

Princess Studies

Script

after Anton Chekhov

I

(enter one by one women and men dressed in tuxedos. Walks toward first space, picks up pillows full of feathers, walks over to the second space and empties the container. 'repeat until all the containers of feathers are emptied into the second space. Cellist enters also wearing a tuxedo. enters first space now empty. Starts tuning his cello. to a minor key)

lights down.

Mic: underneath feathers in second space, lights a match.

lights slowly up.

Mic

Once upon a time there was a prince
Who wanted a princess all to his own.
But she must be a proper princess.
So he traveled all over the world in order to find such a princess.
But every time there was something wrong.
There were plenty of Princesses,
But he could never really know if they were real princesses.
There was always something that wasn't quite right/
So the prince came back home and was very much upset
Because he did so long for a real princess.

cello plays scales slowly.

Mic: up and start pacing on floor

walking time to music as if playing musical chairs.

when music stops, sit down, repeat

Printed text (projections on to structure #1)

There was a child who was found in a storm.

A fire storm.

The combustion was caused by a single match.

II

Rob - Yes, when you are alone with nothing to do, you realize marriage is the only answer. What is it all about? We go on and on, just living, until we are sick of it. Again I have let another year slip by. The matchmaker's been roaming for three months. Everything is arranged....Ugh! I am feeling disgusted with myself.

Getting married is a hell of a business. If it's not one thing, it's another. This has to be just right, that has to be just right - no, damn it, it's not as easy as they say. What a business...not the sort of...just a hell of a business!

And the dowry, What about the dowry? tell me about it once more.

Mic- lights a match

Mic ah...the dowry! A brownstone in the city. Four stories. And what a fine income it brings! A real joy. The grocer alone pays seven hundred a month for his store. And the beer hall in the cellar draws a big crowd. there are two wings - they've got wood siding, but one's on a stone foundation. Each brings in four hundred. Then there is a vegetable garden in the garden district. A store keeper rented it three years ago to grow peas. Very sober! Never touches a drop.

Rob - and the girl, what is she like?

Mic - Oh she is a rare breed. Sugar candy! all white and pink. Peaches and cream, so sweet- there is no word for it. She'll take your breath away. You'll tell your friends and even your enemies.

Rob - what about her father, he wouldn't be an doctor, would he?

Mic - She's the daughter of a respectable politician and her mother is in business.. A girl who wouldn't shame a gentleman. She won't hear of a garbage man or a plumber. "As for me" she says, "whatever my husband's like, even if he's not much to look at, he's got to be proper, and well respected in his circle." Yes, very genteel! And on the Sabbath, when she wears a silk dress - my God, how it rustles, a Princess, I tell you!

Rob - But I haven't made up my mind yet. I was just mulling it over.

Mic - Nonsense, nonsense! Don't be shy. I'll marry you off so quick you won't feel a thing. We'll go to the girl right now and finish it off...just like that! When you're married, you won't recognize yourself, or anything else for that matter. You'll have a beautiful home with a sofa, a little puppy, some sort of a canary in a cage, needlework, home cooking...and imagine, you're sitting on your sofa, when suddenly, a pretty girl, very attractive sits down beside you and with her soft little hand she..

Rob - Ah damn! When you think about it, really, what soft hands they have - white as milk!

Mic - And that isn't all! As if it's only hands! My friend, they also have...But what's the point of saying it - they have, my friend, simply - ah who the hell knows what they have.

Rob - You know, to tell the truth, I love it when a pretty little thing sits down next to me.

Mic - See! you've caught on. Now we only have to iron out the details. Don't worry. The wedding dinner and all that - I'll handle it. Champagne - you can't do with less than 10 cases, no matter what you say., Moet and Chandon also - a half dozen bottles, are absolutely necessary. I bet the bride has a gang of aunts and gossipy girlfriends - that kind doesn't like to fool around. We don't want any Rhine wine - the hell with it, right? As for the meal... I know a caterer, the son-of-a-bitch feeds you till you can't get up from the table...

III

Start of Musical chairs/ auction

IV

Mic - Ah...you're here, Well, Have you found anybody?

Rob lights a match

Rob - Oh yes, only first let me catch my breath. How I've been running around! For your sake I've searched every house in town. Worn myself out going to offices, ministries, hung around army barracks. Do you know, my dear, I was almost beaten up- yes by God! The old woman that married off that nice young widow to that man who we all thought was a reputable business man. Well he's off to jail for embezzlement,

Mic - What!?!

