

THE STORY CLUB

A one-act play for young audiences by
Nicole B. Adkins

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

IVY, girl, 10 years old, Story Club "Boss," Charlie's big sister.

CHARLIE, boy, 7 year old.

JUSTINE, girl, 9 years old.

HANNAH, girl, 10 years old, new next door neighbor.

SETTING

A sunny Saturday afternoon in Ivy and Charlie's backyard. In their imaginations: an enchanted wood for days and days.

PRODUCTION NOTES

There should be no blackouts between scenes. Scenes are only marked for the purpose of indicating larger beats.

SCENE 1

(The setting is Ivy and Charlie's backyard. They have a playground, perhaps with swing-set & slide, etc. This can be as simple or elaborate as the producing company decides, but there should be multiple levels and playing spaces. It is especially important that the Ogre have a "lair," and that the Ogre and Fairy Queen areas are obviously defined. These can be creatively rendered – think "kids' fort." The spirited, inventive, and often dictatorial 10-year-old IVY enters as though in a sacred ritual. She is wearing a crown, perhaps butterfly wings, and carrying a wand. 9-year-old JUSTINE, who finds herself frequently torn between Ivy's virtuosity and 7-year-old Charlie's hijinks, follows behind, pulling a colorful trunk on wheels. CHARLIE, who loves Ivy's stories but has his own idea of how things should go, carries a hat in which pieces of paper are folded. Other than Justine and Charlie's giggling, the entire entrance should feel like a parade and familiar ceremony.)

IVY: Shhhh!

JUSTINE: Sorry!

IVY: Welcome, Subjects, to my Royal Castle.

JUSTINE: I thought it was a pirate ship.

IVY: Justine! Try to keep up.

JUSTINE: Well, it was a pirate ship last week!

CHARLIE: I liked the pirate ship—but I wanted to play the dread pirate with an eye patch instead of a parrot. Ivy! You said next time that—

IVY: Today we are here to hear a brand new story.

JUSTINE: Yay! A new story!

IVY: Do we have the costumes?

JUSTINE: Yes, your Royal Highness!

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(She refers to the colorful trunk.)

It's really full!

IVY: Mom bought a bunch of new stuff at the garage sale next-door.

JUSTINE: Did somebody else move in yet?

CHARLIE: There was a moving truck yesterday, but we haven't seen anybody.

IVY: Charlie? Do you have the hat with the characters in it?

CHARLIE: Yes, Ivy.

IVY: Don't you mean yes, your Royal Highness?

CHARLIE: Aw...do I have to?

IVY: Charlie! Come on! The story will never work if you don't participate. You promised.

CHARLIE: Fine. Yes, your Royal Highness.

IVY: Thank you, my loyal subject. Pass the hat.

JUSTINE: What's the title, Ivy?

IVY: I'm not Ivy right now. Remember?

JUSTINE: Sorry. What's the title, Fairy Queen?

IVY: The title of today's story is "The Ogre and the Fairy Queen."

JUSTINE: Not again!

IVY: What do you mean?

(They look at Justine.)

JUSTINE: *(Beat.)* You're the Fairy Queen, right? You always get to play all the Queen parts.

(They look at Ivy.)

IVY: I'm telling the story! I know the part best—and I'm the oldest! Besides, I picked it first before we even got started.

CHARLIE: Why do we always have to have fairies and queens? Let's make this one about Karate Champions!

JUSTINE: Oooh! Yeah! Karate Champions!

IVY: This story is NOT about KARATE CHAMPIONS! This is my story! *(Beat.)* Does somebody else want to tell the story??

(They are quiet.)

That's what I thought. Now pass the hat.

(Justine picks a piece of paper out of the hat.)

JUSTINE: Great! Just great. I'm the Ogre. I always have to play the bad guy.

IVY: Remember what Mrs. Eberly said at the school play. *(Beat.)* She said it to your grade, too, Justine. There are no small parts—

JUSTINE: Only small parts.

IVY: Justine!

(Ivy looks witheringly at Justine.)

JUSTINE: *(Not enthusiastic:)* Only small actors.

IVY: Right!

JUSTINE: Why don't you play the Ogre then?

IVY: *(With great patience:)* I can't do that, Justine. I already picked Fairy Queen.

CHARLIE: I want to be the Ogre!

IVY: You can't. You're too little. And Justine already picked that one.

JUSTINE: I'll switch! He can be the—

(Ivy gives Justine a stern look.)

(Sighs:) Fine.

CHARLIE: I want to be the Ogre.

IVY: Did you pick Ogre?

CHARLIE: No.

IVY: Pick from the hat, Charlie.

(He does.)

CHARLIE: Fairy princess??!

(Justine laughs.)

