

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

By Marty Duhatschek

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CHARACTERS

(4 Males, 7 Females, 3 Either)

STORY TELLER (ST)	The story teller. (male or female)
ALAN	A person in a cow costume. (male or female)
FATHER	A kind merchant, father to Beauty and her sisters. (male)
BEGONIA	Clumsy middle sister of Beauty. (female)
BABETTE	Oldest sister of Beauty, self involved and a bit greedy. (female)
BEAUTY	Youngest sister. A beautiful, kind and caring girl. (female)
PRINCE	Counter part to the Beast. Starts out snotty, ends up nice. (male)
MAB	Queen Mab, Queen of the Fairies. (female)
MORNING DEW	A little Fairy girl. (female)
BLOSSOM	Another little Fairy girl. (female)
BEAST	Counter part to Prince. Separate actor to allow for make up. (male)
CACCIATORE	An Italian Cook & statue most of the play. (male or female)
WATSON	An English butler & statue most of the play. (male)
MIPSY	A French maid & statue most of the play. (female)

PROP LIST

(By Scene)

Large board, (Diving board)

INTRODUCTION

Cardboard teapot cutout
Basket of flowers
Coins
Watering can

ACT 1, SCENE 1

Rose
Vase
Robe
Locket
Lock of hair

ACT 1, SCENE 2

(4) Coins
Rose on trellis

ACT 1, SCENE 3

Gold rose
Vase
Mug of water
(3) Suit cases
Bag of golf clubs

ACT 2, SCENE 1

Mirror

ACT 2, SCENE 2

(3) Bowls and spoons

ACT 3, SCENE 1

Feather duster
Hand dolly
Silly hat
Tea setting for three

ACT 3, SCENE 2

Feather duster
Dishes and Utensils
"Disney" bath towel
(2) Books
Mirror
(3) Red roses

ACT 3, SCENE 3

Knife and Potatoes
Vase
(3) Golden roses
Sling
Mirror
Microphone

ACT 3, SCENE 4

(9) Golden roses
(1) Rose, half gold and half-red.

COSTUME PLOT

(These are only suggestions. This is a Fairytale and should have an other-worldliness feel to it.)

STORY TELLER: If female, a dress or nice skirt and blouse. If male, dress pants and button down shirt.

ALAN: Full body cow costume with a hood over his head that allows the person's face to be seen. The hood should have ears, small horns and maybe a little brown yarn for hair. The costume should feature a big fluffy pink utter!

FATHER: Nice robe, period pants and shirt.

BEGONIA: Nice-looking, fancy dresses.

BABETTE: Nice-looking, fancy dresses.

BEAUTY: Nice-looking dresses, but more simple than her sister's.

PRINCE: Embroidered tunic and leggings. Wears a simple crown.

MAB: Very flowing dress. Light material that splays out when she moves. Also has a robe to cover up her true appearance.

MORNING DEW: Wings and tights. Also has a robe to cover up her true appearance.

BLOSSOM: Wings and tights. Also has a robe to cover up her true appearance.

BEAST: Long heavy robe with puffed sleeves and sturdy pants.

CACCIATORE: White shirt pants and a chef's hat. Perhaps an apron.

WATSON: Formal suit with black pants and coat. White shirt and a small bow tie.

MIPSY: Black and white Maid's outfit.

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INTRODUCTION

The stage is set for Beauty's house. A table and a few chairs, a fire place with a vase on top of it. The STORYTELLER, "ST", enters through the house or back stage. The house lights are still up. The introduction will be played in front of the house set.

ST: Hi! Welcome to *(name of organization)*. My name is *(insert first name)*, and I'm a storyteller. We storytellers go way-way back, there were storytellers around before there was television, before movies were invented, even before books there were storytellers. There had to be, what else was there to do? So, on cold winter nights the family would gather around the fire and they'd listen for hours as wonderful stories took them on great adventures. Today we have a fantastic story that has been . . .

ALAN: *(Enters through house and onto the stage.)* I'm here, I'm here. Sorry I'm late. *(Notices audience)* Hi everybody. Did I miss anything? Not to worry, I'm here now.

ST: You're here for what?

ALAN: For the play.

ST: For the story.

ALAN: Sure . . . for the story, whatever. Anyway, I'm ready to go!

ST: Um, Alan, you're not in this story.

ALAN: What'da ya mean, I'm not in this story?

ST: I'm sorry, but there are no cows in this story.

ALAN: Course there are! It's all over the marquee outside!

ST: Huh?

ALAN: "Beauty and the Beef!" *(To audience)* Here's the beef. So which one of these lucky little ladies gets to fall in love with me? *(Picks out some little girls.)* You? . . . You?

ST: Alan.

ALAN: It's you isn't it? Aren't you the lucky one!

ST: Alan.

ALAN: Oh fare Beauty-ette, shall I or perch these hallowed halls? For I am the sun and thou art the moon, and we'll be ere together come this June . . .

ST: Alan!!!

ALAN: I'm acting here.

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ST: It's "Beauty and the Beast" not "Beauty and the Beef." There is no cow in this story!

ALAN: Are you sure?

ST: Yes I'm sure. Now will you please leave so I can get on with this?

ALAN: (*Sulks off towards back stage.*) Okay, okay . . . I don't need a barn to fall on my head, I can tell when I'm not wanted . . .

ST: Now, as I was saying, this story . . .

ALAN: I just thought that . . .

ST: Good-bye, Alan!

