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A PARTICIPATION MUSICAL

The Tale of the Frog Prince

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Music by
BILL ROSER



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(THE TALE OF THE FROG PRINCE)

ISBN 0-87129-199-1

My special thanks to
Jay Levitt and A Company of Players
at the Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities
for giving this play life

A TALE OF A FROG PRINCE
A Participation Musical
For Four Men and Three Women
(or Three Men and Four Women)

C H A R A C T E R S

FROG - PRINCE

ROSALIE

QUEEN

KING

PENELOPE

BERTRAM

SPREE (male or female)

PLACE: A swamp.

TIME: Long ago.

*Spree, although played by a real person, supposedly can be seen only by the frog, Rosalie and the audience.

A TALE OF A FROG PRINCE

SCENE: The play opens in a beautiful swamp. Moss and green are everywhere, and one or two large logs, with one hollow so that the toad and children can crawl through it. There can be peek holes in it. There is a mushroom house for Spree to live in, and various mushrooms around for the characters to sit on. Fly and insect noises abound.)

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: A sunrise light comes up on the swamp. The buzzing of insects can be heard. SPREE peeks out of the mushroom house, then climbs out, does a little dance that involves chasing a fly. He then earnestly goes after a specific fly. He chases buzzing sound, catches fly in hands, then carefully goes over to the FROG, who is sleeping on his log. SPREE kicks him, once lightly, then again until he wakes up.)

FROG. Leave me alone . . . ouch! . . . who is . . . Oh, it's you. A fly for breakfast, thank you, Spree. (Takes it and gulps it down, then gets up and goes over to "pond" and mimes drinking water from hands.) What are we going to do today? (SPREE mimes playing.) Yes, I know you want to play. But that's all we ever do. Sit in this dirty old swamp and -- here, share my water. Hungry. I need to catch more flies.

(FROG starts after flies. SPREE mimics him as

they hop around the stage. SPREE bumps into FROG.)

FROG. Leave me alone. Stop doing that. You're not my shadow. So, a fly. Grunt. (He catches and swallows a fly, then sits on log. He scratches his head with a foot. SPREE does same with his foot.) You know, you look ridiculous scratching your head with a foot. Why must you do everything I do? You remind me of me long ago. And I don't want to remember, so go away. (Turns away.) Shh, quiet. I see you, fly. (Tries to catch fly. SPREE, who has been following, bumps into him.) You stupid, clumsy . . . I lost that fly. Get away from me. Climb into your mushroom. (SPREE turns sadly away.)

(Suddenly, FROG has an itch. He tries to scratch his back and can't reach the itch.)

FROG. Spree, come down here and scratch my back. It itches. I can't reach. (SPREE shakes head no.) Spree, scratch my back. Spree, please. I'm not angry with you any more. Just a little scratch. Haven't you any sympathy? To once be a great and powerful prince, and then to be turned into an ugly frog! Just a little scratch. (SPREE shakes head no. FROG tries to reach itch.)

JUST A LITTLE SCRATCH

FROG.

Just a little scratch

Just a little itch

I can't reach my back to scratch this pesky little twitch.

He won't scratch my itch

He won't itch my scratch

No one in this stupid swamp will scratch this froggy's back. (Pause.)

SPREE (spoken). Ribet.

FROG (spoken). Did I hear a ribet?

SPREE and CHILDREN (spoken). Ribet.

FROG (spoken). I thought I heard a ribet?

(Ribet.)

I did. I heard a ribet.

(Ribet.)

Did I hear you ribet?

(Ribet.)

I did. I heard you ribet.

(Ribet.)

I knew I heard you ribet.

(Ribet.)

Let's sit on a log, act like a frog

And ribet all day long.

(FROG goes into audience.)

FROG.

Just a little scratch

Just a little itch

I can't reach my back to scratch this pesky
little twitch.

Will you scratch my itch?

Will you itch my scratch?

Someone in this stinky swamp has scratched
this froggy's back.

(Ribet.)

(Softly.) Did I hear a ribet? (Ribet.)

I did, I heard a ribet. (Ribet.)

Let's sit on a log, act like a frog

And ribet all day long. (Ribet.)

Did I hear a ribet? (Ribet.)

I did, I heard a ribet. (Ribet.)

Let's sit on a log, act like a frog

And ribet all day long. (Ribet.)

FROG. Thank you for that scratch. (There is a
buzzing sound.) Shh, shh, everyone. I hear

a fly. (Mimes catching and eating.) Gulp.
Got him. Um, that was good. (To a child in
the audience.) Do you want me to catch you a
fly? We sing together, why not eat flies toget-
her? (Child shakes head no.) Spree doesn't
like flies, he likes bananas. Spree, our new
friends don't want to eat flies just now, but I
bet they will play a game with us. Spree, find
three children to come up here and play Leap
Frog with me? (SPREE beckons, and three
children come up on stage. They play Leap
Frog with FROG and SPREE.) Thank you, you
can go back to your seats now. (They do so.)
Now, some Follow the Leader. (SPREE picks
four little children. They come up on stage
and follow FROG through his log. Then FROG
goes to C.) Now, everyone . . . all my friends.
Let's play Simon Says. Simon says stand up.
. . . Lift up your arm. . . . Simon says stand
on your left foot. . . . (Finds some of the
children on their right foot, etc.; game continues.)

