

Ogre Etiquette



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To Cecilia Roberts

Ogre Etiquette

FARCE. Fairy Godmother is at wit's end with her class of unruly, misbehaved princes and princesses and all their fighting, dueling, and combative behavior. To teach her students that their behavior is most un-charming, the Fairy Godmother tells them the story of Princess Pearlette and Olga "the ornery" ogre. When Princess Pearlette meets Olga, she invites her to a tea party. At first, Olga thinks Princess Pearlette would make a good teatime treat, but instead the two become friends. Princess Pearlette teaches Olga to refrain from commenting on how plump and delicious someone looks, to smile without bearing her teeth, to greet others without growling, and to ballroom dance. In return, Olga shows Princess Pearlette how to do the ogre dance, which involves scratching oneself all over, rolling in the dirt, and fiercely staring at others while circling them. Princess Pearlette convinces her brother Prince Charming that it's better to dance with ogres than fight them, and Olga shows the other ogres that it's more fun to attend palace balls, dance, and eat crumpets *with* the royals instead of dining on them.

Performance Time: Approximately 30 minutes.

Characters

(3 M, 9 F, 6 flexible, opt. extras)

- FAIRY GODMOTHER:** Headmistress of the Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes; female.
- PORTIA:** Bookish princess who is a student at the Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes; female.
- PHILLIPA:** Outspoken, rambunctious princess who is a student at the Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes; female.
- PERSEPHONE:** Princess who is artistic and a little Goth; student at the Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes; female.
- PERCIVAL:** Bookish prince who is a student at the Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes; male.
- PRESCOTT:** Goody-two-shoes prince who is a student at the Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes; male.
- PRINCE CHARMING:** Fashionable, flirty, and fabulous, Pearlette's brother; male.
- PEARLETTE:** Prince Charming's younger sister; carries around two dolls named Princess Petunia and Princess Poppy; female.
- KNIGHT 1:** A knight who always runs a bit late; flexible.
- KNIGHT 2:** Mimics whatever Knight 1 does; flexible.
- KNIGHT 3:** Prince Charming's biggest fan; flexible.
- LADY 1:** Prince-crazy, fair damsel; female.
- LADY 2:** Makes excellent crumpets; female.
- LADY 3:** A big fan of Prince Charming; female.
- OLGA:** A smelly, fearsome ogre, with a big heart and capacity for healthy change; female.
- OGRE 1:** Crafty, cunning ogre; flexible.
- OGRE 2:** Not-too-bright ogre; flexible.
- OGRE 3:** Ogre who is always hungry; flexible.
- EXTRAS (Opt.):** As additional Princesses, Princes, Knights, Ladies, and Ogres.

Setting

A classroom at the Fairy Godmother's Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes.

Sets

Classroom the Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes. There are a few student desks or chairs.

Palace garden. A backdrop or a bare stage may be used.

Spooky forest. A backdrop or a bare stage may be used.

Props

Ruler

Books

Picture of hand-drawn dragon battling a knight

Golden ball

Flute

Fan

3 Swords (plastic)

2 Dolls

Picnic basket

Picnic blanket

Toy tea set

Bouquet made with bones and weeds

Plate of crumpets

Sound Effects

Ballroom music
Music for ogre dance

**“We start off every good dance
by moving in a circle
and looking each other
in the eyes fiercely.”**

—Olga

Ogre Etiquette

(AT RISE: A classroom at the Fairy Godmother's Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes. Princesses and Princes are waiting for class to start. Prince Percival and Princess Portia are seated, reading. Princess Persephone is drawing a fearsome dragon battling a knight. Prince Prescott is playing a game of toss by himself with a golden ball. Princess Phillipa is bored and wanders around the room looking for someone to harass. Eventually she decides on Prince Prescott. She catches his ball and runs away with it.)

PRESCOTT: *(Shouts.)* I say, that's frightfully rude!

(Princess Phillipa turns and takes a ruler from Princess Persephone.)

PERSEPHONE: *(To Princess Phillipa, shouts.)* Hey!

PHILLIPA: En garde!

(Princess Phillipa holds up the ruler like a sword. Prince Prescott pulls a flute from his belt and brandishes it like a sword.)

PRESCOTT: Scallywag! Have at you! *(Chases Princess Phillipa around the room as she holds the ball out of reach.)* Return my ball to me, you scamp!

PORTIA: *(Annoyed.)* Would you two mind?! Some of us are trying to read about table manners for tomorrow's etiquette pop quiz.

PERCIVAL: I second that notion.