ALAN: I'm going, I'm going . . . (*Exits back stage.*)

ST: (*To audience*) Sorry about that. Today we have one of the most famous stories ever told, "Beauty and the *Beast*." Did you not know that there are more than a dozen different versions of this story? And they come from at least six different countries. The story you're about to see borrows bits and pieces from many of them. Now a certain well-known animated movie is one possible version of this story. I hope you weren't expecting that one because ours is a little different.

ALAN: (*Comes out with a big cardboard cut out of a teapot draped around his neck. Singing.*) "Tale as old as time, making most from least, looking out for signs, . . . something else that rhymes, Beauty and the *Beast*".

ST: Alan.

ALAN: What?

ST: I just finished saying that we were not to going see the Disney adaptation of this story.

ALAN: But I love that one! (*Singing*) "No one drinks like Gaston, no one stinks like Gaston, no one washes the dishes in sinks like Gaston. I'm especially good at expectorating, (*stops singing*), and then he spits and it shoots all over and . . .

ST: Alan!! No cows.

ALAN: (*Makes teapot talk again.*) Chip? Chip! Has anyone seen my son Chip? (*Getting a look from ST.*) No cows?

ST: No cows.

ALAN: Okay . . . (*sulks off again*)

ST: So, before we start the story, lets meet the characters. First, there is Beauty's Father.

(The FATHER enters from one side. QUEEN MAB, with a basket of roses, and the TWO LITTLE FAIRIES enter from the other side, the FAIRIES have shawls covering up their true appearances. THEY play a scene where MAB begs for him to buy flowers to feed her poor children. HE buys some flowers and THEY all move off in opposite directions.)

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He was a kind-hearted merchant, helping those less fortunate when he could. And he was a gentle father to his children. Then we have Beauty's two older sisters, that's right Beauty had two sisters. And they were called Babette & Begonia.

(SISTERS enter together, BEGONIA trips at center stage and BABBETTE giggles at her.)

BEGONIA: It's not funny.

BABBETTE: I agree Begonia, the way you constantly fight to remain upright is anything but funny. *(Walks off to opposite side.)*

BEGONIA: *(Following after her.)* I don't constantly fight to . . . *(trips)* . . . there's a rut there, see? *(Exits)*

ST: Now they weren't horrible people, like Cinderella's stepsisters were, but on the other hand, they wouldn't be the most generous people you ever met either. And of course there was Beauty . . .

(BEAUTY enters from back stage with a watering can; SHE pretends to water a few things along the way; SHE pauses at center stage.)

But unlike her older sisters, who had let their families' wealth go to their heads, Beauty was a big-hearted soul and gave much joy to all those around her.

(ALAN enters from the same way BEAUTY did and stands off to one side of her.)

(Stage whisper) Alan!

ALAN: And then there was Alan, Beauty's much beloved pet. A charming, intelligent, dashing fellow, her most trusted confidant, who she took with her everywhere.

ST: *(Finally giving in, but not happy about it.)* And then there was Alan her pet . . . cow.

(At this point BEAUTY acknowledges ALAN by scratching him behind his ears. HE stomps his foot when SHE does. THEY exit together to the opposite side.)

Now the Beast was really a Prince. Who in his youth was much like Beauty's sisters and had not yet grown to have a generous heart. *Seven years earlier*, the Prince was taking a stroll through the marketplace.

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(The PRINCE enters from one side. QUEEN MAB, with a basket of flowers, and the TWO LITTLE FAIRIES enter from the other side, shawls cover up their true appearance.)

MAB: Sir, would you care to buy some pretty roses from a poor beggar-woman?

PRINCE: No thanks, I don't much care for flowers.

MAB: But these aren't just flowers Sir, they're roses. There's something magical in roses, don't you think? And please Sir, I need money to help feed my poor children.

MORNING DEW: Please sir. We're hungry.

BLOSSOM: It's been ever so long since we've eaten, Sir.

PRINCE: I don't mind paying for something I need, but I am indifferent to flowers, roses or otherwise. *(Takes a rose out of the basket and looks at it.)* Not a very healthy specimen at any rate. *(Hands it to BLOSSOM.)* Perhaps you could eat this? It looks a little chewed on anyway.

(THEY freeze on stage.)

ST: As you may have guessed already, this was no ordinary beggar-woman. But this was the great Queen Mab, Queen of the Fairies. Who sometimes would test the hearts of men and whoa to those who failed.

(Unfreeze. THEY throw off their robes and reveal themselves. As MAB weaves her spell, SHE and the OTHER FAIRIES dance around him.)

MAB: Cold hearted mortal . . . *(Starts chant/songlike)* Who turns his nose up at beauty and need, a lesson you'll have and one you shall heed. No more shall the world see this pretty prince here, but an outward appearance that will strike them with fear.

DEW & BLOSSOM: Strike them with fear.

MAB: The roses you shunned, round your castle will ring, when they're cut or they wither in your chest will it sting.

DEW & BLOSSOM: Chest it will sting.

MAB: The fate you must bear, you shall not bear alone, and the household that serves will be turned into stone. While sun and the moon touch the sky they will stay, only moving at start or the end of the day.

DEW & BLOSSOM: Only moving at start or the end of the day.

MAB: This penance I cast from below and above, only breaking the spell . . .

DEW & BLOSSOM: Only breaking the spell . . .

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MAB: When you are touched . . .

DEW & BLOOSOM: And touch . . .

MAB, DEW & BLOOSOM: . . . By love.

PRINCE: (*Feeling affected, but trying to shrug it off.*) Well, I can see why you're a flower woman and not a poet. But I suppose I could buy a few roses.

