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Dramatic Publishing

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

The Princess

Who Would Not Marry

by
MAUREEN EXTER



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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THE PRINCESS WHO WOULD NOT MARRY

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MAUREEN B. EXTER

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(THE PRINCESS WHO WOULD NOT MARRY)

THE PRINCESS WHO WOULD NOT MARRY
A Play in One Act
For Three Women and Three Men

CHARACTERS

KING

QUEEN

CHLOE

LULU

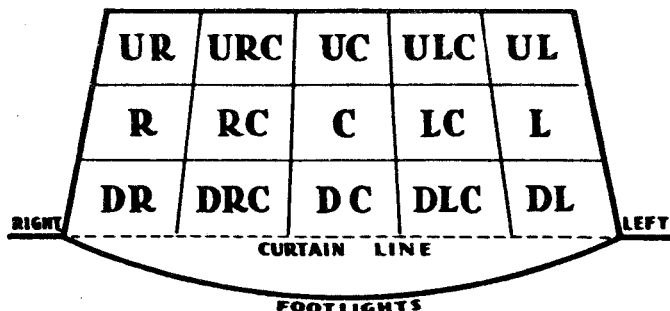
PRINCE ANDRE

PRINCE MORTON

TIME: *Dragon-slaying days.*

PLACE: *The parapets of the castle.*

CHART OF STAGE POSITIONS



STAGE POSITIONS

Upstage means away from the footlights, *downstage* means toward the footlights, and *right* and *left* are used with reference to the actor as he faces the audience. R means *right*, L means *left*, U means *up*, D means *down*, C means *center*, and these abbreviations are used in combination, as: UR for *up right*, RC for *right center*, DLC for *down left center*, etc. A territory designated on the stage refers to a general area, rather than to a given point.

NOTE: Before starting rehearsals, chalk off your stage or rehearsal space as indicated above in the *Chart of Stage Positions*. Then teach your actors the meanings and positions of these fundamental terms of stage movement by having them walk from one position to another until they are familiar with them. The use of these abbreviated terms in directing the play saves time, speeds up rehearsals, and reduces the amount of explanation the director has to give to his actors.

The Princess

Who Would Not Marry

SETTING: The parapets of the castle. This may be suggested by a low wall and a few flags.
Statuettes, books and bric-a-brac are on tables and parapets.

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: The QUEEN is sitting on a bench, reading. LULU rushes in L.)

LULU (with great excitement). Your Highness!
Your Highness! There's a dragon outside the palace gates!

QUEEN. A dragon! (Looks over the wall R.) Oh, Lulu! I must go tell his Majesty at once.

(The KING enters L.)

KING (as he enters). What's that, my dear?

QUEEN. A dragon is outside the palace gates!

LULU. A big one! With green scales!

QUEEN. It's breathing smoke. Oh, dear, is all that pollution healthy for the kingdom?

KING. It will only be there for a little while, my dear. Never fear.

QUEEN. But . . . how do you know? (Realizing.)
Oh! It's a surprise!

KING. Yes, for our Chloe's sixteenth birthday!

QUEEN. Oh, but so soon, dear? Do you think it's wise?

KING. If you will recall, my dear, you were only

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sixteen when I won you by battling your castle's dragon. (The dragon roars.)

LULU. My! It's quite loud, isn't it?

KING. Quite loud.

LULU. And it's . . . it has fire coming out of its nostrils! Oh, goodness, sire, is it safe?

KING. No.

QUEEN. But, tell me--what did our Chloe say about it? Is she excited?

KING. She doesn't know yet. I'm going to let her discover it by herself.

QUEEN (sentimental). My little girl, all grown up with her very own dragon outside the gates.

KING. There, there. Come now, my dear. Children have to grow up sometime. Besides, it's the prince who has to be brave. Our Chloe won't be the easiest girl to get along with. (The sound of trumpets heralds an arrival.)

LULU (at doorway, announcing). Her Highness, the Princess Chloe. (She exits.)

KING. My dear.

(CHLOE enters. She is outraged.)

CHLOE. Father, there's a dragon outside!

KING and QUEEN. Happy birthday, Chloe!

(LULU enters carrying a cake with lighted candles. They all sing "Happy Birthday to You.")

LULU. There's sixteen candles, your Highness. One for every year. You have to make a wish and blow them out.

CHLOE. Thank you. (She takes a deep breath and blows out the candles.)

LULU. Oh, lovely! The Princess gets her wish!