PRESCOTT: *(To Princess Phillipa.)* If you return my ball, maiden, then you will be treated with clemency! I have no desire to fight a fair damsel!

(Princess Phillipa sticks out her tongue at him.)

PRESCOTT: I throw down my gauntlet! I will not endure such insolence! Have at thee, coward!

PERCIVAL: Prescott, must you talk so *princely*?

(Prince Prescott runs around the room mock sword fighting with Princess Phillipa. Fairy Godmother enters with a twirl.)

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Cease this instant, you scamps, or I will put an enchanted sleep on you! *(They ignore her.)* Stop, I say, unless your dearest wish is to be turned into a frog! Hand over the ball, Princess Phillipa!

(Prince Prescott and Princess Phillipa cease sword fighting. Prince Prescott attempts to grab the ball, but Princess Phillipa begrudgingly gives the ball to Fairy Godmother.)

PRESCOTT: *(Indicating ball.)* I say, that's mine!

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Prince Prescott and Princess Phillipa! Why can't both of you just live happily ever after?

PRESCOTT: I was getting along quite well until that...this miscreant... *(Indicates Princess Phillipa.)* ...commandeered my ball!

PHILLIPA: Fairy Godmother always taught me to share, Prince Prescott.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Sharing today will lead to happily ever after tomorrow.

PRESCOTT: *(To Princess Phillipa.)* Sharing, not stealing, you regal robber! En garde, you royal rogue! *(Pulls out his flute and holds it like a sword.)*

PHILLIPA: Gladly, wimp!

(Prince Prescott and Princess Phillipa mock duel again.)

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Really, this is the last straw!

PERCIVAL: I thought last week when they started doing arm-wrestling during our dinner-table manners demonstration that was the last straw.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Yes, well—

PORTIA: Or what about that food fight they started during lunch yesterday afternoon?

FAIRY GODMOTHER: *(Remembers.)* That's right.

PERCIVAL: Or when they started an impromptu jousting tournament during riding lessons.

PORTIA: *(To Fairy Godmother.)* Or when during ballroom dancing they played tag.

PRESCOTT: We weren't playing tag. She stepped on my toes, and I was attempting to return the favor.

PHILLIPA: Fairy Godmother taught me forgiveness, not revenge, Prince Prescott.

PRESCOTT: Does that mean you are ready to apologize, Princess Phillipa?

(Princess Phillipa sticks out her tongue at Prince Prescott from behind her fan so Fairy Godmother cannot see.)

FAIRY GODMOTHER: This is the final straw! I'll turn you both into beasts and stick you into an abandoned castle until you can learn to behave yourselves! This is not the kind of behavior we tolerate at Fairy Godmother's Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes! Why can't you behave like dear Princess Persephone here. See how she is diligently working on refining her drawing like a cultured princess? *(Holds up drawing. To Princess Persephone.)* What is this, dear?

PERSEPHONE: It's a picture of a dragon battling with a knight

FAIRY GODMOTHER: *(Confused.)* I see... *(Returns the drawing.)*

PRESCOTT: Princess Persephone does nothing but draw and write poetry. How is that charming?

PERSEPHONE: A book with a fine cover but no pages makes for dull reading.

PRESCOTT: Huh?

PERCIVAL: I say, good one, Princess Persephone.

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Well, this won't do! I won't stand for this kind of conduct in Fairy Godmother's Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes. We do come with a happily-ever-after guarantee, after all. All this fighting, dueling, combative behavior! It is most un-charming! Ungenteel! Improper! Why, what would our founders say?

PHILLIPA: Aren't you the founder of the Fairy Godmother's Finishing School for Gifted Princesses and Princes?

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Certainly not. The story actually starts, once upon a time, with Prince Charming.

PORTIA: *The Prince Charming?*

PERCIVAL: He isn't your type in the least, now is he, Princess Portia? You would work best with a more scholarly sort, a bibliophile like yourself, I would surmise.

PORTIA: My interest in Prince Charming is purely academic.

PRESCOTT: A wish come true! Eh, Percival?

(Prince Prescott elbows Prince Percival in the side. Prince Percival is not amused.)

PORTIA: Prince Charming is a character of substantial historical importance. Rescuing damsels in distress, defeating giants—

PERSEPHONE: The ballads that have been written about his exploits—those poetic masterpieces—are all terribly romantic and exciting!

PHILLIPA: I'm sure I could out-fence Prince Charming any day! Just like I can out-fence you, Prince Prescott!

PRESCOTT: Don't try my patience, maiden!

PHILLIPA: I can't help that you are abysmal at swordplay!

