

A CROWN DOES NOT A PRINCESS MAKE

By Maureen Brady Johnson

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ISBN: 978-1-60003-749-8

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A One Act Youth Fairy Tale

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SYNOPSIS: Princess Lilliana has never, EVER, taken the crown off her pretty little head. She proclaims that it makes her a REAL princess. But one day, it sinks to the bottom of the filthy, yucky moat. Will the moat dragons fetch it for her? Or will the dragons teach her that a crown does not necessarily a REAL princess make?

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 female, 2 male, 8 either 0-10 extras; gender flexible)

NARRATOR AVERY (m/f)A prim and proper narrator (19 lines)
NARRATOR BENNIE (m/f)An excitable, dramatic narrator (19 lines)
PRINCESS LILLIANA (f)A princess who thinks very highly of herself (41 lines)
QUEEN HILDEGARDE (f)A kind and gentle Queen (9 lines)
KING WENCESLAS (m)A stern, yet reasonable King (9 lines)
DONALD/DONNA (m/f)A moat dragon who is angry at the entire kingdom (12 lines)
DEE DEE/DUNCAN (m/f)A moat dragon who is sensitive and understanding (14 lines)
MASTER TOM (m)A hard-working townspeople (16 lines)
EMMA (f)A sensitive townspeople (14 lines)
MOGG (m/f)Scruffy townspeople (8 lines)
BOGG (m/f)Motley townspeople (7 lines)
SHMOGG (m/f)Nasty townspeople (5 lines)
SHLOGG (m/f)Mean townspeople (5 lines)
EXTRAS (m/f)..... Townspeople who walk on and off the stage (Non-Speaking)

DURATION: 20 minutes

SETTING

The set can be as complex or simple as you wish. For a simple set, I imagine three areas of the stage, the throne room SL, the village Midstage and the moat SR. Two large chairs could be the Thrones with a piece of material draped as a tapestry...The village could be a few large cardboard rocks and piles of boxes covered partly with burlap... a couple pieces of fencing...The hill by the moat could be a pile of cardboard rocks or blocks covered with a drop cloth painted like rocks and the Princess could sit on top of the "Hill" and look down into the moat. You could take a large piece of material and have stage hands moving it like water. I'm sure that you will come up with some imaginative ideas that would work for your particular performance area.

PROPS

- Two oversized books for the narrators.
- Bags and baskets with fake fruit and food
- Sacks of rubbish for the townspeople to throw in the moat
- Two hoes or rakes for Tom and Emma

COSTUMES

You could use medieval costumes or just use capes, crowns and hats to suggest the medieval garb. The Dragons could wear leather jackets or ponchos with material hanging down that look like an actual Sargasso Sea Dragon. You could do fantastical make-up on the faces of the people playing the dragons or you could use puppets and have the puppeteers do the voices and dress in all black. You could also have the dragons wear dragon hats and that would show their faces.

The most complex thing is the Princess' garbage poncho which can simply be a large burlap trash bag with garbage velcro'd or duct-taped to it. You will need cardboard food/trash. Again, it can be as complex or as simple as you wish. Burlap or cloth bags can be used to clean up the trash in the moat cleaning scene.

MUSIC

I would definitely use medieval music at the beginning and the end...and maybe to set the mood in appropriate spots, ie. When Princess Lilliana is sitting by the edge of the moat or when the King and Queen take their walk.

PRODUCTION NOTES

If you wish to have a few more townspeople as walk-ons during the town scenes, you can. If you wish to double up and have two people play the townspeople parts of Mogg, Bogg, Shmogg and Shlogg, you can have them wear different hats.

Narrator A and B can be court jesters who tell the story...or they could be traveling musicians/minstrels...or they could be dressed as common folk/storytellers.

You can eliminate the narrators if you wish. I include them because I always had a few students who want to be in the play but have trouble memorizing their lines. This gives a director at least TWO parts for the students who can read from a prop book with expression!

AT RISE: *Lively Celtic or Medieval Music.*

AVERY: Once Upon A Time...