MAB: And now, only to save yourself, do you consider helping others . . . It's too late poor prince . . . too late . . . too late . . .

MAB, DEW & BLOOSOM: (*Dance around him one more time and then run out through the audience.*) Too late . . . too late . . . too late . . . too late . . .

(*PRINCE shakes his head, HE can feel it starting. HE walks off.*)

ST: And for seven long years the Prince, I mean the Beast, has been living that fearsome curse. Well, I think that about covers it. Now our story starts with Beauty's father about to leave on a merchantman's journey . . . (*Exits*)

(BLACK OUT)

ACT I, SCENE I

In BEAUTY's house. FATHER is talking with the sisters.

FATHER: (*HE puts the flowers HE bought in the Introduction into a vase.*) I won't be gone longer than a few months.

BABETTE: But, we will miss you, Father. Who will take us shopping at the market?

BEGONIA: Who will pay the seamstress for new dresses?

BABETTE: Who will bring us flowers, (*looking at the ones HE just brought and not approving*), such as they are.

BEGONIA: (*Now SHE looks at the roses.*) And what of our suitors?

Who will talk with them on our behalf, (*SHE turns knocking over the vase, half catching it throwing roses all over.*) when you are gone?

FATHER: (*Helps her pick them up.*) Just remember to be seated when they're here, Begonia, and you should be fine.

BABETTE: And with your hands in your lap. You'll seem less like a windmill that way.

BEGONIA: I am not clumsy! (*Almost dumps the flowers again.*)

BABETTE: And shoes! Oh, I need new shoes, Father. See how dirty these have become?

FATHER: I've left money enough for each of you to buy what you'll require while I'm gone. There's a pouch on each of your dressers.

B&B: Thank you, Father.

FATHER: Now take care not to spend it all, my investments do have us spread a little thin.

B&B: Yes, Father.

FATHER: As for the household expenses . . . where's Beauty?

BEAUTY: (*Enters with a robe followed by ALAN.*) Here I am, Father.

FATHER: Now I was telling your sisters, I've left some money for the household accounts. I'd like you to take care of those while I'm away.

BEAUTY: Of course, Father. Come and try this on.

BABETTE: Must you bring that cow everywhere you go?

ALAN: As a matter of fact she does. (*Aside*) It's in my contract.

FATHER: What is this?

BEAUTY: A warm robe I made you. (*Puts it on him with ALAN's help.*) It will help keep off the cold winds while you're at the seaport.

FATHER: It's wonderful! What is this made out of?

ALAN: It's not leather, I can tell ya that.

BABETTE: Too bad.

BEAUTY: It's lambs' wool, Father. It will be warm and cozy for you.

FATHER: Thank you, Beauty.

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(FATHER kisses her cheek. ALAN puts his cheek out waiting for a kiss too. FATHER chooses not to.)

BEAUTY: Mind you wear that now. You know how easily you take a chill.

FATHER: I shall wear it all the time.

BABETTE: We have gifts for you too, Father.

BEGONIA: We do? *(Gets an elbow from BABETTE.)*

BABETTE: Yes we do. Here, *(SHE removes a locket from around her neck)* a pretty locket that you can wear close to heart, to remind you of me.

FATHER: Thank you, Babette. *(HE puts it on. BEAUTY can help him with this if HE has a problem fastening it.)* I didn't expect presents, you really didn't have to do this for me.

BABETTE: It's all right, I wanted to buy a bigger one anyway.

FATHER: And Begonia, you have something for me too?

BEGONIA: *(To BABETTE)* Do I?

BABETTE: Of course you do. *(SHE rips out a chunk of BEGONIA's hair.)*

BEGONIA: Ouch!

BABETTE: A tress of her hair to keep inside the locket. See? *(Hands it to him.)*

BEGONIA: That hurt.

BABETTE: Hush.

FATHER: Thank you, Begonia. I'm a lucky father to have three such caring daughters.

BABETTE: Yes you are. And you know what the old saying is, don't you, Father?

ALAN: Spare the rod and spoil the child?

BABETTE: No. *(Backs Alan into a corner.)* I was thinking of the old saying, "One good present deserves another."

ALAN: Oh yeah . . . that one . . . that's a good one too, very popular.

FATHER: Is that how the old saying goes?

BEGONIA: Yes! Presents! Presents!

FATHER: Very well, what would you like me to bring you then?

BABETTE: I want a dress, a beautiful dress, a gold one. With pearls and sequins around the collar and the cuffs, and white lace ribbons around the hem. And, and a crystal tiara with golden inlays and pearls around the band.

FATHER: What, no shoes?

BABETTE: Of course it will have to have shoes to match, silly.

BEGONIA: Bring me back a dress too, just like Babette's. Only I want it to be pink with silver threads, real silver, wound into a sweeping sort of pattern. And I want a tiara as well, only it should be silver, with

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diamond dust at the peaks! *(Pretending to model the dress SHE whirls and topples into the chair.)*

BABETTE: You better make sure that tiara has a chinstrap.

BEGONIA: I'm not clumsy! *(Can't get up.)* Help me out of this thing!

ALAN: *(Tips the chair forward spilling her out.)* Anything to be helpful.

BEGONIA: Not quite what I had in mind. *(Gets up and goes for ALAN.)*

ALAN: But effective. *(BEGONIA backs him into the same corner.)*

Maybe I'll just stay here a while.

FATHER: Well, I expect to do very well with the shipments I have coming in, you shall have your dresses. And what can I bring for you, Beauty?

BABETTE: How about a new pet? Something that doesn't come with its own flies.