PRESCOTT: Hold me back! I can't be responsible for what I do after such slander!

(Prince Percival holds Prince Prescott back.)

PHILLIPA: Slander? More like *honesty*. Have you considered another profession than royalty, Prince Prescott? Maybe becoming a chicken farmer? You have a natural resemblance to the bird. Perhaps it's in your bearing, manner, even in your walk. *(Prances around like a chicken.)* Allow me to... *(Squawks like a chicken.)* ...introduce myself. *(Squawks like a chicken.)* I'm Prince Prescott, the chicken farmer. *(Squawks like a chicken.)*

PRESCOTT: En garde!

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Now, desist, both of you! I have no qualms about returning you to your parents the size of their thumbs in walnut shell beds!

PERSEPHONE: We want to hear all about the heroic exploits of Prince Charming!

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Oh, yes, Prince Charming!

(Lights down on the Finishing School. Lights up on a palace garden. Prince Charming enters. Menacingly, he circles Ogre 1 with his sword.)

PRINCE CHARMING: Have at thee, ogre! I shall slay thee, monstrous fiend of the forest!

PERSEPHONE: He's dreamy!

PORTIA: He's divine!

PRESCOTT: He talks so princely!

(Ogre 1 points behind Prince Charming.)

OGRE 1: Damsel in distress! Damsel in distress!

PRINCE CHARMING: Where? Where? *(Turns. Ogre 1 runs away, escaping. Prince Charming turns around. He doesn't know where Ogre 1 is. Shouts.)* Come out, you coward! En garde! Fight me!

(Knights 1-3 and Ladies 1-3 enter. Knight 1 draws his sword.)

KNIGHT 1: Where is that odious ogre?

(Knight 2 draws his sword, mimicking Knight 1 exactly.)

KNIGHT 2: Where is that odious ogre?

PRINCE CHARMING: That fearsome fiend scampered out of sight. He couldn't face me like an ogre.

KNIGHT 1: Next time, Charming, I'll be here! *(Poses heroically.)*

KNIGHT 2: Next time, Charming! *(Poses heroically exactly like Knight 1.)*

LADY 1: Are you hurt, Charming?

PRINCE CHARMING: Never been better. The best morning exercise a prince can hope for is battling an ogre.

LADY 2: How terribly brave you are!

KNIGHT 3: *(To Prince Charming.)* Can I have your autograph?

LADY 3: *(To Prince Charming.)* Me, too! Me, too!

(Princess Pearlette enters.)

PEARLETTE: *(To Prince Charming.)* Hey, Cuthbert!

PRINCE CHARMING: *(To others.)* Excuse me. *(Drags Princess Pearlette aside. Annoyed.)* How many times do I have to tell you to stop calling me that, Pearlette?

PEARLETTE: But "Cuthbert" is your name.

PRINCE CHARMING: My name is "Charming" now.

PEARLETTE: What's wrong with "Cuthbert"?

PRINCE CHARMING: Well, "Cuthbert" is not particularly charming, now, is it?

PEARLETTE: *(Holding up two dolls. Indicating dolls.)* Princess Petunia and Princess Poppy wanted to invite you to tea this afternoon.

PRINCE CHARMING: *(Scoffs.)* I don't have time to play dolls, little sis. I have important princely exploits.

PEARLETTE: But you used to play dolls with me all the time.

PRINCE CHARMING: (*Annoyed.*) Now run along!

PEARLETTE: Please come to tea. Princess Petunia and Princess Poppy miss you. You would be the best big brother in the whole wide kingdom!

PRINCE CHARMING: (*Embarrassed.*) Keep your voice down, please, Pearlette. I can't believe you followed me here. You are in serious danger. This forest is invested with ogres! Be careful. Are you listening to me?

PEARLETTE: But you missed Princess Poppy's birthday tea last month!

PRINCE CHARMING: Go back to the palace and leave me alone, Pearlette! (*Loudly, so the rest of the group can hear.*) Goodbye, young-princess-I-do-not-know-and-just-met-today-and-who-is-definitely-not-a-relation-of-mine, namely my little sister. Run along home. Well, I better be off! Too many damsels in distress, too little time!

LADY 1: I'm a damsel in distress!

PEARLETTE: (*To Prince Charming.*) So am I. I miss having a big brother.

PRINCE CHARMING: Farewell! May you live happily ever after!

(*Gallantly, Prince Charming exits.*)

LADY 2: (*Swooning.*) How terribly heroic!

