After Ever Happily

By Kandie Kelley

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Christine's in big trouble. Her mother warns her not to open the old book of fairy tales, but Christine breaks the rules and opens it anyway. Now the pages are strewn across the stage. The book just happens to be magic, and the characters from the stories inside soon appear in Christine's family room. Chaos ensues as Cinderella kisses the Frog Prince, and the evil Queen from Snow White falls in love with Rumpelstiltskin. Hansel and Gretel are eating the aluminum siding off the house, and the Miller's Daughter convinces Rumpelstiltskin not to kidnap her baby, what with the dirty diapers and all. Prince Charming ditches Snow White for the very sleepy Sleeping Beauty, and the Prince from Sleeping Beauty can't understand why he doesn't have a name. This quirky one-act gem is simple to produce and will delight all.

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(6 m, 8 f)

CHRISTINE: Curious young girl.
MOM: Christine's mom, owns the magical book.
CINDERELLA: A confused Princess to be.
FROG PRINCE: Has all the answers, and his eyes on Cinderella.
SNOW WHITE: Slightly bitter housekeeper, ready for her Prince.
PRINCE CHARMING: At least he has a name.
SLEEPING BEAUTY: Lovely girl who needs a nap, and gets it.
PRINCE: Handsome Prince who needs a Princess.
MILLER'S DAUGHTER: Distraught mom, loves her son.
HANSEL: Looking for his home, hungry
GRETEL: His sister.
RUMPELSTILTSKIN: Sad, misunderstood man, quite a charmer.
QUEEN: Just wants to be loved.
POOR WOODCUTTER: Lonely father, carries an ax.

TIME: The present.
SETTING: The family room in Christine's house.

PROPS:
Book with a beautiful cover
Loose pages
Stuffed frog wearing a crown
Bowl of fruit with an apple
Doll wrapped in a blanket
Hat for Frog Prince

After Ever Happily

(AT RISE: CHRISTINE, sitting on the sofa, gingerly examines the cover of a very old and colorful book.)

MOM: *(Offstage.)* Dinner's ready. Hurry and finish up that homework, Christine!

(Startled, CHRISTINE hides the book under the sofa cushion.)

(MOM ENTERS.)

MOM: Did you hear me? Dinner's ready.

(CHRISTINE looks sheepish.)

MOM: What are you up to, young lady? I don't see your math book anywhere. I thought you were doing your homework in here. You said you had a test tomorrow.
CHRISTINE: I was just thinking. Thinking about stuff. Yeah … that's it … thinking about school stuff.
MOM: *(Eyes HER suspiciously.)* What do you have under that cushion?
CHRISTINE: Nothing.
MOM: You're up to something. I can tell.
CHRISTINE: *(Shrugs then removes book from under cushion. Hands it to MOM.)* Here. *(MOM snatches book and holds it protectively.)* I was just seeing what was so special about this book.
MOM: I told you to never, ever touch this book.
CHRISTINE: I don't get it. You want me to read, and yet you won't let me read the one book I'm interested in.
MOM: It's just a very old book, that's all, one my grandmother gave me. I'd be heartbroken if anything ever happened to it.

(MOM sets the book on the table, smoothing out the cover.)

CHRISTINE: But it's just a bunch of fairy tales. See, look at the cover. It says, "Happily Ever After, Fairy Tales Children Love to Read." I'm a child. I should be able to open it.

MOM: No, you should not be able to open it because that's the rule of this house!

CHRISTINE: I don't get it! It's just some dumb old fairy tales!

MOM: Listen, Christine. My grandmother gave me this book, and it means a lot to me. I've never even opened it. I was afraid the pages would just fall apart. Who knows, the book might be worth some money. It has a beautiful cover, don't you think?

CHRISTINE: Yes, the cover's really nice. But it's the inside that interests me. Can't I just take a peek?

MOM: Absolutely not. Now, come along. Everyone's waiting for you at the table. Besides, I made hamburgers, your favorite.

CHRISTINE: But I won't rip the pages or anything! And who would want to buy a bunch of fairy tales anyway?

MOM: Yours is not to ask. Yours is to mind me. Now hurry up, dinner's getting cold.

(MOM EXITS.)

CHRISTINE: I'm dying to know what's in this book.

(CHRISTINE runs to EXIT and glances offstage to make sure MOM is out of sight.)

CHRISTINE: A quick look won't hurt. I mean, gee whiz, it's just a dumb old book. *(SHE lifts the book and begins to open it, stopping once more.)* Oh, heck, it's only a book. One look. What could possibly be …

(As SHE opens the tome, LIGHTS flash, thunder SOUNDS. CHRISTINE drops the book, and it falls apart. Its pages are now strewn across stage.)

CHRISTINE: Oh no! What have I done?!

(CHRISTINE attempts to pick up a few pages.)

MOM: *(Offstage.)* Christine! You better not be fooling around with that book. Get in here, now!
CHRISTINE: Oh, I'll just pick these up later …

(CHRISTINE RUNS OFF. After she does, a STUFFED FROG, wearing a crown, is tossed from one side of the stage; CINDERELLA ENTERS from the other.)

CINDERELLA: What's going on? One minute I was cleaning the fireplace; the next, I'm here.
FROG PRINCE: (*Spoken from offstage.)* Are you sad?
CINDERELLA: Who said that?
FROG PRINCE: Down here.
CINDERELLA: *(Looks around until SHE finds the frog and bends down to inspect it closer.)* How can you talk? You're just a frog!
FROG PRINCE: But you've known talking mice, singing mice, in fact; why would you question my ability to speak?
CINDERELLA: I think you're confusing my actual story with the Disney movie. There are no talking mice in the real story.
FROG PRINCE: Well, I do talk. And I'm wondering if you're sad.
CINDERELLA: More confused than sad. I mean, I was just getting ready for my fairy godmother to show up, as she always does at this point in the story, and then BAM, here I was. What happened?
FROG PRINCE: I'm not sure, but I can make all your wishes come true if you'd just lift me up and let me eat at the table with you and sleep in your tiny bed.
CINDERELLA: That's really gross. Talking or not, I'm not that fond of slimy amphibians. Besides, my stepmother would never approve of such an arrangement.
FROG PRINCE: She doesn't need to know. I don't see her around anywhere.
CINDERELLA: She's at the ball with my stepsisters, but she'll come home. You can count on that.

End of Freeview

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