

ANNIERELLA AND THE (VERY AWESOME) GOOD QUEEN FAIRY COWMOTHER

By Bobbi A. Chukran

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

NARRATOR	Can also double as one of the male cowboy dancers at the ball
ANNIERELLA	Orphan girl, lives with her stepmother, Eula Gee, and her three stepsisters. An energetic young woman, feisty
EULA GEE	The Nasty Stepmother
MOZELDA JOE	Sister One ... the oldest sister, bossy, brash
BRIZELDA JANE	Sister Two ... middle sister
FRIZELDA ANN	Sister Three ... younger sister
VERY AWESOME GOOD QUEEN FAIRY COWMOTHER	A quirky, loud, large energetic cow with wings and dangling udders. Fairy Cowmother is basically a cow dressed in a frilly dress, with some kind of wand tucked up in her hoof, wearing a tiara. She has a few helpers that skip along behind her ... small sheep with wings perhaps. They help in the dressing and undressing of Annierella.
ROY BOB	Rich rancher cowpoke; the Cowpoke's Ball is at his ranch ... young, handsome, maybe a bit stuck on himself
DANCERS	Assorted male and female dancers at the ball
CHORUS	Various helpers for Cowmother dressed as winged sheep or other farmyard animals—can double as dancers at the ball

PROPS LIST

FOR SCENE ONE

Wooden porch and front wall of old farmhouse

Invitation to the ball

Mailbox, milking stool, old milk can, etc. to make the stage look like a farmyard

Broom for Annierella

FOR SCENE TWO

Bright red bandanna

Sparkly wand and tiara for Cowmother

Red boots for Annierella

FOR SCENE THREE

Punch bowl, cups, etc. on table

Chairs

Miscellaneous cowboy décor

Red/white checked tablecloth

One of Annierella's red boots

FOR SCENE FOUR

Wooden porch and front wall of old farmhouse

Mailbox, milking stool, old milk can, etc. to make the stage look like a farmyard
Clothes line, etc.

Red boots for Annierella

Sparkly wand and tiara for Cowmother

SETTING

SCENE ONE: In a modest farmyard in front of Annierella's home.

Simple outdoor setting with front porch, mailbox, milking stool, old milk can, etc. A small garden area, clothesline, etc.

SCENE TWO: Same as Scene One

SCENE THREE: At the ball, which can be a barn or decorated room in a ranch house. Cowboy décor. A small table has a punch bowl, etc. and a few chairs placed around the perimeter. Traditional country music plays softly in the background

SCENE FOUR: Same as Scene One and Two

ADDITIONAL NOTE: Scene Three can be either lengthened or shortened depending on time requirements of the production by adding more songs and dancing.

*For Steph, Little Sister, Jack, Betty G. & the
Divine Miz C. and Fred ... muchas gracias!
And for Rudy, as always.*

ANNIERELLA & THE (VERY AWESOME) GOOD QUEEN FAIRY COWMOTHER

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SCENE ONE

NARRATOR: Evenin' y'all! There once was a cowgirl named Annierella. Annierella lived on an old farm with her nasty step-mother, Eula Gee, and her three older step-sisters, Mozelda Joe, Brizelda Jane and Frizelda Ann. Now, I know it's pretty darned rude to say so, but woouooooe, were those sisters UGLY! They were not only ugly, they were also darned near inept ... worthless, you might say, and lazy to boot. They couldn't dance, they couldn't sing, they couldn't cook worth a darn, and they sure didn't know which end of a cow was which! Y'all sit back now, and we'll tell you their story.

(As NARRATOR speaks, lights come up on ANNIERELLA dancing around the stage, simultaneously doing chores. ANNIERELLA is busy with a butter churn, a washtub and a clothesline, furiously trying to do it all at once, hoes the garden, etc. Every once in a while SHE'll stop and exaggerating, wipe her forehead, blow her hair out of her eyes, etc. SHE wears old tee-shirt under raggedly overalls and ugly, dirty work boots.)

MOZELDA JOE: *(Entering from left carrying bucket.)* Mama told me to fetch some milk, but for the life of me, I can't figure out how to get the milk outta them thangs!