LADY 1: (*To Prince Charming, calls.*) Wait for me, my ducky delight, my perfect poopsie!

LADY 3: (*To Prince Charming, calls.*) Hey, I didn't get my autograph!

KNIGHT 3: (*To Prince Charming, calls.*) Me, either! Don't go, Charming!

(*Lady 1, 2 and Knight 3 rush off after Prince Charming.*)

KNIGHT 1: Let us not loiter! Charming may need us! Away!
(Makes a dramatic parting gesture and exits.)

KNIGHT 2: Away! *(Makes the same dramatic parting gesture as Knight 1 and exits.)*

PEARLETTE: *(To dolls.)* Well, we'll find someone else to have tea with, won't we, Princess Petunia, Princess Poppy? Who needs Cuthbert? I'm sure there is someone in the forest who will have tea with us.

(Princess Pearlette exits. Lights down on palace garden. Lights up on Finishing School.)

FAIRY GODMOTHER: *(To students.)* And so Princess Pearlette ventured deep into the dark forest.

PHILLIPA: Who's afraid of a forest?! Not with my fencing skills! Maybe Prince... *(Squawks like a chicken.)* Prescott over here!

PRESCOTT: Do not try my patience, maiden. It is only my princely vow to protect others weaker than myself that prevents me from challenging you to a duel this instant.

PORTIA: *(To Fairy Godmother.)* I do hope she brought the essentials for hiking in the woods.

PERCIVAL: Namely, something to read.

PORTIA: Precisely.

PERSEPHONE: *(To Fairy Godmother.)* Did the branches encroach on her, like black veins from the heart of the dying forest as night fell?

FAIRY GODMOTHER: Yes, well, the woods were rather spooky.

(Lights down on Finishing School. Lights up on spooky forest. Princess Pearlette enters carrying her two dolls and a picnic basket.)

PEARLETTE: *(Calls.)* Hello? Is anyone there?

FAIRY GODMOTHER: *(To Students.)* Then out of the forest came...a smelly, huge, hungry ogre!

(Olga the ogre enters. Students gasp.)

OLGA: Well, well, what do we have here? A little lost princess?

PEARLETTE: I'm Princess Pearlette. *(Indicating dolls.)* This is Princess Petunia and Princess Poppy. Are you hungry?

OLGA: Oh, that I am, my dear, succulent, and scrumptious sweetie.

PEARLETTE: Excellent. Would you care to join us for tea?

OLGA: Tea? I've never had tea before, but I wouldn't mind a little live entertainment before dinner.

PEARLETTE: Well, we must remedy that as quickly as possible. Now, Princess Petunia, you light the kettle, and, Princess Poppy, you bring out the scrumptious array of delicacies for our illustrious guest— *(To Ogre.)* What is your name? *(Puts down the basket and spreads the picnic blanket on the ground.)*

OLGA: Olga.

PEARLETTE: Princess Olga?

(Olga chuckles.)

OLGA: Just Olga...or Olga the Ornery. I'm no princess. I'm an ogre.

PEARLETTE: An ogre? I seem to remember something about ogres. They are in serious danger, I think. Be careful.

OLGA: They most certainly are in danger...from that chivalrous clod Prince Charming.

PEARLETTE: We don't speak his name in polite society.

OLGA: You aren't a fan of Prince Goody-Two-Shoes?

PEARLETTE: Most certainly not. He's a selfish, arrogant, meanie!

OLGA: I agree entirely.

(Princess Pearlette sets out two toy teacups and a plate on the blanket.)

PEARLETTE: Do have a seat, Olga. Thank you so much for coming to tea today, my dear friend. Princess Petunia and Princess Poppy, meet Olga the Ornery. (*Olga growls.*) We don't growl, Olga. We reply, "How do you do?"

OLGA: (*Surprised.*) No growling?

PEARLETTE: Growling is all very splendid. Your growling was exceptional...the zenith of growling. Growling in its proper time and place is sublime, but at tea parties we say, "How do you do?" when we meet a new acquaintance.

OLGA: Oh, right. (*Sweetly.*) How do you do? (*Bares her teeth.*)

PEARLETTE: With a friendly smile, perhaps? (*Smiles at Olga. Olga smiles.*) Princess Poppy says you have an uncommonly pretty smile!

OLGA: (*Embarrassed.*) Oh, thank you. No one ever said I was pretty before.

PEARLETTE: Perhaps you could offer Princess Poppy a compliment as well?

OLGA: Um...well... (*Thinks. To doll.*) You are looking particularly plump and delicious this afternoon.

[END OF FREEVIEW]