BENNIE: In a very tiny kingdom that was almost always overlooked... far, far away. There lived a princess

PRINCESS enters.

who never, ever, EVER took off her crown.

AVERY: She wore it cooking and looking and playing croquet...

PRINCESS pantomimes all the actions.

BENNIE: She wore it flowering, showering and at the end of the day she would say...

PRINCESS pantomimes.

PRINCESS: My crown makes me so beautiful. Actually, it makes me Supremely Gorgeous. And people listen to me when I wear my crown. Without my crown, I'm not a real princess. I will never, ever, EVER take it off.

AVERY: You'll wear it shopping or hopping or making souffle?

PRINCESS: YES!

BENNIE: ... sewing or crowing or harvesting hay?

PRINCESS: Harvesting hay? OK!

QUEEN and KING enter.

QUEEN: Princess, it's time for our Sunday afternoon walk.

KING: Yes, my dear, come along.

PRINCESS: Mummy, tell me how beautiful I look in my crown.

QUEEN: Lilliana, what did I tell you about that?

PRINCESS: Real beauty is ... uh...I forget...

QUEEN: ..is as elusive as a dragon in the moat.

PRINCESS: But Mummy, my crown makes me so beautiful and when I wear it, people take me seriously.

KING: Lilliana, what have I told you a million times???

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PRINCESS: That a crown does not a princess make.

KING: Very good. (*Aside to the QUEEN.*) At least she remembered that!

BENNIE: The Royal family took a walk around their tiny kingdom every Sunday, sharing the week's leftovers from the royal dining room with the poor of the kingdom.

Enter TOM, EMMA and TOWNSPEOPLE.

KING: Here you go, Thomas. You will enjoy these chicken pot pies.

HE gives a couple of bags to TOM.

TOM: Thank you, Sire. You are most kind.

PRINCESS: Master Tom, Don't you think I look pretty in my crown?

TOM: Yes, Princess. You do.

QUEEN: Lilliana! Please.

PRINCESS: Yes, mother.

KING: Tom, make sure you stop by the castle because I have a small carpentry job for you to do. It's not much but it pays well.

TOM: Thank you, your majesty.

EMMA: Your majesty? I have a gift for the Princess.

The PRINCESS grabs it from EMMA. SHE rips open the small box. There is a pair of mittens inside.

PRINCESS: Mittens?

QUEEN: Princess, Emma used her last scraps of yarn to make those for you. What do you say?

PRINCESS: Sorry. I don't wear mittens. I wear gloves.

QUEEN: Princess that is not what you say...You say, Thank you, Emma. I know that these will keep the Princess warm.

EMMA: You are too kind, your majesty.

The ROYAL FAMILY moves on to another group of TOWNSPEOPLE. EMMA speaks quietly to TOM.

I used the last snippets of yarn to make those mittens! Will the princess ever be as kind as her parents?

TOM: Maybe if she took that crown off once in awhile...

The ROYAL FAMILY moves on to another group of TOWNSPEOPLE. THEY all pantomime talking and giving away food. PRINCESS keeps adjusting crown and smiling and waving.

AVERY: Times were bleak for the tiny kingdom that year. Food was scarce and the winter would soon be upon them. But the little kingdom struggled along because the King cared about his subjects. They didn't call him Good King Wenceslas for nothing! The people loved the King and Queen. They weren't quite so sure about the young princess.

BENNIE: When the walk was finished, and her parents went inside the castle for their Sunday afternoon nap, the princess went to her favorite place at the farthest end of the castle grounds on a little hill by the moat to gaze at her reflection. The dark water was a perfect mirror for her supreme gorgeousness.

PRINCESS: I look even prettier when my crown sparkles in the sunlight. Sparkly, sparkly, sparkly!!! What would I ever do without my crown...oh...I'd be common and plain and perhaps, bordering on ugly.

AVERY: With her crown perched a little too high on her head, she leaned over to admire herself and as she peered into the dark murky waters, a putrid wind blew over the moat and...

PRINCESS: Oh no!!!! NO. NO!!!!

