



A Prince Problem **By 5th Grader Isabel Mehta**

© 2011 Isabel Mehta and Philadelphia Young Playwrights. For educational use only. Not for sale, production, or performance. If you are interested in producing this play at your school or institution, please contact Info@PhillyYoungPlaywrights.Org to seek permission from the playwright.



Character List

Prince Philip Layne: An 11 year old boy who is very curious and kind. He always wants what is best for everybody.

Queen Meredith: A 40 year old very strict and serious mother who doesn't like the commoners because she thinks she's better than them. She believes the commoners and the royal should not socialize.

Arthur: A 60 year old butler who is VERY clumsy and is hard of hearing.

King Clubster (King of Clubs): A very chill card who has a southern accent. He has a caring heart but doesn't always show it. He believes he is better than everybody.

King Spade (King of Spades): A caring, trustworthy, and formal card.

Heartsia (Two of Hearts): A loving and caring card who is always calling everybody sweetie, honey bun, etc. She has a New York accent. She wishes for her rights, because she is a two, nobody listens to her.

Diamond (Two of Diamonds): A selfish card who only cares about herself. She is very bland and un-emotional. She also wishes to be treated equally.



SCENE 1

Setting: In the castle in the living room.

QUEEN

Philip! Time for your sword-fighting lesson! And don't be late. I hired a professional teacher. This is something especially important for a prince to know!

PHILIP

(Philip enters stage left)

Another lesson Mother? They're so tiring and annoying! How much *do* you expect me to learn?

QUEEN

What do you mean "another lesson?" You don't want to be laying around with your bum on your bed all day long, do you?

PHILIP

No Mother. I was just wondering if I would have time to go to the... the-

QUEEN

The what?

PHILIP

The park?

QUEEN

Absolutely not! Those kids are peasants! They do not come from the same royalty as our family and I will not respect that! Plus they're just so *different*. You would never get along, anyway.

PHILIP

Please Mother? I want to go to school! I want to be friends with the villagers! Just because they're different doesn't mean they're bad people.

QUEEN

Nonsense! Now get that mud off your pants, you're starting to look like those peasant children now.

(Queen exits stage left)



PHILIP

Yes Mother.

(Dusts his pants and sighs and she exits stage left.)

SCENE 2

Setting: Philip is in his room.

PHILIP

I just don't understand! Why does she think different is so bad? I just can't take it any more! This has been going on ever since I was old enough to walk and talk! I wish father was here. He'd fix all of this, but of course he has to be on some journey with the King of France discussing something boring, probably like money or land. But she has no idea what it's like to have no friends! I just wish I could think of a way to prove to her what's right. But from the way she acts, that's going to take a miracle.

(Lets out a big sigh and plops down onto the bed. Lights dim and he falls asleep.)

SCENE 3

Setting: Split Stage. On the left side there is Phillip's room. On the right side there is the living room. It's 9:00 in the morning.

QUEEN

Oh Arthur, Philip is asking again about going outside and playing with those filthy children. I know you have been my butler so long, I thought you could help me with what I should do about it.

PHILIP

(Stops behind the playroom chair and secretly listens to the conversation.)

QUEEN

It's just so out of this world to even remotely let Philip go out and socialize with the non royal! We are so much better than them! They were only planted on this earth to serve us! Not to be friends with us! That is what I believe and how I was raised. Same, same, same, is what I like.

ARTHUR

Yes Madam, whatever you think is right.

(Not really listening. Having a hard time holding the tray. Everything is about to topple off.)

QUEEN

And for Philip to even *think* to have a chance with those people was outrageous! This just



proves I need to be even stricter with him about this situation.

ARTHUR

Yes Madam, whatever you think is right.
(One teacups falls and cracks into a million pieces.)

QUEEN

Oh Arthur! Why are you always *soooo* clumsy? Even though you can't hear me doesn't mean you have to drop china!

ARTHUR

I'm extremely sorry Madam. How could you ever forgive me?

QUEEN

Just try not to drop any more china? Just try.

ARTHUR

Oh yes Madam. How about a nice rest in your bed? That would suit you well.

QUEEN

Good idea, Arthur. You've always been a wonderful butler for me.
(Queen exits stage right. While she is off stage, Arthur cleans up the mess.)