BRIZELDA JANE: *(Entering from right.)* Don't ask me! I don't know either. Get Annierella to do it. She doesn't have enough to do today. *(laughs)*

FRIZELDA ANN: *(Entering with EULA GEE)* That's for sure! Why, that lazy girl needs to earn her keep around here!

EULA GEE: You girls, now don't strain you voices. *(shouts)* Annierella! Get BUSY!

NARRATOR: Little Annierella's life was very hard on the farm, and she never had any fun. She was expected to get up at the crack of dawn and feed the chickens, milk the cows, herd the longhorns, sweep the kitchen, make some cheese, bake some bread and even cook up some grub for her step-mama and her sisters. Grub means food, in case you didn't know.

(NARRATOR exits.)

MOZELDA JOE, BRIZELDA JANE, FRIZELDA ANN: *(SISTERS shake fingers at ANNIERELLA as THEY shout simultaneously ...)*
Annierella, do this! Annierella, do that! Annierella, did you wash my dress? Annierella, did you polish my boots? Annierella, did you brush my hat? Annierella, did you do this 'n that? Annierella, quit lollygaggin' around—get busy!
EULA GEE: Annierella, go check the mail! I'm too tired!

(ANNIERELLA walks over to the mailbox and takes out a single sheet of paper.)

ANNIERELLA: *(reading)* Nothing but some junk mail ... some kind of party at the Lazy R&B.
MOZELDA JOE: A party? Let ME have it! *(Snatches the paper out of ANNIERELLA's hand and begins to read, Excited)* Look, gals! It's about the Cowpoke's Ball! It's down at the Lazy R&B Ranch this year. I've always wanted to go but we've never been invited before.

(Hands the paper to EULA GEE.)

BRIZELDA JANE: Why, that's the biggest ranch in the county. Isn't that where that sweet Jimmy Bob Louis lives now?
EULA GEE: *(reading)* No, you're thinking of the Lazy S&S Ranch. This is from Roy Bob Davis. He just got home from college. Graduated and everthing. I heard he's lookin' for some young filly to marry and set up housekeeping with. Last I heard, his daddy left him pretty well off, too, what with all their oil wells and cattle and that big ol' ranch.
MOZELDA JANE: Well, what are we waiting for? Let's get busy designin' some new dresses! Mama, can we go? Puh-leeeeeze???
EULA GEE: Of course we kin go! I myself wouldn't miss it. Especially since we got us a gen-u-wine personal invite!
ANNIERELLA: *(peering over EULA GEE's shoulder & frowning)* Uh, it says "Occupant" on the address label. That's not what I call a *personal* invite!
EULA GEE: Well, we OCCUPY this house, don't we? That means we're invited! And don't stand there and sass me, young lady!

(SISTERS start discussing dresses, excited, etc.)

Why, girls! You're jabbering and yammering and cluckin' and carryin' on like a yard full of settin' hens!

MOZELDA JOE: We're just excited, mother! We work so hard around here, it'll be nice to go out to a party and relax a little bit and have some fun for once.

FRIZELDA ANN: Oh boy! I know just what I'm gonna wear, too! A new blue gown, with doo-dads and bling-bling all over it!

BRIZELDA JANE: No siree, sister! You can't wear a blue gown! I'm gonna wear a blue one! With lace and gee-gaws all over the sleeves!

MOZELDA JOE: Well, dangit! We can't all wear a blue gown! I'm the oldest, I should be the one to wear blue if I want. Mine will have a big ol' ruffly collar, to show off my girlish charms.

(The THREE SISTERS start pulling hair, kicking each other, etc.)

EULA GEE: Hush, girls, I can't hear myself think! *(reading flyer)* WAIT A MINUTE! The ball is TONIGHT! HEY! *(claps hands to get GIRLS' attention)* We don't have much time. As a matter of fact, I think we all should have brand new dresses for the ball. If we hurry, we can go to town and be back just in time to get ready. Annierella, hurry up and go hitch up the buggy, and make it snappy! We're goin' shoppin'!

ANNIERELLA: May I have a new dress for the Ball, too, step-mother? I can do extra chores to pay for it.

