

# 'Princess Diaries' dressed-up spin on 'Ugly Duckling'

By Ellen Blevens  
For *entertainment!*

Once there was a little duckling. She did not look like the other ducklings in the pond. They all made fun of her until she became a beautiful swan.

Disney's latest movie takes this worn-out children's tale and adds a crown. "The Princess Diaries" is an average film with a predictable story.

Mia (Anne Hathaway) is a high school girl who wishes she was invisible. She has big glasses and frizzy hair, which, in Hollywood terms, automatically makes her a nerd.

Mia is not very happy when she finds out that she is the only remaining heir to the throne of Genovia, but she agrees to take princess lessons with her grandmother, the Queen of Genovia (Julie Andrews), anyway.

Ultimately, Mia must decide whether she will move to Genovia and live as a princess or remain in San Francisco with her artist mom.

Along the way there are the usual bumpy spots in the road. Mia's best friend thinks she is acting stuck up. The popular girls try to use her. And the entire time, Mia is fleeing the paparazzi.

Ultimately, in the end, the ugly duckling does become a beautiful swan. However, Mia was not really ugly to begin with — she just needed contact lenses and a good conditioning rinse.

There were several scenes which left me scratching my head because they added absolutely nothing to the movie. In the beginning of the film, Mia and her mother have an argument about her mother dating Mia's teacher. This could have been a good opportunity to show conflict and resolution in Mia's relationship with her mother, but this blossoming relationship with the teacher is never even discussed again.

Another scene which contributed nothing to the movie involved the Queen and the limo driver. The Queen is

## Review

### The Princess Diaries

C+

**STARRING:** Julie Andrews, Anne Hathaway, Hector Elizondo, Heather Matarazzo, and Mandy Moore  
**DIRECTED BY:** Garry Marshall  
**RATED:** G

romanced by Joseph (Hector Elizondo). This subplot was not required to advance the film, and was not given adequate screen time to make the audience care.

Overall, this is not a great movie, but then again, there haven't been many great movies this summer. It is a perfect movie for children to see with their parents, but I recommend anyone between the ages of 16 and 25 to steer clear of "The Princess Diaries."



Ron Bartzdorf/Buena Vista Pictures  
Queen Renaldi (Julie Andrews, left) and her beautiful granddaughter Mia (Anne Hathaway, right) great citizens of San Francisco in "The Princess Diaries."