Excerpt terms and conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Dramatic Publishing
A PARTICIPATION MUSICAL

The Tale of the Frog Prince

Book by
KATHY HOTCHNER

Lyrics by
BILL ROSER,
STEVE and KATHY HOTCHNER

Music by
BILL ROSER

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY
The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty fees are given in our current catalogue and are subject to change without notice. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed anytime it is acted before an audience. All inquiries concerning amateur and stock rights should be addressed to:

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY
311 Washington St., Woodstock, Illinois 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including but not limited to the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication, and reading are reserved. On all programs this notice should appear:

"Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY of Woodstock, Illinois"

Book ©MCMLXXXIX by
KATHERINE HOTCHNER
Lyrics ©MCMLXXXIX by
STEVEN and KATHERINE HOTCHNER, BILL ROSER
Music ©MCMLXXXIX by
BILL ROSER
Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(THE TALE OF THE FROG PRINCE)

ISBN 0-87129-199-1

© The Dramatic Publishing Company, Woodstock, Illinois
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)

CHARACTERS

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 together? (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