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Dramatic Publishing

The Far-Fetched Fable of the Frog Prince

How a Prince Became a Frog and
Starred in the School Play



Comedy
by
Jennifer Kirkeby

The Far-Fetched Fable of the Frog Prince

How a Prince Became a Frog and Starred in the School Play

Comedy. By Jennifer Kirkeby. Cast: 4m., 6w., 1 either gender. You know the original story. A princess drops her golden ball into a well. A frog makes her a deal that he'll dive into the well and return her ball if she will promise to be his friend for always. The princess makes the promise. But when the frog gives her the ball back, the princess runs off without a second thought. In *The Far-Fetched Fable of the Frog Prince: How a Prince Became a Frog and Starred in the School Play*, we discover why the frog (who's really a prince, by the way) got turned into a frog in the first place. Plus, it just so happens that a school is preparing to do the play *The Frog Prince*. With a little magical mix-up between the old and the new brought on by a crafty witch, the two stories begin to overlap, intertwine and create complete zaniness. *Flexible staging. Approximate running time: 1 hour. Code: FE6.*

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The Far-Fetched Fable of The Frog Prince:

**How a Prince Became a Frog
and Starred in the School Play**

By
JENNIFER KIRKEBY



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The Far-Fetched Fable of The Frog Prince: How a Prince Became a Frog and Starred in the School Play (originally *The Frog Prince*) was commissioned and first produced by Stages Theatre Company; Hopkins, Minnesota, artistic director, Sandy Boren-Barrett. It premiered October 15, 2010, at Stages with the following cast and production team:

CAST

Claire	KENZI ALLEN
Ms. Nelson	LISA BOL
Prince Edward.	HADEN CADIZ
Princess Esmeralda.	ARIANNA DART
Margaret	ALLISON KURP
Andrea	HANNAH MORRISSEY
King	BRENT TECLAW
Noah	CONNOR THOMAS
Witch	MAEVE THORBURN
Lady Tacita	EMMA TYLER
Ron Niginski	MICHAEL VENSKE
Thomasina	SAHARLA VETSCH

PRODUCTION TEAM

Artistic Director	SANDY BOREN-BARRETT
Director	CASSANDRA PROBALL
Sound Designer.	TIM CAMERON
Lighting Designer	GRETCHEN KATT
Costume & Make-up Designer.	PAULA LEE
Props Designer.	CINDE OAKLAND
Set Designer.	ERICA ZAFFARANO
Stage Manager.	MEGAN K. PENCE
Assistant Stage Manager	ANDREA WYLIE
Sound Board Operator	ZOIE PULKKA

The Far-Fetched Fable of The Frog Prince

CHARACTERS:

1. PRINCE EDWARD / FROG PRINCE (m): Prince from THEN who falls in love with Princess Esmeralda. The Witch turns him into the Frog Prince.
2. PRINCESS ESMERALDA (f): Princess from THEN. She makes a promise to the Frog Prince that she doesn't keep.
3. KING (m): Princess Esmeralda's Father. THEN
4. RON NIGINSKI (m): Dramatic science teacher and emotional costumer. NOW
5. MARGARET (f): Princess Esmeralda's maid. Giggles a lot. THEN
6. MS. NELSON (f): Drama teacher who doesn't display much emotion until the Witch casts a spell on her. She doesn't care for Ron. At first. NOW
7. NOAH (m): Enjoys his science class. He is cast as the Frog Prince in school play. Thomasina's best friend. He wears glasses. NOW
8. CLAIRE (f): She is thrilled to be cast as the Princess in the school play. Best friend of Andrea. Claire doesn't like Noah because of some bad experiences they had as kids. She wears glasses similar to Noah. NOW

9. THOMASINA or THOMAS (m/f): Noah's best friend and class clown. Skater girl or boy. Rides around on a scooter. NOW
10. ANDREA (f): Claire's best friend. Travels in Heelys or on a scooter. NOW
11. WITCH (f): Angered by a past incident, she decides to take out her vengeance on Prince Edward by casting a spell on him and eventually the others. After one of her spells, she combines the THEN & NOW.

