

TADPOLE TO TOAD

A Ten Minute Play

by

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FOR READING
ONLY

please contact Kyla for production purposes

SETTING: A tree by a pond.

AT RISE: ASH is sitting under a tree while ABBY comes in trying to balance two very full mugs of tea without spilling.

ABBY

(quietly)
Hey.

I thought I'd find you out here.

I brought you some tea.

ASH

Thanks.

ABBY

Where do you want me to put it?

ASH

Oh! Um? You can just put it on the ground... my hands are a bit...

They gesture as if there is something in their hands

ABBY

Full?

ASH

Yeah.

ABBY

What have you got?

ASH

It looked cold so I picked it up. It's umm...It's a frog... Actually, it might be a toad. See it's got these spots which I think might be warts so it's probably a toad but/

ABBY

You always did love those things.

ASH

Yeah.

ABBY

Did you name it?

ASH

No, not yet I'm not sure if I/

Then we can name it together. ABBY

We don't need to do that. ASH

Sure we do. ABBY

But... ASH

Come on! You used to name everything when you were younger. ABBY

Yeah, but they were stupid names. ASH

You loved Quackers the duck. ABBY

Wasn't very original. ASH

We could name it Ribbit. ABBY

That's a sound not a name ASH

So was Quackers. ABBY

I was three! And toads don't make that noise. ASH

That's what those animal books told me. ABBY

About frogs. ASH

Same difference. ABBY

Not really. ASH

ABBY

Your tea is getting cold.

ASH

Oh...

ASH sets down the toad and picks up the mug

It's pretty cute honestly.

ABBY

Yeah, I guess.

ASH

Do you think it would let me hold it?

ABBY

Maybe?

ASH

Do you want to?

They pick up the toad and hold it out to ABBY

Sure

ABBY

They transfer the toad

I thought it would be slimy

ASH

It's a toad.

ABBY

Yeah but- Ugh!

She shakes her hand off dropping the toad on the ground

It peed on me!

ASH

They typically do.

ABBY

That's disgusting.

ASH

Just wipe your hands on the grass

ABBY bends over and wipes her hands on the ground

ABBY

So why are you out here really? Mom said you blew up at her.

ASH

Did she?

ABBY

I don't know what happened. I just wanted to check on you.

ASH

Nothing happened.

ABBY

You're at the thinking tree.

ASH

And?

ABBY

You never come here unless somethings wrong. So spill.

ASH

Did you know that toads don't really have a gender?

ABBY

No, but/

ASH

They kind of just change sometimes. I think it happens when they mate or something but I'm not really sure.

ABBY

Is that why you won't give it a name? Because I'm pretty sure Ribbit is gender-neutral.

ASH

(rambling)

It just doesn't feel right to name it. I mean if you give it a name and then it decides it wants to change and its not really a decision but then what are we going to call it because the old one won't feel right and if it does people might not understand and/

ABBY

Hey! Breathe... You're going to break that mug if your grip gets any tighter.

ASH

Oh...

(beat)

ABBY
You don't have to talk about it if you don't want to.

ASH
No it's okay...
Just give me a minute?

ABBY
Sure

They sit there in silence. After some time ASH finally looks over to ABBY.

ASH
Abby?

ABBY
Mhm?

ASH
I think I might be a toad?

ABBY
Excuse me?

ASH
Nothing... just.

ABBY
I thought you'd be a tadpole with how small you are if anything.

ASH
I'm being serious!

ABBY
Are you sure about that?

ASH
What the hell do you want from me?

ABBY
Ashley!

ASH
That's not my name!

ABBY
(realizing)
...What?

You're not listening to/ ASH

I'm just... confused? ABBY

(mumbling)
I just explained it to you. ASH

Love, I don't know how a person can be a toad. ABBY

I just told you! ASH

I don't think you/ ABBY

I did! ASH

ASH stands up in frustration

Hey! Hey! Calm down! ABBY

Don't tell me what to do! ASH

It's not my fault you're speaking gibberish! ABBY

I'm pretty sure this is English! ASH

Why won't you tell me what's wrong?! ABBY

Because I already did! ASH

ABBY calms down a little bit and their voice softens

(quietly) ABBY

So... you're a... toad?

ASH

That's what I said.

ABBY

I don't want to sound bad, I just don't understand.

ASH

I thought you would be different.

ABBY

Hey I didn't say it was a bad thing!

Is this what mom was yelling about?

ASH

Yeah.

(beat)

ABBY

Maybe she didn't get the toad thing?

ASH

I didn't use the toads to tell her.

ABBY

So? What's this about?

ASH

You know.. the changing thing

ABBY

Yeah...

ASH

The mating and how they're/

ABBY

Oh!

Oh?

So?

ASH

I'm nonbinary... yeah.

ABBY

Cool.

You're not mad? ASH

Why would I be mad? ABBY

Mom was... ASH

Mom's an asshole. ABBY

Yeah. ASH

So is there anything? ABBY

Like what? ASH

Like pronouns..or? ABBY

Oh! They/them ASH

You changing your name? ABBY

Yeah, I was actually thinking about like shortening it... maybe Ash? ASH

Sounds badass. ABBY

Really? ASH

Yeah. ABBY

Thanks. ASH

Is that all? ABBY

One more.

ASH

Hit me.

ABBY

Ice cream?

ASH

Why?

ABBY

Well you're not my little tadpole anymore.

ASH

What does that have to do with?

ABBY

Come on toad let's go.

ASH

You don't have to...

ABBY

If those moms get to start forest fires to announce their babies gender we sure as hell can get ice cream for yours.

ASH

You sure?

ABBY

I'll race you to the car!

ABBY quickly gets up and runs away swinging her keys in hand.

ASH

You're ridiculous.

ABBY

Last one gets the smaller cone!

The lights fade on the thinking tree as the two run offstage

END OF PLAY