No way!

IVY: Come on! It's just a story!

CHARLIE: No way! I'm not gonna be a fairy princess. That's... that's... I'll tell mom!

IVY: Fine! You can be the Fairy Prince.

CHARLIE: I don't want to be a Fairy anything! Fairies are girls!

IVY: Not all the time.

CHARLIE: I'm not doing it!

IVY: *(Sighs:)* Fine. Elf Prince, then.

CHARLIE: Elfs are boys?

IVY: Yeah, sure. Okay, so I'm the Fairy Princess, you're the Ogre, and you're the Fairy Prince.

CHARLIE: Elf Prince.

IVY: That's what I meant.

JUSTINE: Come on, Ivy! Start the story! *(Chanting:)* Start the story! Start the story!

CHARLIE: I wanted to be the Ogre.

IVY AND JUSTINE: Shhhhh!

(Justine moves close. Charlie listens, but sulks.)

SCENE 2

IVY: Once upon a time there was a Beautiful Fairy Queen—

(Justine and Charlie giggle. Ivy glares, then continues.)

A Beautiful Fairy Queen, and her beautiful daughter The Fairy Princess—

CHARLIE: Nuh-uh!! Her Karate Prince—

IVY: *(Sighs:)* And her magical son, The Fairy Prince—

CHARLIE: I'll go inside!

IVY: Geez Charlie! I'm just trying to make it sound nice! Her regular old son, The Elf Prince...

(Ivy looks around. Charlie and Justine are quiet.)

They lived in the woods in a beautiful magical castle made all of flowers. Everything seemed perfect and happy, but...little did the Fairy Queen or her subjects know, deep in the dark, dark wood with all the Snakes and Spiders, lived an angry ogre.

CHARLIE AND JUSTINE: Oooooooh!

IVY: The Ogre was very, very ugly and warty—

JUSTINE: Hey!

IVY: *(Hisses:)* It's just part of the story, Justine!

JUSTINE: *(Long-suffering:)* Okay.

CHARLIE: I can be ugly and warty.

IVY: The ugly warty Ogre wanted nothing more than to be beautiful. And she knew that if she captured the Fairy Prince, the Fairy Queen would have to share with her the magical secret to turning beautiful...

(Magical music begins. Ivy's voice could continue as a voice-over. The children try on costumes they pull out of the colorful trunk, then proceed to decorate the playground with fabric and items from the box. Ivy's imagination is taking shape.)

IVY'S VOICE: Deep in her lair in the dark of a forest, the Evil Ogre began hatching her Evil plans...

JUSTINE/OGRE: *(In a crackly/gruff voice:)* That Fairy Queen thinks she can have everything! She runs the forest – everyone does whatever she says – because she is so beautiful! It's not fair. If I were beautiful, I could live with the rest of the creatures of the forest. But, because no one can stand to set their eyes on me, I have to live in this dingy cave. It's NOT FAIR! Well, things are going to change around here. I'll tell you that much!

(Justine growls loudly. Ivy/Fairy Queen and Elf Prince look frightened.)

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: What was that?

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Maybe it was thunder.

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: I do hope so! That would mean rain. That would be so nice for the fairy flowers!

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Or maybe it was a bear!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: He could bring us magical honey.

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Or MAYBE it was a Karate Champion chopping down a tree with his bare hand –

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: My dear, loyal subjects! I have a very important announcement to make.

(Charlie/Elf Prince draws near. Ivy/Fairy Queen addresses the audience.)

Today is our own dear Elf Prince's Royal Birthday!

(Charlie/Elf Prince bows.)

Let us all prepare for a celebration and feast to take place this Royal Afternoon.

JUSTINE/OGRE: Do you hear this, Spider and Snake Friends? *(Evil laughter, then mimicking Queen:)* "Royal Celebration of the little Prince Brat." Hah! Must be nice. Hmmm...how can I bring ruin upon this "special" event? I must do my worst... Snake Friends? Can I count on you?

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: *(Whispers:)* Charlie—quick—you go be the Snakes!

(Charlie sneaks over to the Ogre Lair and becomes the Snake Friends. This could be done with just Charlie's hands, or with puppets. The Spiders could be represented the same way.)

CHARLIE/SNAKE FRIENDS: Yessss...

JUSTINE/OGRE: I will need a jacket of snake scales strong enough to repel fairy magic!

CHARLIE/SNAKE FRIENDS: Sssssure!

JUSTINE/OGRE: And how about you, little poisonous Spider?

(Charlie becomes the poisonous Spider, speaking in a tiny voice.)

CHARLIE/POISONOUS SPIDER: Me and my friends can make a net!

JUSTINE/OGRE: *(Evil laughter:)* Ah! Yes! You and your friends will spin a net for me...strong enough to hold a prince!