TIME:

THEN: Very long ago & NOW: The present.

LOCATIONS:

THEN & NOW: Forest with nearby well which should be placed somewhere near center stage. There should also be enough room on stage for the actors to move about. The well needs to be tall enough for an actor to be able to hide in. There is a bench near the well and a large tree that actors can hide behind. There is the suggestion of a nearby forest. Witch will spend time "hiding" from others in the forest or other places. There are also flowers and a blueberry bush not far from the well.

THEN: Princess Esmeralda's dining area in palace. Furniture pieces may be brought on for these scenes.

NOW: Rehearsal area (which includes the well) and classroom. Chairs or benches may be brought on for these scenes.

MUSIC NOTE:

Some musical underscoring is encouraged to be used in particular to add to the different time periods.

See end of play for Synopsis of Scenes.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

SCENE 1: THEN: The forest near the well. Princess Esmeralda meets Prince Edward. They decide to see each other the next day. The Witch turns Prince Edward into a frog.

SCENE 2: NOW: Junior High School. Claire and Andrea look at the posted cast list for school play, which is *The Frog Prince*. Noah and Thomas talk about science class. We discover that Claire and Noah do not like each other but are both cast in the lead roles in the play.

SCENE 3: THEN: Princess Esmeralda is by the well waiting for Prince Edward. He doesn't show up. She throws her golden ball in the air. It accidentally falls into well. The Frog Prince returns her ball. Princess promises to take him with her, but she runs away instead. The Witch begins to spy on them.

SCENE 4: NOW: Rehearsal of previous scene. Noah gets his frog head stuck in the well. Noah and Claire argue.

SCENE 5: THEN: Princess Esmeralda and her father the King are eating dinner. Margaret is serving them. The Frog Prince comes to their castle and reminds Esmeralda that she promised to take him with her. The King insists that she keep her word.

SCENE 6: NOW: Science class taught by Ron Niginsky. Kids learn (and act out) metamorphosis. Noah and Claire come to a truce.

SCENE 7: THEN & NOW: Princess Esmeralda and the Frog Prince begin a friendship which irritates the Witch, so she decides to mix THEN and NOW. Noah goes on a nature walk and makes a startling discovery.

SCENE 8: NOW & THEN: Dress rehearsal. Witch begins to cast spells on everyone which creates confusion and chaos.

SCENE 9: NOW & THEN: Confusion accelerates. Witch decides that she wants the golden ball. All characters come together to get the Witch.

SCENE 10: NOW & THEN: Claire and Noah are sitting by the well and aren't sure what just happened. Witch is transformed. Ron and Ms. Nelson plan a date much to Thomasina's disgust. Prince Edward and Princess Esmeralda finally reunite.

The Far-Fetched Fable of The Frog Prince

SCENE 1

(THEN: Very long ago. A lovely pastoral setting near a forest. Birds are singing, sun is shining. There is a large well center stage and a bench beside it. [Please see "Locations" on page 6 for set detail.] Baroque-style underscore may be used.

PRINCESS ESMERALDA enters carrying a basket. She puts it down and takes out her golden ball. She throws the ball up in the air and catches it. She says the following poem:)

ESMERALDA.

GOLDEN BALL, GOLDEN BALL UP SO HIGH,
COME BACK TO ME, OR I SHALL CRY.
YOU SHINE IN THE SUN FOR THE WHOLE WORLD
TO SEE.
GOLDEN BALL, GOLDEN BALL, HOW I LOVE
THEE!

I love you because you are my favorite toy. Because my mother, God rest her soul, gave you to me. I always think of her smiling face when I look at you.

(She hugs ball, then continues to throw it in the air. She says poem again as she moves about.)