PHILIP

I am so frustrated with her! This has been going on for my whole life! Eleven years!! I thought she would come to her senses by now! Just because they're non royal doesn't mean they're not people! They should be treated with the same respect as us!

ARTHUR

(knock knock)
Master Philip? May I come in?

PHILIP

Of course Arthur.

ARTHUR

Madam sent me up here to accompany you. She said to make sure you were resting, after your lessons and all. But... I brought some playing cards if you'd like.

PHILIP

Oh yes! That would be great!



ARTHUR

It's your grandfather's old deck. You know how he loved his playing cards.

PHILIP

Oh yes, you've told me all about it.

ARTHUR

So what game?

PHILIP

How about War?

ARTHUR

You would like to lick the floor? I assure you master you do not want to do that.

PHILIP

(chuckles)

Not exactly, I said War.

ARTHUR

Oh sorry Master Philip. I'm becoming an old man. My hearings been a little rusty lately.
(puts finger in ear and shakes it around.)

PHILIP

That's alright, I understand. Arthur, could I ask you something? I need some advice.

ARTHUR

Of course Master Philip, ask away.

PHILIP

What if... let's just say, someone in your life is really frustrating you with their thoughts, and you wish you could change them, but that is going to be really hard because their feelings are really strong and they are really stubborn. Let's just say.

ARTHUR

Interesting. And where may I ask did you get this situation?

PHILIP

Well... phhh obviously, not from my life. I mean that would just be crazy!

ARTHUR

Ok? But honestly, I really don't have much to say.



PHILIP

Pleeeeee???? I really need some advice... I mean it'd just be nice to know.

ARTHUR

Rrrriigghht. Well all I have to say is, you have to do what *you* think is right.

PHILIP

What is that supposed to mean?!

ARTHUR

It means to do what you think is right.

PHILIP

Well what if I don't know what's right?

ARTHUR

Then I'm sorry, but I'm not much help to you.

(Starts collecting the cards and putting them in a pile. Then while he is putting them in a pile he drops them and they all flip all over the floor)

PHILIP

Oh Arthur, why are you so so so.... *clumsy*?

ARTHUR

I am deeply sorry master. Is there anything I could do to repay you-

QUEEN

Arthur!!!! Get over here this instant! I need your opinion on where our royal water fountain for the annual Christmas Ball should go!!!!

(calls from off stage left)

ARTHUR

Coming Madam! Master Philip, I'll be back as soon as possible.

PHILIP

All right, Arthur.

(sighs and jumps onto the bed backwards. He is on his back)

CLUB

(Comes up from behind the bed so Philip can't see him.)

What in the world is wrong with that man! He is so dang clumsy! My back feels like it was bent right in half!



PHILIP

Wait, who was that?

SPADE

Is everybody ok?

PHILIP

Who's there?

(gets off the bed and walks over to the front of stage, looks left to right)

CLUB

Over here ya fool! Are ya blind or somethin'?

PHILIP

Oh Arthur, you know I'm getting a little bit too old for your funny business.

(reaches down and picks up the club)

CLUB

Whoa, hey watch it buddy. You don't just go around pickin' up everything you find do you?

PHILIP

This is unusual, his tricks normally aren't this advanced.

CLUB

What do ya mean "advanced?" We're not some sorta toy trick.

PHILIP

Wait, so you're... you're

CLUB

Real? Yeah, that's the word.

PHILIP

Oh my gosh, oh my gosh, oh my gosh.

CLUB

Whoa, cool it skippy.

PHILIP

This is a dream, this is a dream.

(takes deep breaths)



SPADE

Is there a problem over here?

CLUB

Oh, it's nothing. This prince is hyperventilating 'cause he's never seen anything interesting before. Kids these days.

SPADE

Wait, did you say prince? As in, the son of the king?

CLUB

Yeah, what did you think I meant?

SPADE

I can't believe it. We finally might actually have a decent ruler around here.

PHILIP

Whoa whoa, hold the sword fighting, there's going to be no ruling around here until I get over the fact that my deck of cards are life-size and walking and talking and and....
(starts hyperventilating again)

CLUB

Oh great, this is just great.

HEART

(gets up from the floor, she was lying on her back)
Did you say a prince? Oh my my goodness! A prince! A prince! Do you hear that sweeties? A prince!