EULA GEE: You? I don't think so, missy! You're lucky we give you our old burlap feed sacks to sew up into dresses. And didn't we give you that brand new flour sack just last week to make yourself an apron? Ungrateful child! Always askin' for stuff you don't deserve.

ANNIERELLA: But, what will I wear to the Ball?

MOZELDA JOE: You can't go to the Ball! You stink like an old cow, Annierella *(holds nose)*.

BRIZELDA JANE: Besides, you have to stay here, and ... uh ...

ANNIERELLA: Stay here and do what? I always get my chores done!

MOZELDA JOE: Oh, I don't know! Don't be sassy, missy! You can slop the hawks! Them hawks always need sloppin'.

BRIZELDA JANE: And them chickens need pluckin'!

FRIZELDA ANN: And the compost needs turnin'!

EULA GEE: And that barn needs muckin'!

MOZELDA JOE: And the 'horns need herdin'!

BRIZELDA JANE: And the fence needs paintin'! You can't go to the ball ...

BRIZELDA JANE, MOZELDA JOE, FRIZELDA ANN: *(All together, shouting)* You ... can ... NOT ... go ... to ... the ... Ball! Now GET BUSY!

(EULA GEE, MOZELDA JOE, FRIZELDA ANN AND BRIZELDA chat excitedly as THEY exit stage.)

MOZELDA JOE: Mama, can I get an aubergine dress, and a new hat to go with it?

EULA GEE: Yes, darling. You sure can. You'll look absolutely astoundingly amazing in aubergine!

FRIZELDA ANN: Mama, can I get a chartreuse dress? You know how nice I look in chartreuse.

EULA GEE: Sure you can, sweetheart. You'll look charming in chartreuse. It'll bring out the color of your skin, and all the other girls will be simply pea green with envy!

BRIZELDA JANE: And what about me, mama? Can I get a fuchsia dress, mama? Puhleeeze?

EULA GEE: Of course you can, baby. You'll look utterly fantastic in fuchsia. It'll bring out the highlights in your hair.

MOZELDA JOE: And what about new shoes? Can we get new shoes, too? I haven't had a new pair of shoes since last week.

(ANNIERELLA watches sadly as SISTERS exit stage.)

SCENE TWO

ANNIERELLA: *(sits on the porch, sobbing)* Oh woe, woe is me! Oh poor ol' lonesome me! Waaahhhh! I never get to do anything fun!

(A crashing noise announces arrival of the FAIRY COWMOTHER.)

FAIRY COWMOTHER: *(Pirouettes onto and across stage. SHE swoops across stage, stops by ANNIERELLA and strikes a silly pose. Her HELPERS gather around her, bumping into each other.)* I'm heeere! And just in the nick of time, from the looks of things.

ANNIERELLA: *(taking this all in)* Who in tarnation are you? And where'd you come from?

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Why, don'tcha recognize me, girl? Don't I remind you of someone that you've heard about before? Perhaps in some story you've read or some movie you've seen?

ANNIERELLA: Uh, nope. I can't rightly say so.

FAIRY COWMOTHER: *(impatient)* Come on, try harder!

ANNIERELLA: Ummm, so, you're a ... cow? Wearing a ... uh ... tiara? Am I dreaming? If I am, this is gotta be a nightmare!

FAIRY COWMOTHER: *(with attitude)* I am NOT just an everyday, ordinary cow! *(stomps her foot)* I'm the Good Queen Awesome Fairy

Cowmother! And these are my little mutton minions. You never *heard* of me before? Huh, I thought EVERYBODY had heard of *me*! I'm *very* famous, I'll have you know. I've starred in *ever* so many productions! I've done Broadway, off Broadway, off off Broadway, the Milky Way, etcetera, etcetera ...

(SHEEP nod, in agreement.)

ANNIERELLA: Oh, I see. I guess ... I'm sorry, I don't get out much.

FAIRY COWMOTHER: *(smacks ANNIERELLA on the head with her wand)* Well, that's neither here nor there. I must say you're lookin' pert near puny, Little Annierella! Tsk, tsk, so sad. Looks like you done lost your best hound dawg, to boot. What seems to be the problem?

(ANNIERELLA starts sobbing again.)