GOLDEN BALL, GOLDEN BALL UP SO HIGH,
COME BACK TO ME, OR I SHALL CRY.
YOU SHINE IN THE SUN FOR THE WHOLE WORLD
TO SEE.
GOLDEN BALL, GOLDEN BALL, HOW I LOVE
THEE!

(ESMERALDA puts her ball into basket and begins to sing and dance around.)

PRINCE EDWARD enters from the forest. He carries a quiver and arrows on his back. He watches ESMERALDA from behind the tree.

ESMERALDA sings louder and dances with abandon.

EDWARD can no longer contain himself. He begins to laugh.)

ESMERALDA *(cont'd., startled by EDWARD's laughter).*

Come out here and show yourself at once!

EDWARD *(steps out of hiding).* Good afternoon, lovely lady. *(He bows.)*

ESMERALDA. How rude of you to spy on me!

EDWARD. Forgive me, Princess. I didn't mean to embarrass you.

ESMERALDA. Why should I be embarrassed?

EDWARD. Well, you were...you were so exuberant and quite...loud.

ESMERALDA (*glares at him*). You clearly have no knowledge of the art of dance or voice, both of which I study quite seriously.

EDWARD. Please accept my apology for laughing at your lovely performance. I am truly a gentleman of the first order.

ESMERALDA. I shall decide that for myself. By the way, how did you know that I'm a princess?

(MARGARET, ESMERALDA's maid, enters and rushes to ESMERALDA.)

MARGARET. Please excuse the interruption. Is everything all right, Your Majesty?

ESMERALDA. Fine, Margaret. I'm just speaking to a "gentleman of the first order."

(EDWARD bows to MARGARET. She is smitten.)

MARGARET. Oh, how splendid! *(She giggles nervously and smiles at EDWARD.)* I'm Margaret.

EDWARD *(takes her hand and kisses it)*. Enchanted to meet you, Margaret. I am Prince Edward of Buntington.

MARGARET. Oh my! *(Giggles as she curtsies to him.)* Did you hear that, Esmeralda?

ESMERALDA. Yes, Margaret, thank you.

MARGARET. He's a prince! *(Giggles.)*

ESMERALDA. So I heard.

MARGARET *(walking toward castle)*. I shall be right over here watching if you should need anything.

ESMERALDA. Thank you.

MARGARET. Anything at all. *(Giggles.)*

ESMERALDA. Thank you, Margaret.

MARGARET. Good day, Prince Edward of Buntington.
(She curtsies and giggles.)

EDWARD. Good day, Margaret.

(MARGARET exits giggling.)

EDWARD *(cont'd. To ESMERALDA)*. To answer your question, I surmised that you are a princess because you are wearing a crown. Princess Esmeralda. What a lovely name.

ESMERALDA. Thank you, Prince Edward.

EDWARD. Might I invite you to our estate for dinner sometime?

ESMERALDA. Perhaps. Although, I'm very busy with my lessons and such. And I'm not accustomed to having dinner with someone whom I know nothing about.

EDWARD. If you come to my castle, you will learn all about me. In the presence of my family and staff, of course.

ESMERALDA. Of course.

EDWARD *(looking at her ball)*. Would you like to play catch?

ESMERALDA. All right. But you must be very careful. This ball is extremely precious to me.

EDWARD. I will. *(They begin to throw ball back and forth and move around.)*

ESMERALDA. What brings you to this part of the country, Prince Edward?

EDWARD. Please. Call me Edward. *(Beat.)* I am on an important journey. For generations, the men in my family who are in line to become king, must travel on a

thirty-day quest to prove that they are worthy of the throne.

ESMERALDA. Thirty days! That sounds quite dangerous!

EDWARD. Indeed it can be. So far it has given me a fresh perspective on life. I'm very glad that I happened upon this path. If I'd taken a different route, I might never have met you.

