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SF PERUSALS

The Sleeping Prince

An Occasional Fairy Tale

Terence Rattigan

A Samuel French Acting Edition

SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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THE SLEEPING PRINCE

Concerning (in strict order of precedence) the following personages:

His Majesty King Nicolas VIII of Carpathia

His Royal Highness, The Grand Duke Charles, Prince Regent of Carpathia

Her Imperial and Royal Highness, The Grand Duchess Charles

Her Royal Highness, The Archduchess Ferdinand of Styria

Her Royal Highness, The Princess Louisa of Styria

Count Trigorinsky, major-domo to the Grand Duke

The Countess Von Und Zu Meissenbronn, lady-in-waiting to the Grand Duchess

The Honourable Peter Northbrook, attached to the Grand Duke's suite

The Baroness Brunheim, lady-in-waiting to the Grand Duchess

Baron Schwartz, butler to the Grand Duke

Freiherr Von Braun, personal footman to the Grand Duke

Ur De Grune, personal footman to the Grand Duke

Miss Mary Morgan, whose stage name (to avoid confusion) is Elaine Dagenham

THE SLEEPING PRINCE

Presented by H. M. Tennent Ltd at The Phoenix Theatre, London, on the 5th November 1953, with the following cast of characters:

(*in the order of their appearance*)

1ST FOOTMAN	*Angus Mackay*
2ND FOOTMAN	*Terence Owen*
PETER	*Richard Wattis*
MARY	*Vivien Leigh*
THE MAJOR-DOMO	*Paul Hardwick*
THE BUTLER	*Peter Barkworth*
THE REGENT	*Laurence Olivier*
NICOLAS	*Jeremy Spenser*
THE GRAND DUCHESS	*Martita Hunt*
THE COUNTESS	*Rosamund Greenwood*
THE BARONESS	*Daphne Newton*
THE ARCHDUCHESS	*Elaine Inescort*
LOUISA	*Nicola Delman*

The play directed by LAURENCE OLIVIER

Setting designed by ROGER FURSE

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

The action of the play passes in the Royal Suite of the Carpathian Legation in Belgrave Square, London

ACT I

SCENE 1 Wednesday, 21st June 1911, about 11.30 p.m.
SCENE 2 8.30 the following morning

ACT II

SCENE 1 About 7 p.m. of the same day
SCENE 2 About 12.30 the same night
SCENE 3 10 a.m. the following morning

MUSIC

The barrel-organ music by Vivian Ellis from *The Cocoanut Girl* is published as a piano arrangement by Chappell & Co Ltd, 50, New Bond Street, London, W1 and is available from Samuel French.

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THE SLEEPING PRINCE

ACT I

SCENE I

SCENE—*The Royal Suite of the Carpathian Legation in Belgrave Square, London. Wednesday, 21st June 1911, about 11.30 p.m.*

We are looking at a very elegantly furnished octagonal room of which five walls are visible, the "fourth" wall in this case being, in fact, the sixth, seventh and eighth. Taking up the entire wall up L, *is a pair of massive double doors, leading to a corridor and thence to the main entrance and other parts of the building. There is a large window filling the wall up* R. *There are doors down* R *and* L *leading to bedrooms. Back* C *is an arched alcove. There are armchairs with footstools down* R *and* L *and a somewhat larger armchair stands* LC. *There is a sofa at a slight angle* RC *and a small circular table* C. *A desk and chair stand by the window and there are small tables* R *and* L. *The alcove is furnished with a large jardinière filled with mixed hydrangeas with a potted palm on a table behind it. At night the room is lit by wall-brackets, a chandelier and four table-lamps. On the table* C *there is a bell-push with a concealed cable, communicating with a bell in the corridor* L.