(ALAN does the cat "hiss" thing to her.)

BEAUTY: Alan, be nice. You home safe is all I need Father.

FATHER: Come now, there must be something you'd like to have. A dress like your sisters? Maybe a shawl or something pretty for your room?

BEAUTY: *(Notices the roses he brought.)* You'll already be spending so much . . . Very well then, bring me a rose.

FATHER: I brought some home already.

BEAUTY: Yes, but these will be all dried out by the time you return. I'd like a fresh rose, a rose that's in bloom.

FATHER: There must be something else I can bring you?

BEAUTY: Just a rose.

BEGONIA: What a silly gift to ask for.

BABETTE: She's only doing that to make us feel greedy.

ALAN: Is that possible?

FATHER: *(Getting ready to leave.)* Now you girls take care of each other. No fighting. I'll be back as soon as I can. Babette. *(SHE comes and HE kisses her cheek.)* Begonia. *(HE kisses her cheek.)* And Beauty. *(Kisses her cheek and SHE gives him a big hug.)*

BEAUTY: Take care, Father.

FATHER: I will.

(FATHER starts to exit, sees that ALAN is still waiting for his kiss goodbye. HE pats ALAN on the head. ALAN takes the opening, puts him in a bear hug and then releases him. FATHER straightens himself out after that.)

Look for me before the first dusting of snow. Good bye! *(Exits)*

BEAUTY: Good bye, Father! *(Looks after him.)*

ALAN: What a sweet guy.

BABETTE: A rose? Little sister, you have a lot to learn.

(BLACK OUT)

ACT I, SCENE II

A trellis with roses on it should be placed at the front of the stage, it suggests the outside of the BEAST's castle. FATHER trudges across the front of the stage. ST enters onto the stage from the opposite side.

ST: Things had not gone well for Beauty's father. The fleet of ships bearing his cargo was swept out to sea in a great storm and all that they carried was lost. *(Exits)*

FATHER: *(Sits down at center stage. HE drops the four coins HE has left from one hand to the other.)* Four coins. How can I face my daughters with only four coins?

(DEW and BLOSSOM enter in disguise again. THEY cross in front of the stage.)

And no presents. Babette and Bagonia will sorely miss their dresses. But, my Beauty . . . seeing her will make me feel better, of this I am sure.

DEW: Good morning, kind sir.

BLOSSOM: Hello!

FATHER: Good morning, children.

DEW: You look sad.

FATHER: That I am.

BLOSSOM: We're sad too, our tummy's hurt. We haven't eaten all day.

FATHER: No breakfast from your mother today?

DEW: No mother, no father, nor breakfast, and no money for food.

BLOSSOM: Only two hungry orphans. That need to live off the kindness of others.

FATHER: *(Looks at his four coins.)* Well . . . I won't have you go hungry. *(Hands them each a coin.)* I know it isn't much, but it's half of the fortune I am left with.

DEW & BLOSSOM: Thank you, Sir!

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FATHER: Now go get something to eat to ease those empty tummies of yours.

DEW: I wish we could repay you.

BLOSSOM: One kind touch deserves another.

FATHER: There's no need. Go, get yourselves some food. *(HE stands and stretches.)* No money and without any gifts, it will be a heavy day when I get home.

(DEW and BLOSSOM become more fairy-like now, weaving a spell. As THEY speak THEY draw him to the roses shedding their disguises.)

DEW: Gifts! What gift can you bring more precious . . . than beauty?

FATHER: Beauty?

(MAB enters away from the action, but directing the magic non-the-less.)

BLOSSOM: A flower in your hand for the flower of your heart.

DEW: To smell a sweet rose is a very fine start.

BLOSSOM: A promise, once made, must be kept if it can.

DEW: And the beauty you seek, is right here at your hand . . .

(FATHER is at the rose trellis, oblivious to the FAIRIES who now dance around the scene.)

FATHER: *(Trance like.)* A single rose . . . and for me to come home safe. A single rose . . . they are beautiful. At least I can give Beauty what she desired.

(FATHER slowly reaches for a rose. The FAIRIES dance around him while THEY chant.)

MAB: *(Chanting)* The roses you shunned, round your castle will ring, when they're cut or they wither in your chest will it sting.

DEW & BLOSSOM: *(Chanting)* Chest it will sting . . . chest it will sting.

FATHER: For my Beauty. *(FATHER plucks a rose.)*

(At the same time as the rose is plucked the BEAST screams in pain and rage. HE leaps out at FATHER. DEW and BLOSSOM screech and run and hide from the BEAST.)

BEAST: *(Rubs his chest. His face is hidden in a hood.)* Who dares take my roses!!

FATHER: I'm, I'm sorry. I didn't think that they belonged to anyone.

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BEAST: They belong, to me!! (*Throws back his hood. His back should be to the audience, so they don't get a good look. But FATHER sees him well enough.*)

FATHER: (*Cowers*) I didn't know! Please Sir . . .

BEAST: Beast! Call me Beast for that I am.

FATHER: I meant no harm. It is only a single rose.

BEAST: Only a single rose? A single rose to you, a knife through the heart to me!

FATHER: I'll just put it back. (*Tries to get back to the trellis but the BEAST is blocking him.*) I beg you . . . Mister Beast, please don't eat me!

BEAST: (*Throws the hood over his head again.*) Eat you?

FATHER: Yes. I have a family, who will take care of them? My poor daughters . . .

BEAST: (*Speaking to himself.*) He worries for his family though he expects to be torn apart. (*To FATHER*) Is the rose for them, your daughters?

