The King and His Dancing Princesses – Preview information

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Director’s Notes

**Casting:** This script was written for a cast of 24, but the number of actors required can easily be reduced.

The two narrators, obviously, can also be combined into one.

Although this is clearly a take on the 12 dancing princesses fairy tale, twelve princesses are not necessary. The pairs of princesses (the Jans and the Jos) can become single princesses. Other princesses can be eliminated, also, with adjustments in the lines.

The servants Donavan, Eduardo, Frederick, and Gerald can be eliminated and their lines given to Alberto, Belvidere and Carlson. If this happens, some of the princesses may need to be dressed up as boys to play suitors in scene 4.

Risa and Nisa were two characters created for girls who didn’t want to speak lines. The characters can be eliminated, if numbers require -- or conversely, their roles can be expanded for comic effect. For example, we had them standing on either side of Donovan during his speech in scene 4, illustrating his words with flight-attendant-like gestures.

**Set and staging**: The set is pretty simple except for the scenes in the magic garden. For these, we brought out a small bench and as many artificial trees, plants, and flowers as we could borrow and fit on the stage. (The set changes in and out of those scenes were well-rehearsed – the boys playing the servants assisted with the scene change)

**Music and dancing**: Obviously, the dancing princesses need to dance! We taught them some very simple choreography to clips from “Cotton-Eyed Joe” and “Funkytown” that the princesses performed. And everyone enjoyed doing “The Chicken Dance” to close out the show. All the music was easily found online.

**Costumes:** The princesses all found their own dress-up princess dress (most had their own at home). Boys wore dark pants and shoes and a white shirt. The King added a crown and purple cape. The girl servants wore dark skirts, white shirts and small white elasticized caps.

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SCENE 1: Castle

Narrator 1: Once upon a time, there was a king who ruled in a faraway land.

Narrator 2: This king was a good king – kind, fair and generous to all his people.

Narrator 1: And this king was blessed with twelve beautiful daughters. The eldest, Julianna.

Julianna: Welcome to our glorious kingdom – which will one day be ruled by me! (*as girls enter, they take positions seated around the castle)*

Narrator 2: The twins, Janessa and Janetta.

Janessa: Oh, my gosh! Janetta: This castle . . Janessa: is just so . . Janetta: so . .

The Jans: fabulous! (*Look at each other-squeal*)

Narrator 1: The ever knowledgeable Juliette.

Juliette: Actually, our kingdom is less a monarchy and more of a benevolent dictatorship, which means it is run with exceptional efficiency!

Narrator 2: And the not-so-knowledgable Jocelyn.

Jocelyn: Dictatorship? Are we going on a cruise?

Narrator 1: The ever-ailing Jordyn.

Jordyn: (*sneezes*) Does anyone have a tissue?

Narrator 2: And the rather unapproachable Janine.

Janine: Hey! Who you callin’ unapproachable? Go ahead! Approach me!

Narrator 2: Um . . no, thank you.

Narrator 1: The never-quite-content Joanna and Josephina.

The Jo’s: (*whining in unison*) Do we have to go on a cruise with Janine?

Narrator 2: The introverted Jocelyn. (*Jocelyn waves shyly*)

Narrator 1: The loquacious Jillian.

Jillian: Hi! Welcome to our castle! Isn’t it a great castle? We just love our castle! Of course, not that we’ve seen a lot of other castles, because there really aren’t a lot of other castles around to see . . seeing as how our dad is the king and so he’s the only one around who lives in a castle . . (*other girls pull her to her seat*)

Narrator 2: (*Jennalee has entered and is staring at Narr 2*) And finally, the always . . *attentive* Jennalee.

Jennalee: (*giggles*) You’re cute! (*Narr 2 groans*)

Narrator 1: The princesses lived, of course, in a castle with their father, the king. (*King enters, princesses look at him and say sweetly: “*Aw!”)

Narrator 2: There, they were showered with all the very best things of life: delicious food (*servant offers 3 princesses food, they say “*Mmm!”) . .

Narrator 1: Beautiful dresses (*servant shows three princesses a dress, they say “*Ooo!”) . . .

Narrator 2: Fine music (*servant plays instrument for 3 princesses, they say “A*h!”)

Narrator 1: Lovely gardens (*servant offers 3 princesses flowers, they say “*Oh!”), and best of all, the incomparably great devotion of their beloved father, the king. (*princesses again look at king and say sweetly “*Aw!”)

Narrator 2: But one day, the king noticed a change in his daughters. Despite all the blessings showered on them, the princesses were discontent, and daily seemed to grow more so (*all sigh loudly*). They rejected the delicious food (*princesses with food throw it down and stomp out)* . . .

Narrator 1: Scorned the beautiful dresses (*princesses with dress toss it aside and stomp out)* . . .

Narrator 2: Ignored the fine music (*princesses listening to music make a face and stomp out)*. . .

Narrator 1: And avoided the lovely gardens. (*princesses with flowers throw them down and stomp out)* The king couldn’t understand the change in his daughters. Then one day, he was informed of another mystery . . .

SCENE 2: King’s throneroom

(*while 4 servants enter talking, king’s throne is set in place by Risa and Nisa and king sits on it)*

Albert: Now the important thing is not to panic.

Marjory: No panicking.

Belvidere: We just need to calmly tell him that there’s a little problem.

Marjory: Just a little problem.

Carlson: Everything will be fine.

Marjory: (*Starts to cry*) Just fine. (*They shush her* )

King: Ah! Good morning, everyone!

Albert: Good morning, your majesty.

Belvidere: Good morning, your majesty.

Carlson: Good morning, your majesty.

Marjory: (*wipes nose*) Good morning.

King: So, how are things on the homefront today?

Albert: All things are in order, sir.

King: The Royal Servants?

Belvidere: Up and at ‘em, sir.

King: Good. The Royal Kitchen?

Carlson: Cooking and baking, sir.

King: Good. The Royal Gardens?

Albert: Pruned and primed, sir.

King: Good. The Royal Musicians?

Belvidere: Tuned and prepped, sir.

King: Good. The Royal Princesses?

(*Marjory begins to wail – Nisa enters, hands her a tissue, exits*)

King: That’s not good. Is something wrong with the princesses?

. . . . . .

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