ESMERALDA. Yes, I'm...I'm glad as well. *(They look at each other.)*

EDWARD *(does a trick with the ball or throws it high in the air)*. Here, catch!

ESMERALDA. Oh! *(She catches it.)* Perhaps we should stop now.

EDWARD. As you wish, Princess.

ESMERALDA *(smiles)*. Esmeralda. *(They sit on bench. ESMERALDA looks around.)* What a magnificent day. Sometimes when I'm out here all alone, I like to imagine all sorts of wonderful things.

EDWARD. Like what?

ESMERALDA *(suddenly feeling shy)*. All sorts. I...I don't know why I told you that.

EDWARD. Please, I would be honored to hear what you imagine.

ESMERALDA. Perhaps another time.

EDWARD. I'll tell you what I imagined earlier today. Then maybe you'll tell me one of your stories.

ESMERALDA. All right.

(EDWARD gets up and acts out his "adventure." MUSIC may be added.)

EDWARD. Just this morning I imagined that a vicious dragon was hovering above me hidden in the trees. He was about to fly down and breathe his fiery breath on me when I took a magical rock and threw it at him. The rock exploded into a million pieces of fire. But the dragon just opened his mouth and swallowed them all!

ESMERALDA (*gasps*). Whatever did you do?

EDWARD. I ran as fast as I could because the dragon was furious and hungry. I thought that if I could lead him to some food, he would leave me alone. So I ran towards a group of deer and hid in a nearby cave.

ESMERALDA. Did he eat them?

EDWARD. Oh yes. In two bites.

ESMERALDA (*captivated by the story*). Oh, my!

EDWARD. Next, I slowly came out of the cave. Then I began to run when I heard the terrifying sound of large flapping wings, and the loudest screech you've ever heard! The dragon had been waiting for me on top of the cave!

ESMERALDA. How did you escape?

EDWARD (*acts this out*). I put my sharpest arrow into my bow. Then I took careful aim, pulled back the string and let the arrow fly. (*Beat.*) Let's just say that the dragon won't be bothering me anymore. (*MUSIC out.*)

ESMERALDA. You are a marvelous storyteller! I could actually see it happen!

EDWARD. That's the wonder of the imagination, isn't it? Will you tell me a story now?

ESMERALDA. Well...all right. (*She acts out her story. MUSIC may be added.*) I like to imagine that there is a giant cocoon in that tree right over there. Inside there is a beautiful butterfly who sings a haunting melody every

morning. She is just about to come out and spread her wings when suddenly...

(MARGARET rings a loud bell. MUSIC out.)

ESMERALDA *(cont'd)*. I need to go back to the castle immediately.

EDWARD. But, your story! May I see you tomorrow?

ESMERALDA. If you'd like. I always come here at noon.

EDWARD. I won't let any dragons harm you, Esmeralda.

ESMERALDA. And I shall finish my story for you, Edward.

EDWARD *(takes her hand and kisses it)*. Until tomorrow then.

ESMERALDA. Until tomorrow. *(She smiles and runs off.)*

(EDWARD smiles as he watches ESMERALDA leave. He turns and continues on his journey.)

A WITCH sneaks through the forest spying on EDWARD. She walks out of the forest and falls dramatically.)

WITCH. Owww! My ankle! How clumsy of me!

EDWARD *(rushes over to her)*. Dear lady! Are you all right?

WITCH. I seem to have injured my ankle.

EDWARD. Allow me to be of assistance. *(He helps her up. She puts her arm around him for support.)*

WITCH. Thank you, kind sir. I don't know what I would have done if you hadn't arrived! *(She looks at him.)*

Goodness, you're Prince Edward of Buntington, aren't you?

EDWARD. Yes, I am. Now, which way do you live?

WITCH. I...uh, I live that way. *(She points. They begin walking.)*

EDWARD. You must have walked quite a distance! There aren't any cottages for miles this way. I must get you home safely before it gets dark.

