

Sir Ryan (also known as “that medieval play”)

A Shakespearean-esque comedy in 3 acts

Synopsis: This is a wildly funny romp full of crazy characters! When Sir Ryan witnesses a beautiful damsel be snatched from a stream by a ferocious dragon, he falls madly in love and vows to save her. But first he needs to get into fighting shape, and fast! Sir Ryan and his unlikely trainer Joel devote an entire hour to getting ready for battle before heading up the mountain to slay the dragon, defeat a witch, and rescue the beautiful maiden before its too late. Of course, no action play is complete without a rockin’ soundtrack—improv skills are a must as the actors provide some a cappella accompaniment and plenty of ad-libbing.

Cast:

2 men, 3 women

Sir Ryan: A semi-retired knight, Sir Ryan wiles away his days napping, eating, drinking, and generally wasting his time. Can he get his act together in time to save a beautiful damsel from a not-so-beautiful death?

Joel: Joel is the drunken half brother of Sir Ryan. Although he never chose the life of a knight, he is a skilled fighter, probably because he’s had to get himself out of some sticky situations at his local tavern. Despite this, he is a gentle, likeable soul who enjoys meditation and music. He is constantly harped on by his wife...

Falon/Dragon: Falon is a shrewish woman who natters constantly at her husband and flirts shamelessly with other men, namely Sir Ryan. As the Dragon, she is still a flirt, making passes at the damsel whenever there is opportunity. These characters require an actress with really great improv skills, and who doesn’t mind wearing ridiculous costumes.

Damsel: The stereotypical damsel in distress: very pretty but fairly dull, vain, and gullible.

Witch: The narrator of the story as well as the evil character. She owns the dragon and demands she do her bidding—the labour board would have a heyday with her! She is determined to remain young forever, because that’s just what witches do.

Excerpts:

Act One, Scene One

Witch: Once upon a time not many moons past
(to be precise, this cursed summer last)

One knight, from service by years so removed

That his rank his looks nor his carriage could prove
Came upon a lady of youth and grace,
A goddess of beauty, most fair of face.
Her skin was the colour of honeyed milk.
Her hair had the lustre of midnight silk.
A woman of lesser virtue than I
Might look on this vision with jaded eyes...
But I digress. This lazy, loathsome man
Had a place nearby where a river ran
Where many an afternoon he would lie
And sleep, and get fat, and stare at the sky.
But one particular day he espied
This lady; and there and then he decried

Ryan: Has my heart loved til now? Forswear it sight! Methinks I've stumbled on my Mrs.
Right! (*aside*) That's old Willy Shakespeare. Sort of.

From his place beneath his willow he peered
At the damsel washing. Lusting, he leered
In secret and silence next to the brook
Whilst she (well, somewhat indecently) took
Advantage of the water and sun so sweet
Oblivious to her spectator's seat.
Into this charming and idyllic scene
(Before the lady was properly clean)
Swooped a monster with terrifying wings!
A dragon more fearsome than...scary things!
He snatched her up from the sparkling stream
And took to the sky before she could scream.
Then, in a second, this panicky cry:

Damsel: Someone please help me! I don't want to die!

Witch: To his feet the knight leapt! (Or truth to tell,
To his knees first, then his feet with a yell
because of his years and his weight as well).

Ryan: I'll save thee!

Witch: He swore, waving fist at sky.

Ryan: I'll save thee, or I shall die as I try!

But I'd rather live so after I save thee I can marry thee and spend the rest of my nights with thee beside the fire...*(ad lib as only you can do!)*

Witch: The dragon took wing to the very top
Of a treacherous mountain. There he dropped
The lady in a warm and cozy cave
Where he lived as a lovely witch's slave.
I am that witch! Here the story begins
Of how an out of shape knight worked to win
A fight against dragon, witch, and magic
Without the whole day turning quite tragic.

Act Three

Enter Ryan, in chain mail and carrying a sword. Proceeds to do some warm-ups he learned the day before.

Enter Joel, carrying a wooden stick like a staff.

Joel: Good morrow, brother. Are you ready?

Ryan: Art thou accompanying me, brother?

Joel: I am, at my peril. 'Tis not enough to help the feeble up, but to support him after.
(Aside) You guessed it: Shakespeare.

Ryan: I can't allow thee to make this thy mission. To quote a famous knight from a time far into the future in a movie set far back in the past, "love has given me wings so I must fly!" Thou hast nothing of the sort to drive thee.

Ad lib argument about if Joel should go or not. Of course in the end they agree that he can come. They begin their ascent, winding through the audience. Joel sings snippets of different songs, eliciting different reactions from Ryan. They eventually arrive at the main performance area again. It is now the witch's lair.

Ryan: This must be the place.

Enter the dragon, the witch, and the damsel.

Ryan: Liliūm inter speniū! (*Aside*) Latin: the language of poets, the church, and many books that I haven't taken the time to read because they are in Latin. I refer to my unnamed damsel in distress. Roughly translated it means "lily among thorns".

Joel: Hey, isn't that from that futuristic form of entertainment called a movie? I do believe the title is "A Knight's Tale".

Damsel: How did you know my name was Lily?

Joel: This is your moment, brother! "Upon your sword sit laurel victory! And smooth success be strew'd before your feet!" (*Aside*) bet you don't know who said that.

Ryan: Have at thee, dragon!

Ryan and the dragon begin to fight. The damsel cheers on Ryan, the witch cheers on the dragon. Then the damsel and the witch begin to fight. Joel serenades them with "Kung Fu Fighting". As he begins to sing, the battle becomes silent so the audience can hear his beautiful song.

Joel: Ding ding ding ding! (*or if we have a bell, we can just ring that*)

Joel brings a chair, a towel, and a water bottle. He gives Ryan a pep talk and prepares him for the next round.

As Ryan gets to his feet, Joel holds up a "Round 2" sign.

Round 2: The dragon slays our knight with a mighty thwack of her tail.

The witch steals off with the damsel.

Joel takes a potion from the witch's arsenal home to his wife...

Joel: My brother slain! A hateful wife to go home to! Woe is me! What's this? A love potion...number 69...maybe my life isn't too terrible after all...

Joel makes his way back through the crowd (down the mountain, maybe singing a sad song or two). When he gets home, he puts the potion into his wife's drink.

Ad lib: Joel gives Falon the drink and she drinks it (of course she has snide remarks about the drink, Joel, etc.) Then she falls down dead and Joel falls down weeping over her...until he realizes that now he's free to cavort at the tavern as often as he chooses.