DIAMOND

A prince you say?

HEART

Yes, hunny bun, a prince!

DIAMOND

Huh! I never saw that coming.

CLUB

What do ya mean you neva saw that comin'? Are you bland or somethin'? And being a king I should know! You low level twos! You're not ev'n half of what I am! I am a king! You and your little heart friend think you guys are equals! You're like jelly without the



donut! NOTHIN'!

DIAMOND

No I am not! We should be treated with the same respect as everybody else! Just because we're twos doesn't mean we're nothing!

CLUB

Oh! Do I hear a flea somewhere? Oh do ya'll hear that? That small gibber gabber?

SPADE

Silence! Prince Philip is obviously very confused right now. It would probably be best if we just BE QUIET FOR 2 SECONDS!

(takes deep breath)

Thank you!

CLUB

Who does he think he is, actin' like the boss of us! We ain't gonna be quiet!

HEART

The prince isn't that bad, cupcake.

CLUB

Don't call me cupcake!

HEART

Fine then, sweetie.

CLUB

Ugh!

SPADE

As you can see, we are in need of a ruler around here, that the cards would actually listen to. None of us get along. We are all just so different. Everybody around here judges each other by their number!

PHILIP

I see. But what makes you think they'll listen to me anyway?

SPADE

I really don't know. Anybody, besides that club, can work fine.



PHILIP

Hey! I think I've got an idea! You see, my mother the queen, doesn't like the commoners, the people who are not royal. She thinks they're filthy. She thinks we can't get along because we're so different from them. Well, maybe if I helped you cards overcome your problem, then we can prove to her how the non royal and the royal can get along!

SPADE

I see what your saying.

PHILIP

So... what do you think?

SPADE

I understand what you're trying to say, but do you have any idea how hard this is going to be?

PHILIP

I know. Believe me, from what I just saw, this is going to be pretty hard, but it seems like the only way to change my mother's mind.

SPADE

Ok, whatever you say.

PHILIP

By the way, thanks for reaching out to me. No one around here really has been doing that lately. With my mother's problems, my butler never giving me any advice, I really needed a friend. And that's exactly what you gave me.

SPADE

I'm just being me!

PHILIP

So, if we're going to do this, I think it would help if I got to know the cards a little more.

SPADE

Great! Hold on. Attention!

(nobody responds)

ATTENTION!

(everybody stops talking)

Thank you! Now, I would like to introduce to you, Prince Philip!



CLUB

He is one hunka chunka!

SPADE

Anyway, I thought it would be polite if we all introduced ourselves. Leaders of the clans only please.

(all four leaders stand in a line)

CLUB

Yo, I'm Clubster, but you can call me Club. I'm always cool and chillaxed. I am the king of all clubs! The most royal of them all! All of the filthy numbers look up at me! And just because the Diamond and the Heart leader is on a temporary business trip with an evil joker...DOES NOT mean they get to be treated as equal as I am!

DIAMOND

Greetings, I'M Diamond and I'M the leader of this clan so you better listen to ME! I'M the greedy one. I only care about MYSELF! I wish for once I would be treated like an equal and not like a puddle of mud.

HEART

Hi sweetie! I'm Heartsia, the two of hearts! But everybody calls me heart! I'm-

CLUB

The REALLY annoying low level two who is *always* calling everyone sweetie or lovey or SOMETHING!

HEART

I do not, honeybun!

CLUB

Ugh!

SPADE

And I'm Spade, just Spade. I will be Prince Philip's guide and friend throughout our deal. Even though I am the King of Spades, I do think everybody should be treated equally.

CLUB

Loser...

(coughs that into his arms)

Hold your horses, what deal?



SPADE

Well... while all you guys were fooling around, Philip and I made a deal. If he helps us get along, then we'll help him with his situation.

CLUB

What kind of situation does this *prince* have?

SPADE

A situation where we need to prove different people can work together.

CLUB

How in the world is that going to help prince? We will never in a million years work together.

SPADE

That's what you think, but Prince Philip is going to help us.

DIAMOND

Yeah sure, like that's going to work.

SPADE

So? When do we start?

PHILIP

Well, there's no time to lose, so let's start now!

SCENE 4

Setting: Philip's playroom.

