and needs to be kissed to transform back into his royal self—this retelling is far from the typical fairytale. The play begins in a forest with the prince and his serving man picking flowers for the prince's fiancée. An old woman finds the prince, and after he refuses to give her the bouquet, she turns him into a frog. The prince finds a friendly milkmaid and decides that she should be the one to kiss him. However, she refuses because she is in love with another man. As the prince continues to pursue a kiss from the milkmaid, his fiancée marries another man. The former fiancée and her new husband begin a tyrannical rule, exiling the milkmaid's love. As the milkmaid is leaving to follow her love into exile, she gives the prince a friendly kiss which transforms him. The prince barely notices his transformation and continues his wanderings about the forest.

This is a typical Mamet play, with unexpected occurrences and an unexpected ending. Because it does not exactly end happily ever after, it is more suitable for an older "young audience." The dialogue is clever and thought provoking, and the characters are well developed and memorable. Most of the exciting action happens offstage and then is discussed onstage, again making it more suitable for an older audience. The set and costumes are minimalistic, making it ideal for a touring production.

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