FATHER: It is for Beauty, my youngest daughter.

BEAST: Beauty?

FATHER: My other daughters want new dresses and shoes. I've lost my fortune under the sea. I couldn't possibly give them what they wanted. But my Beauty, all she asked for was a rose . . . and my, safe return.

BEAST: She sounds like a rare kind of person . . .

(DEW and BLOSSOM have wandered too close, the BEAST as an enchanted being can see them.)

(To DEW) . . . shoo!

DEW: Yikes! (*SHE runs away.*)

BEAST: (*To BLOSSOM, who thought SHE was unseen.*) You'd do best to follow her lead little spellbinder.

BLOSSOM: (*Backing away*) I think you may be right. (*Runs and joins DEW.*)

BEAST: A gentle soul and a kindly heart . . . (*Grabs up FATHER who has tried to sneak away*) . . . is your youngest daughter?

FATHER: Indeed she is.

BEAST: And you love her dearly.

FATHER: More than anything, it's hard not to once you meet her.

BEAST: (*Under his breath*) Perhaps I shall.

FATHER: What was that?

BEAST: Nothing. Well, you do seem a bit large for my cook pot.

FATHER: What a shame, I'll just be off then . . .

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BEAST: It's nothing a little dicing up couldn't remedy. I'd forgotten how hungry I was until you brought it up. It's a shame, you seem a nice enough fellow, but you did steal my rose, (*HE rubs his chest*) any last requests?

FATHER: Perhaps we could reach some other arrangement.

BEAST: I don't think so.

FATHER: There must be something I could give you. Is there nothing else besides my life that you would except as payment for the rose?

BEAST: There may be . . .

FATHER: Anything you wish . . . please.

BEAST: Very well. I will have the one who would have received the rose. Yes, that seems fair, my hearts pain in trade for your own.

FATHER: I can't.

BEAST: Send her to me.

FATHER: I won't!

BEAST: Then you will die.

FATHER: So be it! (*Stands ready to die.*)

BEAST: You're brave.

FATHER: No, I am not. But I love her too much to send her to her doom.

BEAST: She shall not die, that I promise you. She will be well cared for and she shall be safe from any harm.

FATHER: You ask too much. I would not care to live knowing she was . . .

BEAST: Knowing she was living with a beast? I can not blame you.

And your love for her touches me. You may go and say goodbye to your family. But, while you are there you must tell Beauty of my offer.

FATHER: But I . . .

BEAST: Your promise or your life right now!!

FATHER: I promise, I promise.

BEAST: Go. You or your daughter must be back here before the sun rises tomorrow. If your daughter she will be well kept, if yourself you shall be well cooked.

FATHER: It shall me myself, sir

BEAST: Beast! And should no one come, like the beast that I am, I will sniff out where you live . . . and those that are yours . . . all of you then will pay a price! (*Turns his back.*) Before the sunrise.

FATHER: I will be back. (*Starts to leave*)

BEAST: Take the rose. You've paid for it.

(BLACK OUT)

ACT I, SCENE III

The trellis is removed. Back at BEAUTY's home. FATHER enters, HE is hesitant.

ST: *(Enters)* And so, with a heavier heart than he started the day with, Beauty's father approached his home. But, he could not bring himself to go inside. For how was he to share his twice-terrible news? *(Stands off to the side.)*

FATHER: *(Begins pacing)* What a dark, dark day. How can I tell them? How can I share this . . . this . . .

ST: *(Stage whisper to him)* Twice-terrible.

FATHER: *(To ST)* Thank you. *(Back in character)* This twice-terrible news?

BEAUTY: *(Comes out of the house to water plants. SHE sees him.)* Father! *(Runs and gives him a hug.)* Father, it's so good to see you.

FATHER: It's good to see you too, dear daughter.

BEAUTY: *(Calls out)* Babette! Bagonia! Come out, Father is home! *(To FATHER)* Why didn't you come inside?

FATHER: I have some bad news I'm afraid . . .

BABETTE: *(Runs out to FATHER)* Father! You're home at last!

BEGONIA: *(Right behind BABETTE, her hand is stuck in a vase.)* Is he really here? You are!

(THEY get into a group hug kind of thing.)

BABETTE: We missed you, Father!

BEGONIA: We missed you terribly!

ALAN: *(Runs out and sees them.)* Group hug! *(HE joins the hug.)*

(The hug starts to break up.)

BABETTE: Father? Where are . . . where are the presents? Is there a wagon following behind you?

BEGONIA: A wagon full of presents! Thank you, Father!

BEAUTY: Are you all right? You don't look well, Father. Tell us what's wrong?

BABETTE: Nothing is wrong, you worry-wart . . . is there, father?

BEGONIA: You're just teasing us, aren't you?

FATHER: I'm afraid I do have some . . . *(Notices the vase. To BEGONIA)* Why do you have a flower vase on your hand?

BEGONIA: My earring fell in it and I was trying to get it out. Now my hand is stuck, it was mother's favorite vase, I didn't want to break it.

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FATHER: *(HE understands.)* Ah. *(Going on)* At any rate, I do have some very bad news, girls.

BEGONIA: Bad news?

BEAUTY: *(To ALAN)* Bring him some water.

ALAN: *(Point to udder)* You think he wants some milk?

BEAUTY: Water, Alan.

ALAN: Right! *(Runs off)*

BEAUTY: Tell us, Father.

BEGONIA: There's no presents?

FATHER: No presents, no ships. We've lost our fortune, my dears.

BABETTE: Oh no!

BEGONIA: You can't mean we've lost everything.