WITCH. Oh, I don't mind the dark. *(Beat.)* Tell me, what's it like to be of royal blood and to live in a beautiful castle?

EDWARD. It's fine. I prefer to be outside, however.

WITCH. You certainly seem to be an unassuming prince. How refreshing. I have a beautiful daughter, just your age. Surely you must be thinking about finding a suitable princess.

EDWARD. That's very kind. I have no doubt that she is a lovely girl. *(He looks to where ESMERALDA exited and smiles.)* However, I'm interested in another.

WITCH. I see. She is most fortunate. *(Beat.)* I still hope that you will come to my cottage and meet my daughter. She's made a delicious stew. Surely you must be hungry!

EDWARD. Thank you, but I must continue on my journey.

WITCH. I insist. It's the least that I can do after you've been so kind. *(Beat.)* You know, Prince Edward, it may not be obvious at first glance, but I am a very powerful person.

EDWARD. You don't say.

WITCH *(voice and demeanor change. She no longer limps)*. Oh yes. And extraordinarily patient. I've been waiting a very long time for you.

(LIGHTS SHIFT. It becomes darker.)

EDWARD. Excuse me?

WITCH. I said I've been waiting for you. It is written in the stars. *(She takes out her wand and sweeps it up. Stars come out.)*

EDWARD *(steps away)*. I must be going.

WITCH *(intensely)*. Not so fast, Prince. Before your father met your mother, he was promised to me. Coming from nothing, I was thrilled to think of living in a palace as a queen! But then, your father saw your mother and fell instantly in love.

EDWARD. I don't want to hear...

WITCH. Once I learned they were to marry, I ran far into the forest. At first I simply wanted to perish. But later I began to plan my vengeance. And the more that I thought about it, the more powerful I became! And your life will be filled with that power when you come with me. *(She laughs.)* Don't you see how perfect this is? I may have lost your father, but I'll be gaining his son!

EDWARD. Who...what are you?

WITCH *(takes out a magical rock and holds it toward him)*. Just look at this beautiful rock! Aren't the colors simply magical?

(LIGHTS and SFX. Rock lights up.)

EDWARD *(becomes entranced with the rock. He shakes his head as if to break the spell)*. Answer me! What are you?

WITCH. That's not important. The important thing is that you come with me. It is your destiny!

EDWARD. Forces stronger and purer than you shall determine that. Good day! *(He begins to leave.)*

WITCH. Don't walk away from me! You'll regret it for the rest of your life!

EDWARD. How dare you threaten me! I demand that you leave immediately! Your ankle seems to be just fine!

(WITCH holds out the rock again. LIGHTS and SFX. EDWARD becomes entranced as before. He tries to fight it.)

WITCH. You are so much like your father. He always did have a bit of a temper. Now, if you don't come with me, you and your entire family will be very sorry.

EDWARD *(shakes off spell of magical rock)*. I would never follow a creature like you! I'm certain that my father saw you for what you truly are and that is why he left you! *(He storms off.)*

WITCH. Well, you can't say that I didn't warn you, Princey! *(She waves her wand and says incantation:)*

I CALL UPON THE SPIRITS AND DARK MAGIC OF
THE EARTH,
GIVE ME ALL THE POWERS I DECREE!
THE PRINCE MUST LEARN A LESSON FOR MY
PRIDE TO BE RETURNED,
A HUMBLE LITTLE CREATURE HE SHALL BE!

(She points wand toward where EDWARD exited, then at well. Strange SFX and LIGHTING.)

WITCH *(cont'd., laughs)*. Looks like you're no longer a prince! What a shame. *(To herself.)* And he'll stay that

way until a princess falls in love with him just as he is!
(Beat.) Although, that's rather unlikely! *(Laughs.)* I'll
be around to check on you later, Princey! Ta ta! *(She
exits laughing.)*

EDWARD *(offstage with echo)*. Ribbet. Ribbet. Ribbet.
(Etc.)