(*See the Ground Plan*)

When the CURTAIN *rises, the stage is empty, the window curtains are closed and all the lights are on. After a moment, the double doors are thrown open by the* 1ST *and* 2ND FOOTMEN, *who enter and stand on either side of the battants. They wear a distinctive livery.* THE HONOURABLE PETER NORTHBROOK *follows the footmen on. He is aged about forty, is something in the Foreign Office and is, at the moment, attached to the Regent's suite. He is wearing tails.* MISS MARY MORGAN, *whose stage name, to avoid confusion, is* ELAINE DAGENHAM, *is seen to walk past the double doors and along the corridor. She is dressed in a very simple white evening dress, is young and considered very alluring. When she speaks it is with a fairly pronounced American accent.*

PETER (*as he enters*) Miss Dagenham, as I was saying . . . (*He realizes Mary is not there, breaks off, goes to the double doors, looks off and calls*) Miss Dagenham, this way, please. (*He stands above the doors*)

(MARY *enters by the double doors, crosses to* C *and then stands stock-still, looking about her in wonder*)

MARY (*looking around in awe*) Gosh!

(*The two* FOOTMEN *exit by the double doors*)

This is the first time I've ever seen the inside of an embassy.

PETER (*moving up* LC) Legation.

(*The two* FOOTMEN *close the double doors*)

MARY. Same thing, isn't it?

PETER (*moving behind the chair* LC) Not quite. There are only nine embassies in London at the present time.

MARY (*crossing to the chair down* R; *slightly disappointed*) Oh, you mean they don't rate Carpathia as all that important? (*She puts her wrap on the chair, then moves below the sofa*)

PETER. Not yet.

MARY. It looks enormous on the map.

PETER (*moving above the table* C *to* R *of the sofa*) Maps can be misleading.

(MARY *turns to watch Peter*)

Don't misunderstand me, Miss—er—Dagenham. I'm not, in any way, trying to belittle Carpathia. I've never been there, but I gather there is quite a lot to be said for the country. Its trains run on time—and its army, after France, Russia and Germany, is the best in Europe. What is more . . .

MARY. Pardon me. May I sit down?

PETER. Of course.

(MARY *gingerly settles herself on the sofa, at the right end, with evident pleasure*)

MARY. This is really something, isn't it?

PETER. Something?

MARY. This room and everything.

PETER (*looking around*) Yes. Personally I find the decorations a little vulgar.

MARY. Then give me vulgarity. Do you live here?

PETER. No. I am merely attached temporarily to the Grand Duke's suite. (*He crosses below the sofa to* R *of the chair* LC) There are, of course, similar appointments made for all the royal visitors to the Coronation, but in view of the recent adherence of Carpathia to the Entente Cordiale and the great importance attached by the Foreign Secretary to that adherence, a rather special appointment has been made in the case of the Grand Duke. (*He moves up* L) You see, I am actually the head of the Balkan Department at the Foreign Office.

MARY (*uninterested*) You don't say!

(PETER *crosses to* L)

Who's coming to this supper—apart from His Majesty, I mean?

PETER (*turning; startled*) His Majesty?

MARY. The Grand Duke.

PETER (*crossing to* L *of the sofa*) Oh. My dear, you quite startled me. Look, Miss Dagenham, as I gather you're a citizen of the United States, I think perhaps before the Grand Duke arrives—you should learn the correct form of address. Otherwise, who knows, there may be a few *petits moments d'embarras*.

MARY (*murmuring*) Now, I should just hate that.

PETER. The Grand Duke is not King of Carpathia, but Regent.

MARY. Same . . .

PETER (*interrupting*) No, it is *not* the same thing. (*He moves up* L *of the sofa*) The Grand Duke, who was a Prince of Hungary, married the late Queen of Carpathia and while she was alive had the title and form of Prince Consort. On her death their son, Nicolas—a minor—became King, and the Grand Duke was appointed Prince Regent. The correct form is therefore "Your Royal Highness".

MARY. I thought his wife was alive.

PETER. She is. (*He moves above the table* C) But it's his wife—*en secondes noces*.

MARY. What's that mean?

PETER (*after due thought*) His second wife.

MARY. Why isn't she Queen?

PETER (*moving down* L *of Mary*) Oh, for heaven's sake. It's perfectly simple . . .

MARY. Not to me.

PETER. Look, Miss Dagenham, I really don't think you need bother your very pretty little head——

MARY. Thank you.