PHILIP

So, this is my playroom. I figured we should work in here because mother never comes in here, unless I have a lesson I'm going to be late for. But I'm pretty sure I don't have any. I decided I should only show you guys to her until the right time.

CLUB

Now what are we going to do to help us work together?

PHILIP

Well, I don't know! We need something that helps you cooperate. Like an activity!

HEART

I've always wanted to play one of those sweet card games!



PHILIP

That's a good idea. Do you want to try that?

CLUB

Yeah sure, but which game are we gonna play?

PHILIP

How about War? That's one of my favorites.

HEART

Then War it is! We all know how to play that right?

ALL CARDS

Yup!

PHILIP

Ok! This can't be that hard...

CLUB

I can't believe, I have to play with this filthy Two of Hearts!

CLUB/HEART

One, two, three, war!

HEART

Really? I had to get three of diamonds??!! Well, I win! Just because it's a lower number doesn't mean we always lose!

CLUB

No, I win! I got the jack of clubs! And jack is higher than three! Get the picture?

HEART

No! I don't get the picture! Just because it's a more royal number, doesn't mean you overpower me! I can't believe this royalty thing comes up everywhere! This is worse than a rotten bag of lollipops!

CLUB

No you didn't, you big bag of sweet tarts! I WON!

(club and heart start to wrestle)



PHILIP

Guys, guys! That's not even how you play! I can't believe this! This game has turned into an actual war! This is NOT going as planned!

HEART

Get off me you rotten honeybun!

CLUB

STOP CALLING ME THAT!

PHILIP

Guys...

(they don't hear him and keep on arguing)

GUYS! Break it up! Do you have any idea how horrible this looks? This is obviously not going to work. We'll have to try something else to help you work together. Anybody got any ideas?

SPADE

I've always thought those card houses were pretty interesting. Do you want to try that?

CLUB

Yeah, sure. But we are all gonna fail. EPICLY.

PHILIP

That's not true.

CLUB

Yuh huh, just watch.

(they start the house and Diamond steps on his foot.)

Hey get off my foot! Are you blind?

DIAMOND

(the spade is stepping on his toe.)

Ow! Stop stepping on my toe!

SPADE

(club is stepping on his hand.)

That's not your toe. It's my hand!

HEART

Sweeties, move it!



PHILIP
(Uncovers his eyes)

Well... it's a start?

QUEEN
Philip!!!! You're going to be tardy for your harpsichord lesson if you don't hurry up!

PHILIP
Oh my gosh! I didn't know I had a lesson! Quick hide, hide, hide!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

QUEEN
Philip? Who are you talking to?

PHILIP
Uhh... nobody! Go, go, go!

QUEEN
Philip? I better come in!

PHILIP
No!! I mean-

QUEEN
Aahhhh!!!!
(faints)

PHILIP
And this is why I didn't want her to to see them until the right time.

QUEEN
Oh my...
(starts to get up while all the cards are staring at her and hovering around her.)
Ahh!!

PHILIP
Oh, Mother, please don't faint again!

QUEEN
Oh Philip, I think I'm seeing hallucinations.

PHILIP
No, Mother, you're not.



QUEEN

So, so they're... they're real?

CLUB

What is wrong with you people? Do we *look* fake to you?

QUEEN

No, but PHILIP! WHY ARE THEY IN HERE *TALKING* WITH YOU?

PHILIP

Um... well... um... it's just... it's just... you never let me play with any other kids because you think we won't get along because we're so royal and they're not! Well I was trying to prove with the cards different people *can* get along by having them work together and build a card house!

QUEEN

Have you gone mad? Do you have any idea what those people are like? They're not our royal blood and I will not except that! They don't even sword fight or have afternoon tea! You wouldn't like them anyway Philip. They're so different from you. But if you think differently, prove to me now what you think is right. Let me see this card house.

PHILIP

What? Now?

QUEEN

Yes, now!

PHILIP

Well, you see, we're not exactly ready-

QUEEN

GO!

PHILIP

Um, ok. Come on guys, you heard her.

CLUB

GET OFF MY FOOT!

DIAMOND

Well then get your butt out of my face!



CLUB

Oh yeah? Well maybe you should stop just caring about yourself!

HEART

Cupcakes! Get that frosting off your eyes, so you can see you're stepping on my arm!

CLUB

I swear, if she says that one more time, I'm gonna blow!

