

Punch and Prudie

*A Children's Play by
Whitney Ryan Garrity*

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Narrated by a flustered but well-meaning fairy named Fortunata, this charming original fairy tale tells the story of Tucker, a handsome young man who sets out to seek his fortune. Fortunata decides the young man must be aided by his two pets, Punch the dog and Prudie the cat, who chase and tease each other like, well, cats and dogs! Tucker, though dubious, agrees. Fortunata also gives Tucker a magical ring which grants him any wish, although he must use it wisely.

On his journey Tucker becomes smitten with a lovely young maiden Annalise, and he admits that his recent appearance of wealth to impress her is due to the ring.

Unfortunately, the ring is soon stolen and it's up to Punch and Prudie, and a sweet little mouse named Vita, to help prove that the power of friendship is greater than even the magic of the ring.

Performance time approximately 45 minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 6 w)

(In Order of Appearance.)

FORTUNATA: a good fairy (*F*)

PUNCH: a dog (*M*)

PRUDIE: a cat (*F*)

GREGOR: a servant (*M*)

ROWAN: a farmer (*M*) *(Doubles as a second servant.)*

MARTA: wife to Rowan (*F*)

TUCKER: son of Marta and Rowan (*M*)

LAVINIA: sister to Annalise (*F*)

ANNALISE: a beautiful girl (*F*)

VITA: a mouse (*F*)

SETTING

A land far away, a time long ago. Set pieces include a plywood palm tree; brown bench; a fireplace façade, a small round wooden table (on castors); wooden chairs (2); and a loveseat.

PROPERTIES

Ring (<i>Fortunata</i>)	Newspaper (<i>Rowan</i>)
Coffee mugs (2) (<i>Marta</i>)	Satchel (<i>Tucker</i>)
Shawl (<i>Fortunata</i>)	Apple (<i>Preset in satchel</i>)
Silver tray with lid (<i>Gregor</i>)	Book (<i>Annalise</i>)
Floor pillow (<i>Gregor</i>)	Floor pillow (<i>Rowan</i>)
Hat with plume (<i>Gregor</i>)	Shiny cloak (<i>Rowan</i>)
Tray (<i>Lavinia</i>)	Bowls (3) (<i>Lavinia</i>)

(Please see end of script for COSTUME SUGGESTIONS.)

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(AT RISE: The stage is bare of scenery. FORTUNATA is discovered DSC. SHE is a beautiful woman wearing a fancy dress and a tiara. SHE addresses the audience.)

FORTUNATA: Well, hello there, boys and girls ... and parents too. Welcome, welcome. I am Fortunata, a good fairy. Well, I mean, what other kind of fairy could I be? A wicked fairy? *(Strikes a "wicked" pose unsuccessfully.)* Oh, dear me, no. No, I am quite content being a good fairy, thank you very much. I enjoy granting wishes and just being an overall help to those in need. Not that being a fairy is all pixie dust and glamour! Oh, dear me, no. Truth be told, the flying makes me a little dizzy. And every time I wave my magic wand, someone *else* gets the prince! But being a good fairy does have its rewards. *(Displaying the ring on HER finger.)* Like this ring ... isn't it pretty? Well, this ring will come in handy later on. Right now, I would like to introduce you to two very good friends – Punch, the dog, and Prudie, the cat. Punch and Prudie have been the best of pals since just about forever. Completely devoted to one another. Why, I bet that if one were in need, the other would practically—

(PRUDIE runs on with PUNCH in hot pursuit.)

PUNCH: Come back here, you mangy feline!

PRUDIE: *(Laughs.)* You'll have to catch me first!

(PUNCH chases PRUDIE around FORTUNATA. THEY end up on opposite sides of the fairy.)

FORTUNATA: Oh, my stars! What in heaven's name is going on here?

PUNCH: Prudie knocked over my water bowl!

PRUDIE: *(Shrugging innocently.)* It was an accident. My tail just happened to—

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PUNCH: Yeah? Well, *you're* about to have an accident too!

(PUNCH chases PRUDIE around FORTUNATA again. There is much barking and hissing.)

FORTUNATA: *(Over the din.)* Stop it! Stop it this instant, I say! Why can't you behave? Can't you see that we have guests?

(PUNCH and PRUDIE stop dead in their tracks. THEY are once again on opposites sides of FORTUNATA.)

PUNCH and PRUDIE: Guests?!

FORTUNATA: Yes, look ... can't you see all these lovely children and their parents? Say hello to them.

PUNCH and PRUDIE: *(Embarrassed.)* Hello.

FORTUNATA: There now, that's better, isn't it?

PUNCH and PRUDIE: Yes, ma'am.

FORTUNATA: Do you think they came here to see the two of you act in such a horrible fashion?

PUNCH and PRUDIE: No, ma'am.

FORTUNATA: Oh, dear me, no. Now why don't you—

PUNCH: Well ... Prudie started it!

PRUDIE: Did not!

PUNCH: Did too!

FORTUNATA: It doesn't matter who—

PRUDIE: You chased me!

PUNCH: You knocked over my bowl!

FORTUNATA: *(Overlapping.)* Sometimes these things just—

PRUDIE: *(Overlapping.)* With my tail! It was accident!

PUNCH: Was not!

PRUDIE: Was too!

FORTUNATA: *(Grabs PUNCH and PRUDIE by the collars. Angrily.)* All right! Now, listen up! Ordinarily we good fairies have a lot of patience. Truth be told, we are positively lousy with patience! But just look at me! *(PUNCH and PRUDIE turn away ashamed.)* I said look at me!

(PUNCH and PRUDIE turn to FORTUNATA.)

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FORTUNATA: *(Cont'd.)* What you are looking at right now is a good fairy at the end of her patience!! *(Releasing PUNCH and PRUDIE.)* Now, I want you to apologize to each other.

PUNCH and PRUDIE: *(Contrite.)* Yes, ma'am.

FORTUNATA: Well ...? I'm waiting.

PUNCH: I'm sorry that I accused you of knockin' over my water bowl, Prudie. I'm sure it was just an accident.

PRUDIE: And I'm sorry too. Sorry that you're dumb enough to believe that it was an accident!

(PRUDIE laughs and runs off. PUNCH chases after HER.)

PUNCH: Why, you ...!!

(FORTUNATA watches THEM exit. SHE shrugs and turns back to the audience.)

FORTUNATA: You see what I have to put up with around here? Punch and Prudie lived with a farmer named Rowan, his lovely wife Marta, and their young and handsome son, Tucker. They all lived in a beautiful little cottage, way out in the— *(Looking the bare stage.)* Oh, my! Why, this doesn't look like a beautiful little cottage at all, does it? Let's just see if I can fix that with a spell ... *(Waves HER arms.)* "Wherever you wander, Wherever you roam, There's nothing nicer, Than a beautiful little cottage, As a home." *(FORTUNATA looks around, nothing has happened. SHE paces DSC annoyed.)* Oh, dear me! All that barking and hissing and ruckus has thrown off my magic! *(Calling.)* Gregor? Oh, Gregor, dear? I was wondering if you could help ...

(GREGOR, the servant, enters looking rather surly. HE brings on a fireplace façade.)

FORTUNATA: *(Cont'd.)* Oh, yes! That's perfect, Gregor. A cozy little fireplace for the cottage.

End of Freeview

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