PETER. —with abstruse questions of primogeniture and Salic Laws and things. Just remember that your host tonight—The Grand Duke Charles—is addressed as Your Royal Highness, or sir, that his wife, the Grand Duchess Charles, is addressed as Your Imperial and Royal Highness, or ma'am . . .

MARY (*rising*) Hi, wait a moment. That's a lot to remember. Imperial *and* Royal? Why all that?

PETER. That is far too complicated to explain. It all goes back to the Holy Roman Empire. She is a niece of the Emperor Franz Joseph.

MARY. No wisecracks about Austria, then?

PETER. I sincerely trust no wisecracks about anything, Miss Dagenham—of diplomatic moment, that is. In these troubled times the lightest remark can have terrible repercussions.

MARY. Gee! I can see the history books now. The war of Dagenham's Remark. (*She moves to* R *of the sofa and turns*)

PETER (*moving to* L *of the table* C) If you *should* meet the young King . . .

MARY. Oh, gosh! *Another* one?

PETER. He is addressed as Your Majesty, sire, or sir. Now have you got all that straight?

MARY (*moving up* R *of the sofa*) Gee. I don't think so. Altogether far too much plot in far too little time.

PETER (*puzzled*) Plot? (*He smiles politely*) Oh, yes, of course. A stage term. (*He moves to* L *of Mary*) Oh, and one other point. In conversation with royalty only speak when you are directly addressed.

MARY. You mean wait for the cue before speaking the line?

PETER (*moving behind the desk*) I suppose you could put it like that. (*He looks through the window curtains*)

MARY (*moving up* LC) Oh, God, I'm shaking. It's worse than a first night. (*She turns to him*) Do you think we've come to the right place? (*She moves up* L *and turns*) Where are the other guests?

PETER (*moving below the desk*) I don't know. I was told eleven-thirty. It's after that now.

MARY (*moving to* L *of the sofa*) But why am *I* asked anyway—do you know?

PETER. Well, after all you met him the other night, didn't you, when he came to your show?

MARY. Sure, but so did the ten other principals, and I was right at the end of the line.

PETER. It seemed to me that he paid you rather particular attention that night.

MARY. Well, now you mention it, it did strike me, I admit, that I was a couple of yesses and a no up on Laura Cardus, who was standing next to me. (*She moves below the chair* LC *and keeping an arm on it, circles it and stands above it*) But I can assure you our dialogue wasn't so brilliant that he must have felt he simply had to have that female Oscar Wilde to set his supper table in a roar tonight. (*She moves below the sofa*) Are you sure he hasn't mixed me up with Maisie?

PETER (*moving to* R *of the sofa*) Maisie?

MARY. Maisie Springfield, the leading lady. She's met him before, in Paris. She's always telling us.

PETER. No. I'm quite sure he means you.

MARY. But why—when I've only got that little bit in the second act?

PETER. Well—perhaps that was just the little bit he liked.

(*There is a pause.* MARY *paces down* L *of the chair* LC)

MARY. You know, this silence is getting me down. Apart from the other guests, where the heck is my host?

PETER. I don't know. Earlier he was due to have dinner with the Foreign Secretary.

MARY. What does he want supper for then?

PETER. The appetite of these Balkan royalties is often quite prodigious.

(*A sound is heard at the double doors*)

MARY (*in a frantic whisper*) Oh God! (*She crosses down* R) Here they come.

(PETER *moves up* L *of the desk*)

I only hope to heaven I know some of them. I hope there are about a hundred guests, then I can get lost.

