

*Rusalka Synopsis**
**Teacher Version*

Act I

Setting: A lake in a forest

The water nymph, Rusalka, has fallen in love with a human Prince. Unfortunately, Rusalka is made of water and the prince cannot see her and he doesn't know that she exists. At the beginning of this act, Rusalka's water nymph friends are dancing and singing under the water where Rusalka's father, the Water Sprite reigns. The Water Sprite teases them and they all swim away. Next, Rusalka shows up and tells her father that she loves the prince. She also tells him that she wishes to be human so she can live on land with the Prince. The Water Sprite is horrified! He says that humans are evil and she must stay away. If she chooses the Prince over him, she will be lost to him forever. By herself, Rusalka sings to the moon. She asks the moon to tell the Prince of her love for him.

Determined to pursue love at all costs, Rusalka goes to the witch, Jezibaba, for help. She asks Jezibaba to make her a potion to make her human. She can do this, but in order to make her human, she must give up her voice. Also, if Rusalka fails to win the love of the Prince, he will be cursed forever! Convinced that her love will defeat all spells, Rusalka agrees and Jezibaba makes the potion.

The next morning, the Prince and a hunting party are at the lake. He sees Rusalka and is surprised by her beauty in human form. Captivated by her beauty, but surprised by her silence, he leads Rusalka back to the castle. Water Sprite and the other water nymphs are very upset.

Act II

Setting: The Prince's palace

A week has passed. At the palace, the Gamekeeper and a Kitchen Boy gossip about Rusalka. They say she is a creature that the Prince found in the woods. They also think that the Prince is already looking at other beautiful women. There is a beautiful Foreign Princess that is visiting the castle that has caught

his eye. The Prince and Rusalka appear. He cannot understand why she is still acts distant from him, even though he is professing his love for her. The Foreign Princess starts to make fun of Rusalka because she doesn't speak. The Prince sends Rusalka away to get ready for a ball, and goes with the Princess inside for the party.

In a deserted castle garden, the Water Sprite appears and expresses his sadness for his daughter. She is upset, so she runs from the castle to the garden where she sees her father. She begs for his help, but it is too late. The Prince and Princess walk into the garden, and he professes his love for her. When Rusalka sees the Prince, she rushes to him, but he rejects her. The Water Sprite warns the Prince of the curse, then disappears with Rusalka. The Prince is terrified and turns to the Princess for comfort. She makes fun of him and tells him to follow Rusalka into the water.

Act III

Setting: The lake

Rusalka is alone by the lake when Jezibaba arrives. She makes fun of her for a bit, but then tells her that the only way to save herself is to kill the Prince. Jezibaba gives Rusalka a knife, but she throws it into the water... she prefers to suffer through life, rather than kill the Prince. Rusalka's water nymph friends are also ignoring her.

Later, the Huntsman and Kitchen Boy show up in the woods looking for Jezibaba, so she can help them with the Prince who has been bewitched by a strange creature from the woods. Hearing the nonsense, Water Sprite rises from the water and says that it was the Prince who deceived Rusalka. Terrified, the Huntsman and Kitchen Boy run away.

The Prince, desperate and half-crazy, comes out of the forest looking for Rusalka. She appears in the moonlight and explains that, having once given him her love, she can only offer him death. The Prince accepts his fate. Rusalka kisses him, and he dies in her arms. Rusalka disappears into the water.