POCAHONTAS

By Craig Sodaro

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Bring the exciting, inspiring story of the most famous Native American woman to life on your stage. POCAHONTAS is filled with wonderful, challenging characters who played important parts in a turbulent, fascinating life: Powhatan, the chief; John Smith, the fearless adventurer; Captain Argall, the greedy sea captain; Governor Gates and his three lively daughters; Edward Wingfield, the ruthless settler; John Rolfe, a thoughtful colonist; and Pocahontas, the princess who longs for a world beyond the forest where her people live.

The story is woven through the memories of an old woman and her granddaughter, Rebecca, who pause during a walk in a forest. A simple representational set serves all the fast-paced scenes full of action, comedy, and drama.

This is more than just the story of Pocahontas and John Smith. POCAHONTAS is the story of cultures in conflict, of greed, deception, hope, love lost, and love won.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(11 M, 13 W. Doubling possible.)

REBECCA: A young girl, 8 or 9.
GRANDMOTHER: Rebecca's grandmother.
POCAHONTAS: Daughter of Chief Powhatan, about 16.
BEKBEK: Her friend.
TAMASSIS: Another friend.
NANTAQUAS: Son of Powhatan, about 18.
COMOCHOK: His friend, also 18.
POWHATAN: Chief of the Powhatan Confederacy.
CAPTAIN ARGALL: A sea captain, 40-ish.
EDWARD WINGFIELD: President, Jamestown Council, 30's.
LUCY: Wingfield's cook, 20 or so.
BELINDA: Works with Lucy.
WEASEL: A colonist.
JOHN SMITH: Another colonist, about 27.
JOHN ROLFE: A colonist, about 25.
GOVERNOR GATES: Head of Jamestown, 50's.
CLARA: His daughter, about 10.
ANNE: Another daughter, 15.
SARAH: Another daughter.
WINIFRED: Rolfe's cousin in England.
KATE: Another cousin in England.
POCAHONTAS' MOTHER
SAILOR
WARRIOR

SEE end of play book for additional production notes.

SETTING

The action of the play takes place in the imagination of Grandmother. Scenes are set in the forest, Powhatan's village, on board ship, at Jamestown, and in England. To this end, a representational set is used. A backdrop of trees forming a forest would be best. The trees can be real or stylistic. Several stumps should be placed on stage for use during various scenes. One stump and a log sit DSR for Grandmother and Rebecca. Scenes will require the following additional elements:

ACT I

1. Forest: Stumps, as indicated.
2. Forest: None.
3. Jamestown: None.
4. Just outside the fort at Jamestown: None.
5. Powhatan's village: Stump at CS.
6. Inside fort at Jamestown: Fire with spit holding cooking pot (on a truck).
7. Forest: None.
8. Outside fort at Jamestown: None.

ACT II

1. Forest: None.
2. Forest: None.
3. Ship's hold: Barrel and crates (on a truck).
4. Gov. Gates' house: Chairs SR and SL, embroidery. hoop SL, table with lamp SR, screen USL..
5. Near Powhatan's village: None.
6. Rolfe home, England: None.
7. Rolfe home, England: Chair, cradle.
8. Forest: None.

Because fluidity is necessary for the success of the production, the "scenes" listed above are not numbered in the script. However, the instructions for the various changes are included exactly where they should be made. The above list merely helps clarify what is needed in terms of set.

ACT I

(AT RISE: A Virginia forest, 1848. SFX: The beat of a drum. REBECCA, a young girl, enters SL, terrified. She looks nervously about. We hear the caw of a bird, the howl of a wolf.)

REBECCA: Grandmother? Grandmother? Where are you? I'm frightened! Grandmother? We're lost!

(GRANDMOTHER enters USR.)

GRANDMOTHER: We are not lost, Rebecca.
REBECCA: Oh, Grandmother! I thought you'd left me!
GRANDMOTHER: I would never leave my little Rebecca.
REBECCA: *(Frightened.)* Can we go to the farm now? I don't like it here. I heard a wolf howling and a cat growling!
GRANDMOTHER: Your ears are playing tricks on you.
REBECCA: I heard them! They'll eat us if we don't go home!
GRANDMOTHER: The wolves and cats ran away a long time ago.
REBECCA: How do you know that?
GRANDMOTHER: Because the forest was taken from them.
REBECCA: Who took it away?
GRANDMOTHER: Men who came from far away.
REBECCA: I'm glad they took it away, then! I wouldn't want to have wolves and cats roaming about. It's just dark and scary here. You never know what will pop out from behind a tree!
GRANDMOTHER: Come here, Rebecca. Sit. *(GRANDMOTHER sits on stump DSR.)*
REBECCA: I'd really rather go home.
GRANDMOTHER: I want to tell you a story.
REBECCA: Couldn't you tell me at home, by the fire? It's getting cold.
GRANDMOTHER: It's a story about an Indian Princess.

REBECCA: Miss McGruder says that Indians are savages. She says that they killed all the Europeans that tried to settle here at first. She says they lived in holes in the ground and didn't wear clothes and that they smelled -

GRANDMOTHER: Sit, Rebecca.

REBECCA: Yes, Grandmother. *(SHE sits on a log.)*

GRANDMOTHER: Do you believe everything Miss McGruder says?

REBECCA: Shouldn't I? She's my teacher. She even went to college! She must know EVERYthing!

GRANDMOTHER: Would you like to know something she doesn't?

REBECCA: Yes!

GRANDMOTHER: Then look around, Rebecca. Imagine it is a long time ago. Imagine that no farms circle this little forest. Imagine that the forest stretches for as far as anyone knows. Trees, meadows, and yes, wolves and cats, birds and raccoons. Imagine it is the dawn of the sixteen hundreds, and three hundred miles north to south and two hundred miles from the east to the west is ruled by Chief Powhatan, leader of the Powhatan Confederacy.

REBECCA: Grandmother, I don't care for stories with dates and miles.

GRANDMOTHER: But this isn't about dates and miles. It's about Chief Powhatan's favorite daughter. She often came here because we're up so high, and if you look through the trees there ... *(GRANDMOTHER points beyond the audience.)* you can see the ocean. She liked to look at the sea.

REBECCA: What was her name?

(LIGHTS dim on GRANDMOTHER and REBECCA.)

BEKBEK: *(Off SL.)* Pocahontas!

TAMASSIS: *(Off SL.)* Wait for us! Pocahontas!

(POCAHONTAS runs on SL. She looks beyond the audience as if looking out to sea. A moment later BEKBEK and TAMASSIS run on SL, winded.)

End of Freeview

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