(COUNT TRIGORINSKY, *major-domo to the Regent, enters by the double doors. He bows to Mary, imperiously signals to the* FOOTMEN, *then crosses and stands down* C. *The two* FOOTMEN *enter, carrying a small table which they place* C *of the sofa. The* 1ST FOOTMAN *is at the left end of the table, and the* 2ND FOOTMAN *is at the right end of it. They spread the cloth and set out the cutlery, under the supervision of the* MAJOR-DOMO. *The* BUTLER *enters by the double doors. He carries a tray with a silver cruet, two small bowls of roses and two napkins. He hands the tray to the* 1ST FOOTMAN. *The* MAJOR-DOMO *moves behind the Butler to up* C, *followed by the* 2ND FOOTMAN *who exits by the double doors. The* BUTLER *crosses below the table and stands behind it, bowing to Mary on the way. The* 1ST FOOTMAN *stands with the tray* L *of the Butler.* MARY *has her eyes riveted to the proceedings.* PETER *crosses to* L. *The* BUTLER *first takes the bowls of roses from the tray and places one in front of each place, then puts out the table napkins and finally, places the cruet* C *of the table. As soon as it becomes apparent that only two places are being laid,* MARY *tries to catch the attention of* PETER, *who is, rather studiedly, staring at a picture.* MARY *crosses below the table to* LC. PETER *crosses up* R *and moves to the desk.* MARY *crosses below the table towards Peter, but is stopped by the* MAJOR-DOMO *who is crossing down* R)

Hey! (*She darts behind the desk after Peter*)

(*The* MAJOR-DOMO *stands down* RC. *The* 1ST FOOTMAN *crosses to the double doors and exits with the tray. The* BUTLER *moves and stands above the table* C. *The* MAJOR-DOMO *crosses towards the double doors.* PETER *crosses down* L *with* MARY *in pursuit*)

Hey! (*She is again impeded by the Major-Domo and dodges round him*)

(*The* 2ND FOOTMAN *enters by the double doors. He carries a large silver salver with an ice-bucket containing a bottle of champagne and a smaller ice-bucket containing a bottle of vodka. The* 1ST FOOTMAN *enters by the double doors. He carries a silver salver with two champagne glasses and two vodka glasses. The* 2ND FOOTMAN *hands his tray to the* BUTLER, *who places it on the table* C. *The* 1ST FOOTMAN *holds out his tray to the* BUTLER *who takes the glasses and sets them on the supper table. The* 2ND FOOTMAN *moves and stands upstage of the double doors, and the* 1ST FOOTMAN *downstage of them*)

(*To Peter. Under her breath*) Hey!

(PETER *takes no notice. The* BUTLER *bows to the* MAJOR-DOMO, *then moves to the double doors*)

(*Louder*) Hey!

(PETER *turns to Mary*)

(*She moves to* R *of Peter and points frantically to the supper table*) Two places . . .

PETER (*moving up* R; *out of the corner of his mouth*) *Pas devant* . . .

MARY (*following Peter*) What?

PETER (*out of the corner of his mouth*) Not in front of . . . (*He indicates the servants*)

MARY (*frantically*) Yes—but *two* places.

PETER (*crossing round the sofa and standing above the table* C; *peremptorily*) Sh!

(*The* BUTLER *turns and exits by the double doors. The two* FOOTMEN *follow him off. The* MAJOR-DOMO *crosses to the double doors, turns, bows, then turns and exits, closing the doors.* MARY *watches them off, then hurriedly collects her wrap and darts above the sofa towards the double doors*)

(*He intercepts Mary above the sofa and bars her way*) Please. I beg you, Miss Dagenham, control yourself. There's no need for panic.

MARY. Isn't there just? This is a plot, isn't it—supper for two? You knew all about it.

PETER. Well, I suppose I have to confess that I did have an idea—when I received the Grand Duke's instructions regarding yourself.

MARY (*after a pause; angrily*) You know, there's a word for what *you* are, and it's not head of the Balkan Department.

PETER. Miss Dagenham—I implore you not to leap to conclusions.

MARY. I don't have to do any leaping to this conclusion. I can just walk straight there. (*She moves behind the desk towards the windows*) And I can walk straight out . . .

PETER (*moving quickly to the upstage end of the desk*) But why this panic at a harmless little *tête à tête* supper?

MARY. Listen. Where do you think I've been all my life? I know all about these harmless little *tête à tête* suppers. I've had to fight my way out of quite a few. "Champagne and I hope you like caviare and something cold to follow, because we really don't want the servants around, do we? It's so much more fun serving ourselves, don't you think?" And then after supper—"You must be tired after your show, Miss Dagenham, why don't you put your feet up on this nice sofa?" Oh, yes. I know every gambit. (*She turns away*)

PETER. Aren't you confusing this legation with a private room at *Romano's*?

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