

Princess Bride is a jewel

By Diana Ball

PG laughs abound in Rob Reiner's production of William Goldman's 1973 fairy tale, *The Princess Bride*.

When Grandpa comes to visit his bed-bound grandson (Fred Savage), the typical pre-teen cringes from Grandpa's cheek-tweaking and his offer to read him an old fairy tale. Grandpa promises lots of sports and not much "kissy stuff." Within minutes, grandson and audience are swept into an enchanting and absurd past, where shrieking eels, flame-throwing fire swamps, sucking sands, and even ROUS's (rodents of unusual size) cannot keep Buttercup from her Westley.

Aside from nasty natural phenomena in the kingdom of Florin, the "inconceivably" rotten little Vizzini (Wallace Shawn) and his assistants, Fezzik (Andre the Giant) and Inigo (Mandy Patinkin), snatch the fair maiden moments into the movie.

Buttercup takes the next-best offer--that of Prince Humperdinck of Florin, a morally lacking blueblood for whom she feels nothing. But Westley is supposed to be dead, and what the heck--this Humperdinck guy is rich.

Buttercup takes up residence in the family castle to practice being a princess, but is snatched by Vizzini and gang. But she escapes into the moonlit sea only to confront the shrieking eels.

Fezzik fetches her from needle-toothed jaws, while Inigo notices a ship in pursuit. A stranger in black comes to her rescue.

So begins a series of fantastic events that deliver all that Grandpa has promised at an unfaltering, snappy pace.

From tenderness to torture, from rivalry to sweet revenge, from fair maidens to warty hags, *The Princess Bride* is an adult fairy tale suitable for a youngster that can stand a spot of blood and dash of violence.

Cary Elwes plays Westley, the farmhand who comes back in black, with grace and style.

Inigo and Fezzik eventually team up with Westley and prove themselves noble. Together the three storm Buttercup's wedding with only a wheelbarrow, a holocaust cloak, and chocolate-covered medicine balls from Miracle Max, played by Billy Crystal.

Chris Sarandon as Humperdinck, and Robin Wright as Buttercup play low-profile parts. Christopher Guest is the evil Count of Florin and a torture aficionado who temporarily dispatches Westley. Peter Falk appears as Grandpa and Carol Kane is Miracle Max's spouse.

Dire Straits fans will enjoy a musical score by Mark Knopfler that is instrumental in transporting the audience to the magical Kingdom of Florin.

A NEW FILM BY ROB REINER

THE PRINCESS BRIDES