FATHER: All we have is the money I left here at home.

(ALAN runs back in with a mug of water and hands it to BEAUTY.)

BEAUTY: It's all right, Father. The money isn't important. *(Hands him the water)* You home safely is all that matters. Besides we have some money left from the household expenses. And Babette and Begonia, you must still have some of what Father gave you? *(The two SISTERS look away from her.)* We'll manage, Father.

FATHER: That isn't the worst of what I have to tell . . .

(FAMILY moves to the table while ST speaks and crosses in front of them.)

ST: *(Crosses in front of the FAMILY to the other side of the stage as SHE speaks. Kind of like a page turning to show the passage of a short time.)* He told them about picking the rose for Beauty, about his frightful meeting with the Beast, and the terrible fate that awaited them if he did not return by sunrise. *(Exits)*

BABETTE: *(Imitating BEAUTY)* "A single rose is all I wish." This is all your fault, Beauty!

FATHER: It's no one's fault but my own. I should know well enough not to stray off the path through the forest.

BEGONIA: What are we to do, Father?

FATHER: There's nothing else to do. I shall go back. At least he allowed me to come back and say good-bye to you all.

BEAUTY: Father, you can't go back there.

BABETTE: All this for a rose?!

FATHER: I'd forgotten about that, I tucked it into my belt. *(Starts pulling it out.)* It seems rather silly to make a . . . *(pulls it out, it has turned into gold, HE is amazed)* . . . gift of it now.

BABETTE: *(Carefully removes the rose from his hand.)* It's gold.

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FATHER: It wasn't when I picked it. Well, at least it will go a ways to supporting you when I'm gone.

BEGONIA: Don't talk like that, Father! *(SHE hugs him hitting him in the back of the head with the vase.)* Ooo, sorry Father.

FATHER: I must. You have our house and a little money left. But, you will need to go to work now. You must let the servants go and tend the fields yourselves. You will still have more than most do.

BABETTE: Tend the fields? Us?

FATHER: I'm afraid so, my dear. What pains me the most, is that I won't be here to help.

BEAUTY: I won't let you go, Father. For you it is certain death, at least I shall still be alive.

BABETTE: How can you know that Beast will keep his word?

BEAUTY: He trusted Father to return, and he made sure he took the magical rose with him. I may be wrong, but I think I can trust him.

FATHER: No! I won't let you do it.

ALAN: Listen to your father, Beauty.

BEAUTY: *(Ignores ALAN)* I have a chance, for you there is none.

Babette was right, it is my fault. I'm going to do this, Father.

ALAN: I knew she was going to say that.

FATHER: But Beauty . . .

BEAUTY: I've made up my mind.

BEGONIA: Beauty, are you sure?

BABETTE: When I said that about the rose I didn't mean that you should go there.

BEAUTY: I know Babette, but you were right. I need to do this, sister. *(SHE hugs her.)* Come along, Alan.

ALAN: Me?

BABETTE: Alan should stay with us, Beauty.

ALAN: Babette! You like me? I never knew! You know I always liked you too. *(To BEAUTY)* Maybe I should stay with the family.

BABETTE: A fine fat cow like this will fetch a nice price at the market and we do need the money.

ALAN: *(To BEAUTY)* I'll just throw a few things together. *(Runs off)*

BEAUTY: *(Hugs BABETTE)* Take care of Father now. *(Hugs BEGONIA)* Good-bye Begonia. *(Hugs FATHER)* I'll miss you, Father. And don't worry about me. I'll be fine.

FATHER: I wish you wouldn't do this.

ALAN: *(Enters carrying a bunch of packed bags and a bag of golf clubs over his shoulder.)* I'm ready.

BEAUTY: Alan, how nice! You packed some of my things for me.

ALAN: *(Looks at bags)* Your things?

BEAUTY: We need to get going if we are to make it there before sunrise. Good-bye everyone. *(Starts to exit with ALAN)* Good-bye.

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(THEY exit.)

FATHER: Beauty! . . . Beauty . . .

(The DAUGHTERS try to console him as the lights fade to black.)

Do Not Copy

ACT II, SCENE I

Night time, at the BEAST's castle. It is set up during the blackout and the cross over. The chairs at the table are replaced with rehearsal blocks painted to look like stone. The fire place is turned around, it is also painted to look like stone. The STATUE SERVANTS get into place. BEAUTY and ALAN start to cross in front of the stage. ST enters.

ST: And so, with a heavy heart, Beauty made the journey back . . .

(ALAN clears his throat.)

Beauty and her pet cow Alan, along with an excessive amount of luggage, made the journey to the Beast's castle.

BEAUTY: Oh Alan, I don't know if I can do this. I'm so afraid

ALAN: There's nothing wrong with being scared, everyone is afraid of something. You know what scares me? Ice.

BEAUTY: Ice?

ALAN: Yeah. I mean, one minute it's sitting there in your glass, and the next time you look . . . it's gone. Where'd it go?

BEAUTY: It melts. *(SHE starts off again.)*

ALAN: Oh. Well, that makes sense. *(Following her off.)* You wanna know what else scares me?

BEAUTY: No, not really.

ALAN: Feet.

BEAUTY: Feet?

ALAN: Yeah. Don't feet just look weird? Glad I got hoofs . . .

(THEY exit.)

ST: At last, they arrived at the castle. They knocked at the door a long time, but no one answered. They found it unlocked, and since the sun would be rising soon, they gathered up their courage and walked inside . . . *(Exits)*

(Lights up - half on castle. The three STATUE SERVANTS are frozen in position.)