(ROSALIE enters, watches game, and gradually
joins in. FROG does not notice the girl.)

FROG (finishing game). That was wonderful.

I feel, I feel so, so . . .

ROSALIE. Oh, please, can we play some more?

FROG. Who are you? Go away.

ROSALIE. Just a girl. I want to play, too. I
never get to play games. I . . .

FROG. You don't belong here, in my swamp.

And these are my friends, mine. They are here
to play with me, not you.

ROSALIE. You're a mean little frog. Why can't
they play with me, too?

FROG. Because you're . . . you're . . . not like
us.

ROSALIE. Yes, I am.

FROG. No, you're not. You're . . . you're

human.

ROSALIE. So what, I don't care about that.

They're human and they don't care, and neither do I. (Pointing to SPREE, who is sitting on a mushroom.) Who's that?

FROG. That's just Spree. They touched me.

You are too pretty to touch me. If I came near you, you would scream, or run, or cry.

ROSALIE. I would not.

FROG. You're too pretty, and . . . and . . . I wouldn't want you to touch me.

ROSALIE. That's silly.

FROG. It's not silly. See, you even think I'm silly. No one ever touches me. I'm ugly, ugly. Now go away. You can play with the children if you want. I don't want to play with them any more. Anyway, I don't want to play. Games are foolish. I have better things to do. (Goes and sits on his log and sulks.)

ROSALIE (to children). I think he says one thing, and means another, don't you? (Sits with SPREE.)

QUEEN (from offstage L). Rosalie . . . Rosalie! Drat that girl. Where is she off to now? Go find her. Find her. (Calling.) Rosalie.

(PRINCE BERT enters L.)

PRINCE BERT. Rosalie . . . Rosalie. Oh, there you are. Whatever are you doing in this dirty, smelly swamp? Ugh. (Holds nose.) There are bugs here, and toads, and . . .

ROSALIE. I like it here, Bert.

BERT. Well, that's because there's something wrong with you. I'm glad I'm pledged to marry your sister, not you.

ROSALIE. She can have you.

BERT. I'm a pretty good catch if I do say so myself.

ROSALIE. Which you do, often.

BERT. I'm handsome, own lots of land, have many servants, good looks. (SPREE mimes behind him.) Have a kiss for your brother-in-law prince to be? (Moves to sit on SPREE, who darts up angrily as BERT sits. SPREE sits in front of the mushroom house.)

(PENELOPE enters L and hurries to BERT.)

PENELOPE. I heard that. I heard that, Bert. He's mine, Rosalie. I know you're jealous but you keep away from him. Mama, Bert found Rosalie.

(QUEEN enters L.)

QUEEN. Yes, yes, I can see that. I have eyes, you know. Where is the King, with all our food? I am suddenly hungry. Where is the picnic?

(KING stumbles in L, loaded down with many, many things for the picnic.)

PENELOPE. There's the King.

QUEEN. I can see with my own eyes, dear.

KING. I can't go another step. We will eat here.

QUEEN. Here? Oh, no, not here in this dirty swamp. This is no place for a royal picnic.

BERT. No, indeed. There are bugs here, and . . .

ROSALIE. Yes, here. I have friends here.

Children to play with.

QUEEN. Children?

ROSALIE. And a nice frog.

QUEEN (shrieking). A frog? Where? A toad?

KING. Calm yourself, my dear, she said a frog.

QUEEN. I can hear with my own ears, thank you.

PENELOPE (turning URC). Oh, look, a cute mushroom house. Look. Oh, we must stop here. This must be a magic place, even if it is dirty

and smelly. Please, mama. (SPREE is sitting on mushroom by the house. PENELOPE rushes over. She does not see SPREE and practically pushes him down. SPREE retreats inside the house.) This is my mushroom. I found it, so everyone stay away from here.

QUEEN. Well, I'm outvoted again, as always. I'm Queen, but you would never know it. Find me a dry place to sit. (Looks around, sees FROG on his large log.) There, I'll sit on that log.

KING. But, dear, there is a creature already on that log.

QUEEN. I can see, I can see with my own eyes, thank you.

KING. Well, then, you don't want to sit there, do you?

QUEEN. I do. Remove that creature. Put down your things and throw him off.

KING. Yes, dear. (Goes over to FROG.) Shoo, shoo, get off this log. The Queen wants to sit. (FROG doesn't move.) Help me, Bert, Penelope . . . (BERT and QUEEN and PENELOPE go over and all yell at FROG until he retreats off log and goes and sits under the tree.)

ROSALIE (going over to FROG). Don't worry. They'll leave soon. I'm sorry they aren't very nice. (FROG grunts, snaps at fly and turns away.) You're not very nice either, you know.

QUEEN (sitting on log). Now let's have our picnic.

ROSALIE. Can the children come, too?

QUEEN. Those children come to our royal picnic? You have such strange ideas, Rosalie. Good heavens, now. They can have their own picnic, somewhere else.

KING. But, my dear, these children, my loyal subjects, could share our picnic.

QUEEN. Share our picnic?

KING. It was just an idea.

QUEEN. You get carried away with your ideas,

Howard. Remember, you are a king, a king.
KING. Yes, a king. A hen-pecked king.

THE HEN-PECKED KING