(handing ANNIERELLA a giant bright red bandanna, with a flourish) My, my, how you *do* carry on. Dry up, girl! Take this bandanna and mop up all those tears. It's not all that bad. There, there now. Once your Good Queen Fairy Very Awesome Cowmother does a little *(shimmies)* hocus-moocus on you, everything will be right as rain! Everything will be hunky dorey, everything will be A-OK, everything will be peachy, even! No matter *what* troubles you—I can fix it!

(ANNIERELLA sniffs loudly, dries her eyes with the bandanna, blows her nose LOUDLY.)

ANNIERELLA: *(sniffing)* You can?

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Yep, you bet your boots I can!

ANNIERELLA: Well, I want to go to the Cowpoke's Ball with my sisters, but they won't let me. I never have any fun. I work all the time around here. And I'm too lily-livered to make a fuss and demand that they let me go. They're makin' me stay at home to muck out the horse stalls and clean the pig pen! I'm such a wuss! And even if they did let me go, I have nothing to wear! *(sobs into bandanna, blows nose)*

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Well, for pete's sake, dry up, girl! It can't be all that bad, can it?

ANNIERELLA: Sure can!

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Well, all right. That's a fine kettle of fish, ain't it! Not to mention just a buncha ol' hogwash! There's no reason you have to stay home if you want to go to the Ball. No reason your sisters should have all the fun, all the pleasure, all the laughs, all the

joy, all the good times, all the perks! I hear tell that you do a fine job of taking care of all the critters and the house and such, you deserve to kick up your heels a little bit, have the time of your life! You WILL go to the Ball! (*tapping her hoof to her lips, thinking, paces back and forth, tail swishing*) Now, let's see. Surely we can persuade your stepmother to let you go. Did you pitch a fit?

ANNIERELLA: (*nodding*) Yep.

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Did you throw a hissy?

ANNIERELLA: (*sniffing, drying her eyes*) Yep, a big one.

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Did you have a conniption?

ANNIERELLA: Uh huh, sure did. Twice.

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Did you carry on like it was the end of the world, and like you were simply going to diiiiie if you can't go?

ANNIERELLA: Yes, ma'am, I sure did! I did all of those things.

FAIRY COWMOTHER: And they still won't let you go?

ANNIERELLA: Nope, they won't let me go.

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Well, if all those tried 'n true methods of persuasion didn't do it, then you need somethin' more serious! Somethin' that will bring her around to your way of thinkin', somethin' that will convince her to let you go.

ANNIERELLA: (*perking up*) Like a little bit of magic?

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Nah, like a big 'ol shotgun! Got one around here anywhere? I'll teach her a lesson. Where is she, anyway? I'll give her somethin' to think about. (*slaps her knee, snorts with laughter; rubbing her nose*) Owww, I hate it when I do that! It makes milk come out of my nose!

ANNIERELLA: (*horrified*) No! I don't have a shotgun. I thought you were a GOOD Fairy Queen Cowmother!

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Right! I am, I am. I forgot myself there for a moment. The simple injustice of the world gets to me at times! Let's see, where were we? Ah, yes. You mentioned magic. I suppose we could try that. It does work (*beat*) most of the time.

ANNIERELLA: (*looks hopeful, then sad again*) But even if I could sneak out and go, I don't have anything to wear, and no way to get to the Ball anyhow. And just look at my hair! It's a pure-dee mess. It looks like I got pulled through a bush backwards by an ol' javalina. Can magic really do all that for me?

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Wow, you sure do like to whine, don'tcha? Leave all those piddlin' details to me! They don't call me the Good Queen Fairy Very blah blah Cowmother for nuthin'! I have my fiiinne reputation to uphold! (*Stands back, circles ANNIERELLA, scratching her head*) When is this Ball, anyway?

ANNIERELLA: It's tonight.

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Tonight? Why didn't you say so? Hokey smokes, we'd better get busy then! Now, let's see ... what to do, what to do? I know! Not very original, not very unusual, you could even say it's a bit same ol' same ol' ... but why don't we dress you up so that nobody recognizes you! That way, you can sneak into the Ball, have the time of your life, dance your little hooves off, so to speak, flirt with all the fellers there, have some punch, get a little tipsy, you might say ... have some vittles ... maybe some cheese balls ... are they havin' cheese balls? Do you know? I LOVE cheese balls! If they have them, would you bring me back a few? And enjoy yourself for once. Your stepmother or sisters will never even know you've been gone, unless you decide to tell 'em. How's that sound?