(Ivy/Fairy Queen begins to "play" a recorder—this can be pretended while a music cue plays.)

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: Come on, Elf Prince!

CHARLIE: I like being the Snakes and Spiders!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: COME ON!

CHARLIE: But—

(Ivy gives Charlie a withering look. Reluctantly he returns to being Elf Prince. The Fairy Queen "plays" her recorder. Charlie/Elf Prince, much to Ivy's annoyance, begins to practice karate. Meanwhile, the Ogre is sneaking up on the Royal Party with a shimmering net.)

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: What exactly are you doing, my Royal Son?

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: I'm practicing my Royal Karate! Hiiiiyah! Chop!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: *(Between her teeth:)* Fairies don't need karate!

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: But elfs do. Hiiiiyahahah!

(Just then, the Ogre appears, capturing Charlie/Elf Prince in her shimmering net. She is laughing evilly. The Fairy Queen tries to use her magic wand on the Ogre, but nothing happens.)

JUSTINE/OGRE: Ha ha ha! Your magic will not work on me, Fairy Queen! Look at my coat! It's made of snake scales!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: Oh no! A snake scale coat! Everyone knows fairy magic won't work on those!

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: I'll use my karate!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: THERE IS NO KARATE in this story!

(The Elf Prince tries to use karate.)

JUSTINE/OGRE: Sorry, but you are no match for my magic spider net!

(The Ogre carries off Charlie/Elf Prince. The Fairy Queen begins to cry.)

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: Oh no! My Royal Son! This is terrible! (To Charlie/Elf Prince:) Don't worry! I'll save you! (Then, to self:) I'll fight the Ogre. But no karate. That's just stupid and doesn't even exist in Fairy Land.

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: (From the Ogre's lair:) Hey! I heard that!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: I'll have to fight magic with magic. But...will need a good plan.

(The Fairy Queen paces while she concocts a plan. Justine/Ogre pretends to tie Charlie/Elf Prince with magic spider thread.)

JUSTINE/OGRE: There! I've tied you up. Now don't even TRY to escape, Elf Boy.

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Don't worry! I won't! Fairy Land is boring!

JUSTINE/OGRE: Huh?

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Ogre Land is way more fun.

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: Hey! That's not how this goes!

JUSTINE/OGRE: (Nervously watching Ivy:) Uh...I've got you bound with unbreakable spider thread...

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Cool! I like spiders!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: No you don't! Fairies don't like spiders!

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Good thing I'm an elf.

JUSTINE/OGRE: Uh...if you move an inch, my poisonous Spider will bite you!

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: What's his name?

JUSTINE/OGRE: Whose name?

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Your poisonous Spider.

JUSTINE/OGRE: Uh...

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: It's Poisonella!

JUSTINE/OGRE: Poisonella!

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Okay. Poisonella, Ogre, can I join you please and be an Ogre too?

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: NO WAY! Charlie! You'll mess up the story!

JUSTINE/OGRE: Um...

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: I'll be your helper! We could defeat the Fairy Queen together! I know karate!

JUSTINE/OGRE: I don't know...

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: Charlie! Don't agree to it, Justine. This is my story! You love my stories!

(Justine/Ogre looks unsure.)

JUSTINE/OGRE: I don't see why we couldn't both be ogres, Ivy.

CHARLIE: I want to be an ogre! Not a dumb old prince!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: But then who will be the Prince?? My story only has one bad guy! Justine, you'd better do what I say, and not what my baby brother says, if you ever want to be in my stories again.

JUSTINE/OGRE: Okay. *(Beat.)* Yes.

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: Thank you!

CHARLIE: No fair.

JUSTINE/OGRE: I mean, yes to you, Charlie! Elf Prince, you can be an ogre. I'm going to use...Ogre Magic to turn you into one right now!

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: Ogre Magic??! What kind of magic is that!? I'm the creative one around here and I'm not coming up with an idea for THAT!

(Justine/Ogre looks really nervous.)

JUSTINE/OGRE: Um...see this cage? *(Beat.)* Inside is... another Spider! A magic Spider named...Bitey! When Bitey bites you, you will turn into an ogre.

(Beat.)

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: Bitey?! What kind of a name is Bitey??

CHARLIE/ELF PRINCE: Open the cage, please, Ogre. I'd like to meet Bitey.

(Suspenseful music plays as Justine/Ogre opens the cage. Charlie puts his hand in, then contorts and wriggles as he turns into an ogre.)

Yeeow-ooouch!

(He growls.)

IVY/FAIRY QUEEN: That's not how it goes.

CHARLIE/OGRE: *(In ogre voice:)* It does now, Fairy Queen!

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