Rob - it was a shame, no one knew what type of man he was, anyway she comes up to me, the widow's matchmaker. "You're a so and so" she says, "taking the bread out of the mouths of honest people. Stick to your own district." "Well, what of it," I told her straight off. "For my young lady I'm ready to do anything." but what gentlemen I've got in store for

you! Since God made Adam, there's been no one like them. They'll be here today. I ran ahead to warn you.

Mic - Today?!?..

Rob - Don't be scared my darling! That's how these things are done. They'll come, they'll look you over, that's all. And you'll look them over.

Mic - How many are there?

Rob - six.

Mic - screams.

Rob - But why are you in such a flutter, my dear? It's better to have a choice. If one won't do, another will.

Mic - What are they?

Rob - All of them - a first-rate selection. You've never seen such gentlemen.

Mic - What are they like?

Rob - They are marvelous - good-looking, neat. First, there's Mr. B - just marvelous. A navy man. He'll suit you to a tee. Says he needs a bride with some meat on her. Doesn't go for the bony kind. and there's Mr. C. a managing partner at the firm. So dignified, there's no getting near him. Very handsome - stout. The way he yells at me: "Don't give me any nonsense, that she's such and such a lady. Give it to me straight - what's she got in property and how much in ready cash?": "So much and so much, my good sir." "You're lying! Bitch!" Yes, my dear, and he stuck in another word, only it wouldn't be polite to repeat it. Right away I said to myself, "Ah this one must be an important gentle man."

Mic - And who else?

Rob - Mr. D. This one's so delicate, and his lips, my darling - raspberries, perfect raspberries. He's just marvelous. "As for me," he says, "I need a wife who's good looking, well-brought up, and can speak French" Yes a man of refined manners, a foreign type. And he has such slender little legs.

Mic - No, these delicate types are somehow not quite...I don't know...I fail to see anything in them.

Rob - Well, if you want them a little fatter, take Mr. C. You couldn't pick anyone better. NO use arguing - he's a gentleman if anyone's a

gentleman. Why, he'd barely fit through that door - such a marvelous gentleman!

Mic - How old is he?

Rob - He's still young - about fifty, but not yet fifty.

Mic - And what kind of hair does he have?

Rob - nice hair.

Mic - one eye brow or two?

Rob - two!

Mic - and his nose?

Rob - Eh...the nose is fine also. Everything's in its right place. He's just marvelous. But don't be upset. All he's got in his apartment is his pipe - not a stick of furniture.

Mic - Who else?

Rob - Mr. E He's a stockbroker. Stammers a bit, but otherwise he's well-behaved.

Mic - Nothing but brokers and more brokers. Does he drink? That's what you'd better tell me.

Rob - So he drinks, I won't deny it, he drinks, What can you do? After all, he's a stockbroker, a lot of pressure being responsible for other peoples money. But he's so quiet, smooth as silk.

Mic - No! I won't have a drunkard for a husband.

Rob - As you wish my dear. You don't want one, take another. But what of it if he has a drop too much now and then? He's not drunk all week. Some days he turns up sober.

Mic - Well who else?

Rob - There's one more, only he's such a... ah, the devil take him! The other are at least decent.

Mic - But who is he?

Rob - I didn't mean to mention him. If you must know, he's an attorney and wears a carnation in his buttonhole. But he's got lead in his pants. You'll never get him out of the house.

Mic - But that's only five, you said six.

Rob - Isn't that enough for you? See how you've gotten carried away, and only a little while ago you were scared.

V

Full fledged auction scene
projections
home shopping network

VI

Rob - All right, if we have to wait, we'll wait. As long as they don't take their time. Only took a minute break from the office. The boss will suddenly get it into his head to ask,

"Where's the managing vice partner?"

"He's gone to look over a young lady."

How he'd give it to me for that young lady...But let me glance over the inventory.

(reads:) "Stone house. four stories."*(raises his eyes upwards and scans the room)*

Fine! *(continues reading)* "Two wings, one on a stone foundation, the other all wood" ...Hm, the wooden wing's in bad shape. "A Range Rover and a Mercedes convertible for the weekend, large rug, small rug."

Probably the sort that are fit for the scrap heap. But the old woman swears they're first-rate. All right, let'em be first-rate. "Two dozen silver spoons." Sure, what's a home without silver spoons? "Two fox furs."