ANNIERELLA: Sounds purty good to me! I'm ready to blow this joint and have some fun! Let's get started!

FAIRY COWMOTHER: (*peevish*) There's just one teeny weeny little thing.

ANNIERELLA: (*distracted*) Oh, what's that?

FAIRY COWMOTHER: No biggie. Really! Well, it's just that ... As long as you get back before the music stops, you'll be fine. But remember, magic NEVER lasts forever. I'd hate for you to get in trouble with your mama and those butt-ugly sisters of yours on account of me! If you don't get yourself back home before the music stops, you'll turn back into your own sad little scraggle-headed self, raggedy overalls and stinky boots and hair that looks like a coyote had it for lunch then spit it back out, and worse of all, everbody will know who you are. And I don't even want to mention how you'll smell! (*claps hooves together and waves wand around erratically*) Now, let's get you duded up for the 'do!

(*SHEEP HELPERS crowd around ANNIERELLA, help her get dressed. FAIRY COWMOTHER whips and lashes her tail around as SHE helps get ANNIERELLA dressed, dances around her, waving her wand, etc. Wind can blow, designating a cyclone, dust cloud, etc. When THEY are done, ANNIERELLA'S hair is put up on top of her head, all sparkly and glittery, SHE wears a long filmy western style dress covered with sequins, dangly bits, etc.*)

ANNIERELLA: (*looking down at the dress*) Jeepers, Good Fairy Very Awesome Cowmother, this dress is beautiful! (*Pats her hair*) And my hair! It feels clean! Not all gummy like usual. It's SO hard to get it clean when the chickens fly up and scratch around in it and start poopin' all over the place! (*looks down at her old boots*). ACK! Look at these boots! They're a mess, all covered with cow manure

... uh, I mean, horse manure ... and who knows what else! I can't wear these old boots with this wonderful dress! Even if my poor old dead mama did give them to me! They look like somethin' the cat dragged in!

FAIRY COWMOTHER: Well, so they do, so they do! They are a sight, ain't they? All globbed up and mucky with manure and slop and mud and such. Well, leave that to me! *(turning around, swishing her tail four times. A pair of new red boots appear.)* Here ya go! Will these do? I had a feelin' you were partial to red.

ANNIERELLA: Why, these boots are beautiful! *(sits down and pulls them on)* Shinier than a new silver dollar, and bright red. Oh Good Cowmother, how did you know my favorite color in the whole wide world is red!! I could just hug your neck! *(jumps up, grabs COWMOTHER, kisses her, then does a little jig around the yard)*

(COWMOTHER waves her wand, and we hear the sound of horses' hooves, galloping, snorting and whinnying.)

FAIRY COWMOTHER: *(gesturing off stage)* Here's your buggy, dear! With six white horses, quite fittin' for such a beauty as you, if I do say so myself! I think I outdid myself this time! What with the late notice and all, I didn't have much to work with. That old watermelon out back sittin' in the compost heap sure came in handy. And catchin' and enchantin' them six armadillers weren't easy, either, but with a little polish, I think they make a fine carriage and horses! Just watch out when you cross the road in 'em!

(ANNIERELLA runs offstage, the horses whinny, and the sound of galloping hooves is heard.)

(shouting) Remember, Annierella! Be back by the time the music stops, or there won't be anything left of your wonderful finery but one stinky old moldy watermelon, a little herd of armadillies and those sad old clothes of yours! Your dress will be a mess, and I don't even wanna think about how you'll smell! *(to the audience)* I did tell her all that, didn't I? I wonder if she was listening ... *(With a wave of her wand, and a bow, COWMOTHER pirouettes off stage and HELPERS follow her off.)*

(Lights down.)

