



2010

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day

Rebeca Wallin

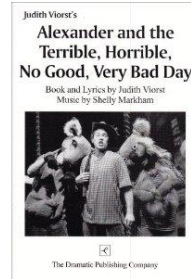
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Wallin, Rebeca (2010) "Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 31 : Iss. 3 , Article 6.

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Viorst, Judith. *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. The Dramatic Publishing Company, 2000. 0871299798. \$8.50. 76 p.

Reviewer: Rebeca Wallin

Reading Level: Preschool, Primary

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Plays; Humorous Plays;

Subject: Children's plays; Children's literature; Musicals;

Theme: Bad days happen to everyone.

Production Requirements: Variable. Need at least six rolling chairs, a rolling table, and a rolling bed.

Acts: 1

Run Time: 1 hour

Characters: 7

Cast: 4 male, 3 female

Time Period: Present Day

This musical closely mirrors the children's book of the same title and is adapted by the book's author. Alexander, a first grade boy, has a day where everything seems to go wrong—arguments with former best friends, cavities, ugly new shoes, and kissing on TV. At the day's end, and with his mother's help, Alexander realizes that bad days happen to everyone and that with his family's love he can endure them and look forward to better ones.

The author takes the fun and pathos of a beloved children's book and translates it wonderfully to the stage. Alexander is brought to life through clever staging and excellent writing. Four ensemble characters play minor characters as well as inanimate objects that are indeed out to get Alexander. The use of puppets also creates a fun world that young children will enjoy. Staging can be complex or simple enough for a touring production. The music is adequate although some songs seem to be thrown in just for the sake of having more songs and making the play longer. The one attempt at audience participation—getting the audience to recite the title of the play with Alexander—is somewhat forced.

Volume 31, no. 3 (January/February 2011)