BENNIE: SPLASH!!!! The crown slipped off her head and disappeared.

PRINCESS: Help! Help! My crown has fallen into the moat.

AVERY: No one heard her. Or if they did, they weren't interested in helping her.

PRINCESS: I lost my crown. I can't be the princess without my crown.

AVERY: And she sat down and cried.

PRINCESS cries very, very loudly.

BENNIE: (*Yelling over the PRINCESS' yowling.*) As her tears hit the dark water, a swirling and a whirling began and with a giant SPLASH, two moat dragons appeared.

PRINCESS stops crying mid-cry when she sees the DRAGONS.

AVERY: Now... the Princess had heard legends about the moat dragons that lived in the moat. But because the moat was so dirty and dark, she had never seen one, let alone two.

DEE DEE: Oh dear! Oh dear...Princess...don't cry...

DONALD: Yeah...cut it out. Dee Dee and I were taking our Sunday afternoon nap!

DEE DEE: Your Highness. What is the matter?

PRINCESS: Don't look at me! Without my crown, I am quite plain, and common and perhaps bordering on ugly. I...I...was looking at my BEAUTIFUL reflection in the moat and my crown slipped off my head.

DONALD: Really? You only think you're beautiful when you are wearing the crown?

PRINCESS: Yes. I do. Dive down into the murky depths at once and get it for me. Quickly...

DONALD: Why should I help **you**?

DEE DEE: Donald, we have to help her.

PRINCESS: Yes! You must help me. I am the Princess.

DONALD: Not without your crown...

PRINCESS begins to cry loudly.

DONALD: All right. All right! Stop the caterwauling. I'm not going to do this for nothing. It's dangerous way down there. What will you give me?

DEE DEE: Donald! She's the princess! It's her crown.

PRINCESS: You will have (*Pause.*) my eternal gratitude.

DONALD: Your ETERNAL gratitude? Well, that's just great. We have to live in this putrid moat with the garbage that YOUR kingdom throws in here... The entire kingdom hates us because we smell like THEIR trash and I'm supposed to be delighted with a little royal thank you?

DEE DEE: Donald, the princess can't go anywhere without her crown.

PRINCESS: Go and fetch my crown!

DONALD and DEE DEE: Fetch? (*To EACHOTHER.*) Did she say FETCH? (*To the PRINCESS.*) NEVER say *fetch* to a sea dragon!

AVERY: And with that, Donald and Dee Dee left with huge SPLASH, covering the princess with a wide variety of trash that had been thrown into the moat.

The PRINCESS should put on a poncho-type garment that has medieval trash stuck all over it. This can be put over her princess dress, covering it. She should also have some sort of trashy head covering, too, so she looks somewhat unrecognizable.

BENNIE: So the Princess sat down in the trash and cried. But it did no good. The dragons were gone. She waited and waited until some townspeople came along. They began throwing trash into the moat.

MOGG: Did you make sure no one's around? We ain't supposed to be dumping this in the moat.

BOGG: What do you think I am? A fool? Of course, I looked around...Absolutely no one of any importance is here.

PRINCESS: Excuse me. I demand your help.

MOGG: What is that?

BOGG: I don't know but it smells terrible!

MOGG: You stink!!!!

PRINCESS: How dare you! I am the princess!

BOGG: You can't be...you ain't got no crown. You look like you just crawled out of the moat. Hey, you don't think it could be...

MOGG: ...a MOAT DRAGON! Let's get out of here! AAHHH!!!!

AVERY: And they ran away before the princess could say a word. The sun was sinking in the sky. She tried to get the muck and mire off of her royal self but it was stuck like glue. And the Princess, who thought she couldn't smell any worse, began to reek.

PRINCESS: (*Picking a piece of garbage off her shoulder and throwing it into the moat.*) How can these moat dragons live in this horrific place?

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The garbage the PRINCESS tossed into the moat gets thrown back at her. DEE DEE comes up from the moat.

DEE DEE: It wasn't always this way, Princess.

PRINCESS: What do you mean?

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