SCENE THREE

At the Ball. Lights come up. Country music plays, small group of dancers dancing around the room, standing around the table with punch bowl. Suddenly there's the sound of horse hooves galloping, coming to a halt. Then a door slams and ANNIERELLA dances onto the stage, snapping her fingers, her head nodding to the music. The horses whinny, and the sound of galloping off into the distance is heard. (A handsome young cowboy sees ANNIERELLA enter, then rushes to meet her, takes her hand, leads her onto the dance floor.)

ROY BOB: (*bowing*) May I have the pleasure of this dance, little lady? Why, you're as pretty as a speckled pup. I don't think I've seen you around these parts before. My name's Roy Bob, and my daddy, he used to own this big ol' ranch here. But then he kicked the bucket, so now it's MINE, all mine! What's your name, little darlin'?

(*HE grabs her and whisks her around the dance floor. STEPMOTHER and SISTERS enter, look around. ANNIERELLA sees them and tries to steer ROY BOB in the opposite direction. (Periodically, we hear the chiming of a clock.)*)

ANNIERELLA: Umm ... my name?

ROY BOB: You're a shy little filly, ain't you! Well, that's all right, you don't have to tell me. Don't matter none, let's just have us some fun!

ANNIERELLA: (*laughing*) Well, I am havin' fun! I think I could dance all night.

ROY BOB: Well, I'm pleased to hear that ma'am, because I don't intend to let you go just yet.

(*OTHER COWBOYS line up, waiting to dance with her. OTHER WOMEN at the dance are snubbed. One by one, ANNIERELLA takes a turn around the floor with ALL the men, but ends back up with ROY BOB.*)

Why there you are, you purty little thang, you! I thought you'd got away from me there for a while.

(*THEY are dancing, when all of a sudden, the music stops. Funny "boing" sound effects ... "spring" etc. ANNIERELLA grabs at her hair, it starts to come undone, and springs out all over the place. Her feet go still. SHE looks down in horror as her dress starts to look ragged. The sequins start to fall off, dangly bits cease to dangle, one by one.*)

ANNIERELLA realizes what's happening and starts running, reaches the front door just in time to hear the horses and buggy run right on by, without her!)

ANNIERELLA: Oh, dangit! My dress is falling apart! Wait for me!

(SHE runs off stage yelling and one of the boots flies off and hits ROY BOB in the head as HE goes after her. We hear clomping of hooves, horses' whinnying, etc.)

ROY BOB: Owww! *(Yelling after her, grabbing the boot)* Wait a gol' darn minute there! Who are you? You never told me your name! Where do you live? I'll love you til the cows come home, I just want you to know that ... come back! Please come back! I loooove you! *(throws hat down on floor)* Dagnabbit!

(Lights Down)

SCENE FOUR

Back at ANNIERELLA's house. SHE's sitting on the front porch, crying ... looking much as SHE did in the beginning. SHE's hiding one red boot behind her. The STEPMOTHER and SISTERS enter, arguing and squabbling. You can hear them coming. ANNIERELLA quickly dries her tears and grabs something to do, like shelling peas, to look busy.

STEPSISTERS: *(calling together)* We're home! Back from the Ball!
(notice ANNIERELLA) What're you doin' up at this hour?

ANNIERELLA: I couldn't sleep and I decided to do a few chores. *(beat)*
Did you have a good time?

BRIZELDA JANE: *(pouting and stomping her foot)* No, if you must know, we did NOT have a good time! Why, you wouldn't believe what we've just been through! Some ol' tarted up, painted hussy showed up at the Ball and hogged all the men! She was dressed in the gaudiest costume you ever DID see, bright new red boots with all sorts of spangles and sequins and shiny fooforalls on her dress, to boot! Nobody else even had a chance to dance!

MOZELDA JOE: *(primping)* And nobody paid any attention to ME! I thought I was one of the best lookin' women there. I mean, best lookin' younger girls there.

FRIZELDA ANN: *(looking over MOZELDA, up and down)* Riiiiight. *(beat)*
Roy Bob was about to ask me to dance when that ... that ... that ...

skunk of a HUSSY slunk in and nabbed him faster than a fat old hungry toad nabs a june bug.

ANNIERELLA: (*trying to hide a yawn, rubbing her feet*) Sounds terrible (*mumbling*). Who was she, do you know?