QUEEN

See! I told you! It is impossible for those who are different to work together and you know it! Unless you can find some *magical* way to prove otherwise, this discussion is over. PERIOD!

(exits stage left)

CLUB

Whoa! What a sass monster! At least now we all know what the problem is. But we are never going to prove to her-

PHILIP

STOP! Stop Stop Stop!! Why are you all so negative?! You guys have to believe in *yourselves*! There is no way anyone can do anything if they don't believe in themselves!

SPADE

I agree. We all have been so negative throughout this journey. We never stopped and thought about what we *can* do.

CLUB

Yes, I suppose you're right.

PHILIP

I think, we can build this card house! I have believed all the way, but the real question is... have you?

CLUB

Not really, I mean, I've neva thought about bein' *positive* before.

DIAMOND

Yes, I suppose even *I* haven't been the most positive card there is.

SPADE

Maybe, for once we should all try to achieve this goal!



CLUB

Maybe, I should stop being so controlling for once.

HEART

And I should stop annoying everybody with my sweetie comments.

CLUB

Thank you lord!

PHILIP

So, what do you say, let's believe! Let's believe we can do it! Let's try to prove to my mother that we *can* work together!

ALL CARDS

Yeah!

HEART

Well, sweeties! What are we waiting for? Let's build this house!

(starts building the house, but the last part doesn't work.)

I'm almost there!

(they reach the top)

Oh my gosh! We did it! We actually did it!

CLUB

This just proves to me the royal faces and the number can work together. This just proves we're all the same value. And we should all be treated the same.

SPADE

I agree.

DIAMOND

So do I.

HEART

So do I.

PHILIP

Yes! Yes! Yes!!!!!! Now, guys, stay right there ok? Mother! There's something I really want you to see!

QUEEN

What Philip? What could be so important that you had drag me all the way over here?



(stops and stares at the cards but pretends to not be surprised.)

Oh! So what does this mean exactly? Just because cards can build a card house doesn't mean you're convincing me anything!

PHILIP

But mother! You don't understand! These aren't just playing cards who can talk, they had the same problem you and I had. You see, They all judged each other by what was on the outside, which was in this case, royalty. They all judged each other by their number. But when they built this card house, they realized we should all be treated the same and not by what royalty they were.

QUEEN

Ok, I see what you're saying. The cards are mirroring our life, and my thoughts. They were able to overcome their differences, and realize we are all equal.

PHILIP

So what are you saying?

QUEEN

I'm saying, you can go outside and play with those children, since you have proved to me what's right.

PHILIP

Yes! Thank you mother, thank you! Oh yes, before I go and play, I need to tell you one more thing: In life, you have to realize we are all equal and we should all be treated with the same respect as others. If you spend your whole life trying to be friends with only royal people, and shutting out the villagers, you're going to miss out on a lot of things. Maybe the villagers have a pretty interesting life-style. Who knows? But the important thing is realizing we are all equal.

QUEEN

Honey, you really are one bright prince. And I love you so much because of it.

(Gives him a hug. Exits stage left)

PHILIP

Hey guys, Thank you. Thank you for everything. You cards becoming life-size was the best thing that ever happened to me.

CLUB

Aw, no prob man!



My pleasure.

SPADE

Sweetie, you're a hero!

HEART

You've made ME a better person.

DIAMOND

Well guys, I guess we can talk whenever we want now, right? I better get going and make some friends!

PHILIP

Bye!

ALL CARDS

Setting: In the park.

SCENE 5

Isn't the outside beautiful, with its exquisite sky and its wonderful chirping birds?

PHILIP

Yes master, nature is a wonderful place.

ARTHUR

Indeed it is.

PHILIP

Is this a good spot for the picnic?

(sits down)

Yes honey, that's perfect.

QUEEN

(they lay out the blanket and all sit down)
So honey, have you made any new friends yet? It has been almost a month since you've made your first appearance in the world! Has it been well for you?

Yes! I have made so many new friends! Mrs. Teacher says I'm a "people person" even though I don't know what that means! I love school, learning new things is so fun!

PHILIP

Oh Philip, I want to know more than that! Tell me about your friends! Tell me how you

QUEEN



made them!

PHILIP

Oh yes Mother, I'm going to tell you *all* about it!

END OF PLAY