Hm. "Four large quilts, two small quilts." "six silk dresses, six cotton, two nightgowns, two..." Eh, worthless frills! "Linen, tablecloths, food processor, vegi-matic..." Well, that's her department. But on the other hand, I'd better check it out. Nowadays they're likely to promise mansions and jewels, but when you marry' em, all you find is quilts and feather beds.

VII

Mic - Indeed, making a choice is so complicated! If there were only one or two, but there are five. I'll just have to pick what strikes me. Mr. A. isn't bad looking, although he's a bit skinny.

Mr. B isn't bad looking either.

And Mr. C., though he's fat, also cuts a fine figure. How am I going to manage here? Mr. D is also a man with qualities.

It's so difficult to choose - there are just no words for it!

Now if I could combine Mr. A's lips with Mr. B's nose, and take some of the easy ways of Mr. C, and perhaps add D's solid build, then I could decide in a moment.

Oh, it's all too difficult! My head is throbbing, I guess it would be best to draw lots. Trust in God's will - whoever turns up, he's my husband. I'll write them all down on scraps of paper, roll them up, and what will be, will be.

A girl's situation is so trying, especially when she's in love.

Men don't feel any sympathy; they refuse to understand ...

There, everything's ready! I'll put them into my hat,

shut my eyes, and what will be, will be. How terrifying! Oh God, make Mr. D turn up. No, why him? Better Mr. A. But why Mr. A?

Are the others worse? No no...whoever turns up, so be it.

(fumbles in the purse, and instead of one, takes out all)

Oof! all of them! They've all turned up! My heart is pounding so! No.

One! One! I must pick one...

Use handfuls of feathers for paper scraps

VIII

Mic Starts:

(Rob in bold text)

Cute

Adventurous

Caring

analytical

curious

athletic

monogamous

attractive

silly

feminist attitude

humble

concerned with the plight of humanity and the planet, wars, poverty, unemployment, hunger, ecological destruction etc.

with great legs

must have a sense of humor

brainy

garlic loving

fit

cocktail drinking

trim and neat

wild assed, cussers, spitters and multi-orgasmics encouraged

long hair

a sense of independence

upstanding values, ethics and class

spontaneous

rebellious attitude

virtuous

gothic

genuine

progressive

romanticism on personal level

optimistic

friendship rooted in shared interests

blond

meaningful relationship that just might have the staying power to

last

great health

with blue eyes

great hygiene

fun

HIV negative

seasonably handsome

has all shots

works out

no dependents

Condo in Lakeview

loves children

light drinker

reads in restaurants

yells at bad drivers

world traveled

employed

walks capably

often sober

crinkles plastic in movie theaters

devoted

sincere

unsurpassed looks

masculine yet gentle

height proportionate to weight

weight proportionate to height

with similar interests.

*start knocking down walls to stack and make into a mess of mattresses.
Repeat personal add section , Micki running around Rob's structure ending
out of breath.
cello plays erratic music*

Projections

Among the Califorman Karok, a girl who is pretty and skillful in making acorn-bread and weaving baskets may cost two strings of dentaluim shells.

in many cases, the bride price is influenced by the personal qualities of the girl, such as her beauty strength and abilities.

Among some ibo-speaking people of Nigeria, a tall well grown girl with a smooth skin and other desirable attributes may fetch 25-40 Lira.

Where as the father of an ugly girl may be glad to get three goats for his daughter.

During the middle ages, they were thought of a as lustful allies of the devil weaning men from god and noble intellectual pursuits.

They wished no more than to be played upon by a master to be his favorite instrument with which he used to father masterpieces.

IX

One evening, a terrible storm, a vicious thunderstorm blew in.
The lightening struck a tree and caused flames to
illuminate high into the pitch black night.
The blaze reached to tease the nimbostratus clouds
and the rain pounded itself harder to battle with the fire.
All at once, a violent knocking was heard on the castle gate.
The old queen went to answer it.
The princess was standing outside.
She was soaked to the bone,

the heat from the burning embers had not warmed her.
The water trickled down her hair through her clothes,
through the tips of her shoes and out again at the heel.
She was a sad sight.
Yet she claimed she was a princess.
a proper princess...
proper...
property...

Mic (*lighting a match*)

a short slender piece of **flammable** material tipped with a **combustible**
mixture that bursts **into flame** when slightly heated through **friction**.
friction...the rubbing of two bodies.
sulfur,
chemical

Upon this bed, the princess was to sleep all night.

Yet none of the rules can qualify one to intensify any relation.

Lights dim

Out.