EULA GEE: That's the oddest thang, nobody knows! She came outta nowhere, if you ask me. I wouldn't be surprised at all if she came from up north somewheres. (*snorts*) She made quite a nuisance of herself. Then all of a sudden she was gone! All I know is that if I ever get my hands on her, I'll snatch her baldheaded for hoggin' all the menfolk! She made me madder than a wet hen! I'm goin' off to bed now! I'm all tuckered out, even if I didn't get to dance much. Annierella, make sure all the chickens are in the coop before you go to bed, and make sure the gates are closed, and make sure all the rest of your chores are done.

(*SISTERS and STEPMOTHER exit into house.*)

ANNIERELLA: Yes, step-mama. (*sighs; SHE takes the remaining red boot from behind her back, gets up and waltzes around the yard, humming a tune.*)

(*SHE's just about to go inside, when a galloping horse is heard in the distance. BRIZELDA JANE runs out of the house.*)

BRIZELDA JANE: There's a rider comin', Mama! Come quick!

EULA GEE: (*comes out on porch*) At this hour? What do you suppose HE wants? We need our beauty sleep!

(*ANNIERELLA looks at audience, nods. Galloping hooves, ROY BOB yells from offstage.*)

ROY BOB: Whoa, horse! Stop! Dadburnit, I said WHOA!

(*COWBOY saunters into view, carrying second red boot, dusting himself off. SISTERS and STEPMOTHER run to yard.*)

EULA GEE: (*primping*) Why look here! It's Roy Bob! What brings you out here so late? Did you want to see me? That was a fine party you gave. Too bad I didn't get to dance with you. I surely wanted to dance with you at least once tonight.

ROY BOB: (*tiping hat and holding out boot*) Howdy, ladies! Glad you had a good time. Ya'll know who this fancy red boot belongs to? I ... uh ... found it by the door tonight after the Ball. Whoever was wearing this boot was the best dancer we've ever seen around these parts! I'd like to find her. Pronto!

MOZELDA JOE: Give me that! (*snatches boot from ROY BOB*) Dangit! I've seen that boot! That girl at the dance was wearing a pair just like that. You know, the little hussy we was just talking' about! The one in that sparkly dress that hogged up all the men dancers! Nobody seems to know who she is. (*shakes head*) Nope, don't know who it belongs to, Roy Bob, but I sure wish I did. I'd give her a big ol' piece of my mind!

ANNIERELLA: (*whispers to audience*) She wouldn't have much left then, would she?

BRIZELDA JANE: (*walks over to COWBOY, peers at the boot*) Uh, sister. Maybe it's MY boot. I was at the dance last night, so it COULD be one of my boots. Give that here! Let me try it. (*grabs boot; SHE pulls on the boot, tries to walk in it, and falls flat on her face. SHE tries to get up and walk, and can't move at all.*) Oh, horse manure! It feels like I'm glued to the ground here. Sister, help me!

FRIZELDA ANN: Here, let me have it—I know I can wear it—I'm sure it's just my size! (*grabs boot off BRIZELDA's foot, and tries to cram it on her foot. SHE takes one step, then falls over backward. A thunk noise is heard.*)

ROY BOB: (*smirking*) Wellll, I'm guessin' it ain't your boot, neither! (*beat*) Any other gals here?

ANNIERELLA: (*stepping up, cringing*) Here, I'll try it.

MOZELDA JOE: YOU?? Why would it be YOUR boot, you little urchin?? That's a side splitter, for sure! Where would you get boots that fine and fancy? (*laughing*)

ROY BOB: Aw, let 'er try it—what's it gonna hurt? I'm all tuckered out and besides, I've tried fifty foot of feet in this end of the county already. I'm tired, and pert near ready to go home. Yours is the last farm out thissaway and I wanna make sure I'm good and thorough.

BRIZELDA JANE: I'll thor-ough you in the pig trough there! There ain't no way in tarnation that boot's gonna fit our Annierella!

(*COWBOY takes boot over to ANNIERELLA. SHE pulls on the boot, brings out the other one, puts it on, springs to her feet, and starts to dance like crazy! Up and down the porch, across the stage and back, etc. etc.*)

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