BEAUTY: *(Entering with ALAN behind her.)* Hello?...Is anyone here?
(To ALAN) Do you think we're in the right place?

ALAN: I hope so. I'd hate to think there's more than one spooky castle in the neighborhood.

BEAUTY: Look at this place!

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ALAN: Yeah, I like the motif, early dinge isn't it?

BEAUTY: (*Notices statues.*) And look at these statues, aren't they amazing?

ALAN: I guess they're alright, (*flicks the COOK in the head*) not very life-like.

(*MAB and FAIRIES enter. MAB stands to side as FAIRIES dance around the STATUES. ALAN and BEAUTY can not see them.*)

MAB: The fate you must bear, you shall not bear alone, and the household that serves will be turned into stone. While sun and the moon touch the sky they will stay, only moving at start or the end of the day.

DEW & BLOSSOM: Moving at start or the end of the day.

(*THEY exit. Lights fade up to full.*)

BEAUTY: I like them.

ALAN: (*Stands in front of the COOK, looking it over.*) Really? (*At MIPSY*) This one's nice. (*At WATSON*) Ooo, here's an ugly one.

WATSON: (*Comes to life*) I beg your pardon!

ALAN: (*Screams*) It's alive!

CACCIATORE: We all are, you silly cow. Zare! (*Flicks ALAN in the head.*) How do you like it?!

ALAN: Ow! Stop it!

MIPSY: (*Goes over to ALAN*) Leave the poor cow alone, he didn't know any better.

ALAN: Yeah. I didn't know any better. (*To BEAUTY*) I like this one.

BEAUTY: I could have sworn that you were statues.

WATSON: Sometimes we are and sometimes we are not. It's quite the story . . . but, I'm forgetting myself. It has been a very long time since we have had guests, forgive my rudeness. I am Watson, the butler. (*HE bows.*)

BEAUTY: (*curtsies*) Pleased to meet you. I am Beauty and this is Alan.

WATSON: And this is our cook . . .

CACCIATORE: I am a chef, you over-stuffed grape. How many times must I tell you? But, I forgive him because he is English and all the English know of food is to boil it until it stops moving. I am Senior(a) Cacciatore, master chef.

WATSON: And our house maid, Mademoiselle Mipsy

MIPSY: (*Curtsies to her*) A pleasure to make your acquaintance, Miss Beauty, and you (*Curtsies to him*), Monsieur Alan.

ALAN: (*Kisses her hand, in a French accent*) Ho-ho, but of course mo' cherie.

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WATSON: Pardon me for asking, sir. But, aren't you a cow?

ALAN: Yeah, what of it?

WATSON: It's just that, you talk.

ALAN: So do you. And at least I don't look like part of Stone Henge.

BEAUTY: Be nice, Alan. What did you mean that you are statues part of the time?

MIPSY: It is an enchantment. At dusk and dawn we are alive, the rest of the time we are frozen like statues.

BEAUTY: That's horrible.

MIPSY: Oui. *(yes)*

CACCIATORE: It makes it very difficult to prepare a meal, I can tell you that. Twenty minutes here, fifteen minutes there, it's no way to cook.

ALAN: Speaking of cooking, what's for breakfast?

BEAUTY: Alan! You think with your stomach far too much.

ALAN: I got four of em, it's hard not to.

BEAUTY: And what of the Beast that my father told me of?

WATSON: The master?

BEAUTY: Is he a statue most of the time as well?

CACCIATORE: No. He is very much alive and very much hungry most of the time. It is not easy to keep up with his appetite with such little time to work with.

BEAUTY: Is he truly a monster then?

BEAST: *(Yelling from off stage.)* Where is she? Has she come?

ALAN: You had to ask?! *(Hides behind MIPSY)*

MIPSY: Oh!

BEAST: I said, is she . . . *(enters with hood up, sees her)* . . . here? *(Looks her over, but speaks to the SERVANTS)* The sun will be rising soon, do you think you have time for chitchat?

WATSON: No master. Come along we must hurry. *(Exits)*

BEAST: I don't smell anything cooking.

CACCIATORE: Yes master, right away. *(Exits)*

BEAST: She will need a room.

MIPSY: Oui. *(To ALAN, who is still trying to hide behind her)* Please, Monsieur Alan! I must go! *(SHE pulls away from him and exits.)*

BEAST: *(Notices ALAN)* You needn't have brought your own food, we have plenty.

ALAN: I'm not food, I'm a pet.

BEAST: I always thought women preferred cats. *(To BEAUTY)* Not you? I suppose you can keep him if he's house broken.

ALAN: House broken?!

BEAST: *(To ALAN)* Can she speak?

BEAUTY: *(Crosses away from him down stage)* I prefer to speak to people that I can see, so I can look them in the eye.

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BEAST: Do you? A good look . . . *(Still with his back to the audience HE pulls back his hood. HE turns to face her and the audience. HE slowly walks towards her)* . . . is that what you want?

BEAUTY: Oh! *(Tries to keep looking at him, but it is hard.)*

BEAST: Go ahead and look then.

BEAUTY: I didn't mean . . . I didn't know . . .

BEAST: Didn't know what? Just how horrible it could be? See the Beast! Hard to look at his retched countenance and yet it's hard to stop, is it not?

BEAUTY: Stop it!

BEAST: But I won't have you thinking that I am impolite. My eyes are here for you to gaze upon. *(SHE does.)* There. And now when you hear the word "ugly", you will have a new mark to hold it to.

BEAUTY: I know what ugly is and that is found behind the eyes, not in what surrounds them.

