



2013

The Witch of Blackbird Pond

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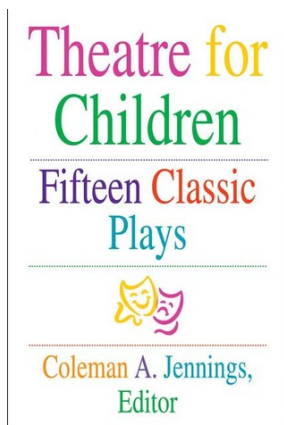
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Author: York, Y.

Title: The Witch of Blackbird Pond

Found In: Theatre for Children: Fifteen Classic Plays edited by Coleman A. Jennings

Year of Publication: 2005

Publisher: St. Martin's Press

ISBN: 9780312336394

of pages: 60

Rating: Excellent

Reading/Interest Level: Intermediate; Young Adult

Keywords: Puritans; Colonial Americans; Witches; Plays; Historical Plays

Production Requirements: Some scenery which could be edited

of Acts: 2

Estimated Runtime: 2 hours

of Characters: 14

Cast Requirements: 8 female, 6 male

Time Period: late 1600s

Review:

Based on the book of the same name by Elizabeth George Speare, this adaptation follows the main plot points and characters in the novel. Upon the death of her grandfather, Kit Tyler moves from her home in Barbados to live with relatives in a Puritan community in Connecticut. Kit finds their lifestyle restrictive and very different from the home she grew up in. After being somewhat ostracized by the community she befriends an old Quaker woman who is also shunned by the town. When their friendship is made known Kit is charged with witchcraft. Although the witchcraft charge is eventually overturned, Kit decides that she cannot live in the prejudiced community. She returns to Barbados with a young sailor that she met on her original voyage.

Fans of the novel will appreciate and enjoy this adaptation. Characters and relationships are well developed with smooth flowing dialogue. Modern audiences may find the extreme attitudes of the Puritan characters a bit jarring and one-sided. At times their reasoning seems very illogical and unbending. Good comedic interludes with the old woman Hannah Tupper and her cat keep the show from being too heavy. The set could range from minimalist to full scale making it possible for an educational tour. Schools would likely appreciate this show as the novel is often part of school curriculum. The show would also work well for a group of younger actors.

Reviewers Name: Rebecca Wallin

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