

The Princess and the Swineherd

Dramatized by Vern Adix

Based upon a story by Hans Christian Andersen
titled The Swineherd

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Young King Rupert spies lovely Princess Grace from a neighboring kingdom and fall instantly in love. But in his attempt to woo her he soon finds out she is not as lovely in actions as she is in looks. She is snobbish, selfish, and self-centered; waited on hand and foot by her three ladies-in-waiting. Even the Princess' father, the Emperor, is helpless to change her actions. King Rupert, however, has an idea. By switching places with a swineherd, he enacts a plan where she must kiss him to obtain a coveted magic teapot, then a magic musical rattle. The Princess learns humility, and King Rupert discovers one gentle lady-in-waiting who should really become his bride. This is a fun dramatized version of the fairy tale by Hans Christian Andersen.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

KING RUPERT: King of Pomania, young, a bachelor.

ALPHONSE: Rupert's friend and confidante, Prime Minister of Pomania.

MRS. GUFFY: King Rupert's elderly, efficient, housekeeper.

PRINCESS GRACE: Daughter to the Emperor, a spoiled brat.

MARILYN: Ladies-in-waiting to the Princess Grace.

REBECCA: Another.

FRANCINE: Another.

SWINEHERD: The lowliest servant in the Emperor's household.

ED: The Emperor's barber..

THE EMPEROR: Father to Princess Grace.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The play, as written, has a disarming sort of twist at the very beginning. This may be used, or the play may be started with the usual sort of opening. The actors who depict characters in the play take the parts of the following during the introduction:

Manager

Director

Actor #1

Actor #2

Actor #3

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TIME

Any time in the glamorous past when men and women wore interesting and exciting costumes, and when fairy tales and magic were believable.

SET

Areas may be established on the stage to represent King Rupert's house, the Emperor's palace, the swing in the garden, and the Swineherd's hut. This may be done either on a proscenium stage, in an arena theatre, or in a large open room or hall. The action should flow from one area to another without appreciable breaks.

SCENERY PIECES

Swing for Princess
Fire unit with pot holder for Swineherd hut area
Door unit for King's palace area
Door unit for Emperor's palace area

ESSENTIAL PROPS

Script
Flowers to pick
Interchangeable clothes for the King and the Swineherd
Sewing basket with needles, thread, etc.
Beautiful rose with box, ribbon, card
Bird (*Nightingale*.) in cage with decorative ribbon
Magic teapot
Magic rattle
Fan
Box of chocolates with knife to cut candy
Glass for drink with pitcher and tray
Shaving stuff including: Razor, Shaving cup, Shaving brush
Hair brush and hair comb
Clothes brush
Wash rag
Feather duster and other things as desired and needed.

See additional production notes at end of script.

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PROLOGUE

(As the action begins nothing is in place in the theatre. The MANAGER comes in looking at his watch and at the audience. He repeats this three times. Finally he comes in, stands before the audience, clears his throat and speaks.)

MANAGER: Ladies and Gentlemen ... er ... uh *(Hesitant and somewhat confused by the turn of events.)* ... boys and girls ... Uh ... I'm sorry but something seems to have happened to our performers. We were supposed to have a show this afternoon ... *(Clears throat again.)* ... but the actors haven't shown up ... and we ...

DIRECTOR: *(Stands in the audience.)* Mr. ... Sorry, I didn't get your name ...

MANAGER: Schweitzer ...

DIRECTOR: I beg pardon ... I didn't quite get it ... Scheitz ...

MANAGER: er ... Schweitzer ...

DIRECTOR: Oh, yes, Schweitzer ... Mr. Schweitzer, maybe I can help you. I have a company of actors ... I think some of them, maybe even all of them, are in the audience ... Let's see *(He looks around.)* Yes ... there are several of them here ... In fact I think I see all of them ... We could probably put on a show for you.

MANAGER: Oh? ... Well!! I ... I don't know ... I want a well-rehearsed production ... I don't want something that is just sort of pulled out of a hat, so to speak ...

DIRECTOR: Oh, we can put something together that will work out very well ... We've been doing a show called "The Girl and the Hog Swiller."

MANAGER: HOG SWILLER!! ... Ooooh! That's a horrible title.

DIRECTOR: Well, we could change that, if you don't like the title ... How about scenery? Do you have scenery we could use?

MANAGER: I think so ... look back there in the storeroom.

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DIRECTOR: *(To a company member.)* Go back and see what you can find. *(Names of others in the company.)* Will you go along and see if you can get some scenery set up so we can do a show here.

MANAGER: Could we change the name of the show to, well, ... maybe "The Princess and the Swineherd"?

DIRECTOR: Why not? ... So, we'll do, "The Princess and the Swineherd." *(HE counts heads.)* Hm! I think we are one actor short. *(To MANAGER.)* How about you playing a part?

MANAGER: Me. Oh, I couldn't do that ... I ... well ... I used to act ... but ...

DIRECTOR: I think you can do it. It's just a little part. *(Hands HIM a script.)* I just happen to have a script here. You will play the part of *(Insert the name of whichever character will work out best. HE opens script.)* It begins here. These are your lines.

(By now the scenery is rapidly being put in place.)

MANAGER: Can I carry a script and read the lines or must I memorize the part?

DIRECTOR: Oh, I think you'd better memorize it. The lines are easy to learn. *(To CAST.)* Are you finding the scenery we need?

ACTOR #1: I think this stuff will do. *(To DIRECTOR.)* What do you think?

DIRECTOR: Most of these things are great. Wait a moment, I don't think this will work anywhere. *(HE has picked up a piece of scenery from one of the other shows.)*

ACTOR #2: *(Has put unit in place.)* There. How's that for the Emperor's palace.

DIRECTOR: Good ... good ... good. *(To MANAGER who is by now acting all over the place as he reads lines to himself.)* The Emperor is rich; he has a daughter who is a real brat. She is spoiled rotten, you know what I mean?

MANAGER: *(Looking up from a script.)* What? Oh, yes, spoiled rotten.

End of Freeview

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