BEAST: Ha! And what do you find behind my eyes? What!!

ALAN: You're scaring her!

BEAST: I'd watch myself, cow, I'm no vegetarian.

BEAUTY: I see a mean heart, someone who would rather frighten people than deal with them! I see a man . . .

BEAST: *(Wheels on her)* I am no man!!! I am no man . . . *(Flips his hood up and turns away.)*

ALAN: *(Stage whispers)* lcks-nay on the an-may.

CACCIATORE: *(Enters)* Breakfast, she is ready.

BEAST: *(Keeps his back to them)* Go and eat.

CACCIATORE: *(To ALAN and BEAUTY)* Come . . . come!

(COOK exits followed by ALAN.)

BEAUTY: You *are* a man. *(Wants to say more, but exits instead.)*

BEAST: *(After SHE is off HE turns to answer her, but SHE is gone.)*

She's so beautiful. *(Takes a small mirror out of his pocket and wipes away the dust. It's been a long time since HE has used it. HE pulls back his hood and looks at himself for a long time.)* This was a mistake. *(Puts the mirror back in his pocket, pulls up his hood, and walks off.)*

BEAUTY: *(Bursts in after HE has left.)* And another thing . . .

ALAN: *(Pokes his head out)* Is he gone? *(Enters room)*

BEAUTY: Yes.

ALAN: So, are you still afraid?

BEAUTY: No, now I'm mad!

ALAN: At-a-girl! I'm gonna go have some more pancakes, those things are great. Are you coming?

BEAUTY: I'm not hungry.

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ALAN: Suit yourself. Hey Catch-a-whatever, how about some eggs?
(*Exiting*) I think I'm gonna like it here. (*HE is off.*)

BEAUTY: (*Looking where the BEAST exited*) This was a mistake.
(*Goes back to the kitchen*)

(*Lights fade to half. ST enters and starts speaking. The OTHER CHARACTERS bring out stuff to the table and begin to do the meal thing. THEY do not see ST.*)

ST: (*Enters*) Well, what do you think? Love-at-first-sight? (*To specific audience member*) No, you don't think so? You know, it's hard to tell with love. Now indifference, if that had been shown, I'd tend to agree with you. (*To all*) But there were sparks there, you have to admit that! Why, they could hardly keep their hands off each other, granted it was each other's throat, but there were sparks! The sun has now set and we join our friends at dinnertime. (*Exits*)

ACT II, SCENE II

Lights up to full. Sunset the same day. BEAUTY and ALAN are eating at the table. The COOK and MIPSY are also on stage.

ALAN: This is great! Tangy, yet filling. A delightful blend of textures and tastes. What do you call this again?

CACCIATORE: Soup.

ALAN: Ah.

BEAUTY: Alan's right, it really is delicious. Won't you join us?

MIPSY: Unfortunately, we cannot.

ALAN: (*To MIPSY*) Watching the waistline? It looks great from where I'm sitting.

CACCIATORE: We're made of marble. We can not eat.

MIPSY: Oui. No food, no sleep, we barely sit.

ALAN: Well sit down then anyway.

CACCIATORE: We are servants, we do not sit with guests.

BEAUTY: That's silly. Please sit with us.

(*COOK and MIPSY reluctantly sit down.*)

CACCIATORE: This is very unusual.

MIPSY: Oui.

BEAUTY: Nonsense! We're all people here.

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WATSON: (*Enters*) And how is your din . . . (Sees the COOK and MIPSY) . . . What are you doing?

CACCIATORE: (*Jumps up*) We were invited, Mister Watson.

MIPSY: (*Jumps up also*) I'm sorry, Monsieur Watson!

ALAN: What's the big deal?

WATSON: The "big-deal", is that they are servants and not to sit with guests.

BEAUTY: I'd much rather be a friend than a guest.

WATSON: I beg your pardon Madame, but there are certain strictures . . .

BEAUTY: Strictures?!

WATSON: We are of a lower class than . . .

BEAUTY: Lower class? You are members of the human race, just as we are!

ALAN: That's right! You don't see me lording it over you other guys, do you?

WATSON: Lording it over *us*, sir?

ALAN: One sixth of the world population, the people in India as a matter of fact, worships me as a god! But I'm willing to sit with you common folk.

WATSON: Worship cows? Yes, sir.

ALAN: That's what they taught us in school, Watson.

WATSON: Pardon me for asking this sir, but at what grade level did you ultimately end your, I'm sure well-rounded, tour of academia?

ALAN: Elementary, my dear Watson. Gosh, I've been dying to say that.

BEAUTY: And what of your master? Where is he?

MIPSY: The master, he never eats until we are, well until we are stationary again.

CACCIATORE: Yes, we see very little of him.

BEAUTY: Why is that?

WATSON: He prefers his solitude, Miss. A wish that I recommend you honor.

BEAUTY: It isn't good for someone to spend all their time alone.

WATSON: The master, as you may have noticed, is not like other people.

BEAUTY: I don't think he is as different as he would like to believe himself. But, I do appreciate your advice and I will take it under consideration, Mister Watson.

MIPSY: Oh! The moon, she will be coming up very soon. I should show you where you will be sleeping. Please follow.

BEAUTY: You go ahead Alan, you can show me our rooms later.

ALAN: You got it. (*In an French accent*) Ho-ho, lead ze way to ze rooms, my little Mademoiselle. (*ALAN follows MIPSY off.*)

CACCIATORE: Mipsy is usually right about the change, I should bank the stove. (*Exits*)

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