QUEEN. You did make a wish, didn't you?

CHLOE (grimly). I wished that the dragon would go away.

LULU. If you tell your wish, it doesn't come true.
But I suppose it's too late.

QUEEN. Poor Chloe. You're probably terrified of that great monster out there.

CHLOE. I'm not afraid of dragons.

KING (to QUEEN). And why should she be? It's the prince who has to fight the dragon. Chloe just has to sit here and get married.

CHLOE. I'll fight the dragon myself. Give me your sword, Father!

KING. What's that?

CHLOE (trying to take his sword from him). I'll slay the monster myself. Then maybe you'll all leave me alone!

KING. Chloe! Stop that!

CHLOE (abruptly stopping). Ow!

QUEEN. Chloe's hurt!

CHLOE. I cut my finger! (Dissolving into tears.)
Oh, Mother!

QUEEN. There, there, my dear.

CHLOE. Mother, I can't marry a man just because he's slain a dragon. It would be barbaric.

QUEEN. But, dear--it's traditional.

KING. You young people! Now, just think for a moment. After all, if fathers didn't hire dragons to stalk about their castles, how would young princesses find proper husbands?

CHLOE. We could choose them ourselves.

LULU (shocked). Oh, your Highness!

QUEEN. I'm sure you don't know what you're saying.

KING. And how would you go about meeting these proper husbands, eh?

CHLOE. There could be parties. Or balls. Or introductions from mutual friends.

KING. You're so very young. I think we're doing the right thing by finding you a husband now. Marriage will settle you.

QUEEN. That's true, dear. Just wait until some nice young prince slays your dragon. After you're married and have four or five children . . . why, you won't recognize yourself. You'll see.

KING. We wouldn't want anything for you but the very best, you know. That dragon cost me a pretty penny. It will take a very fine prince to slay that one.

CHLOE. I won't marry him.

KING. Now, listen here, my girl . . .

CHLOE. Princes are male chauvinists, and I'm not going to marry one.

LULU. You have to marry a prince, ma'am. You're a princess.

CHLOE. I won't marry anyone. Not unless I want to.

KING. You'll marry him or spend the rest of your life in the tower dungeon.

CHLOE. That would suit me just fine.

LULU. Oh, miss, I've seen the tower dungeon. It's not very nice at all.

CHLOE. A person with principles doesn't expect life always to be nice.

LULU. But, really, miss, it's awful.

CHLOE. How awful?

LULU. It's all gray stone, and it's sort of damp and smelly.

KING (pleasantly). Tell her about the rats.

LULU. Well, I didn't see any rats. But there were some little squeaky mice. And cockroaches. And . . . oh, miss, you wouldn't like it at all.

QUEEN. You wouldn't put her in the tower dungeon. Not your own daughter.

PRODUCTION NOTES

SETTING:

The parapets of the castle are R running from upstage to downstage. This may be suggested by a low wall and a few flags. There are benches and tables around the stage in front of the parapets. Statuettes, books, vases of flowers and bric-a-brac are on tables and parapets. There is a doorway L through which all exits and entrances are made. Somewhere on stage should be a broom and dustpan.

COSTUMES:

All costumes should be bright and happy. Those characters that are "traditional" should look typically fairytale-ish. But the characters that are not traditional should wear modern clothes. The following are on the conservative side. The costuming may be handled in any way you like.

KING: Wears a large gold crown, fancy soft shoes which come to a point at the toes, tights and an elaborately colored tunic; over the tunic a fur-trimmed robe of state. He also wears many large rings and a sword hanging from his belt.

QUEEN: Wears a small crown and a long gown with a full skirt, fitted waist, long fitted sleeves which may or may not be puffed at the shoulders.

LULU: Dressed in a modern floor-length "granny gown," puffy sleeves with a choker. She might wear her hair in the modern "granny" style.

PRINCESS CHLOE: Wears a dressy jumpsuit or an after-five pants suit that is feminine.

PRINCE ANDRE: Wears a short tunic or doublet coming halfway down to the knee, tights and pointed shoes. He also has a sword. His costume should give the appearance of a very handsome, suave, debonair young Frenchman.

PRINCE MORTON: Wears a turtleneck sweater, a sport coat and flared trousers. He should appear as a "sharp dresser," very neat. He, too, is suave but in a humble way.

PROPERTIES:

QUEEN: Book.

LULU: A birthday cake with sixteen burning candles, handkerchief.

PRINCESS CHLOE: A handkerchief.