

FALLEN PRINCESS

By Marla Schwartz

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****This duet is designed for challenging competition. For stage performance, three characters may be used. For competition purposes, the male in this duet will play two parts, the part of BRADFORD, the husband who recently had DONNA committed for his own selfish reasons, and DR. GARLAND, the doctor who assisted in the scheme. All props should be mimed. If performed on stage or as a skit or short play, DR. GARLAND may be played by a second male actor.****

(DONNA stares straight ahead, bound in a strait-jacket, as if in a trance.)

CAST: BRADFORD and DONNA

BRADFORD: Donna...Donna..Can you hear me? It's Bradford...your husband. I've come back.

DONNA: ***(coming out of her trance and noticing BRADFORD)***
Disgusting! ***(pause)*** You make me sick! ***(SHE spits in his direction)***

BRADFORD: Behave yourself, Donna.

DONNA: I am—can't you tell? Everyone behaves in here.

BRADFORD: That's not what I meant...

DONNA: If you don't behave, they always have electro-shock therapy. Does that make you happy?

BRADFORD: Please don't do this to yourself.

DONNA: I didn't do this to myself.

BRADFORD: You'll be out of here in no time if you agree to our terms.

DONNA: Oh no, no, no, no, no! Impossible!

BRADFORD: Please understand. If you don't agree, you'll stay here forever.

DONNA: Maybe I like it here.

BRADFORD: How can you possibly like this place?

DONNA: Do I really have a choice? Are you and that doctor friend of yours going to release me if I decide I don't like this luxury resort?

BRADFORD: Donna, I...

DONNA: Don't try to defend your actions. They're indefensible.

BRADFORD: You're right.

DONNA: Straight shootin', I'm right. A lot of good that does me. I'm a prisoner. Bradford, I was a healthy, sane woman when you committed me here. I was fine. You...and that doctor committed me. You've ruined me. And for what? How could anything be worth destroying a person's life?

BRADFORD: I made a mistake. It's why I came back for you. **(looks behind him)** Donna, you remember Dr. Garland, don't you. He's here with me today. He's interested in helping you as well.

(At this point, BRADFORD'S character must also play the character of DR. GARLAND. Remember to shift positions and focal points. DR. GARLAND'S demeanor should be one of confidence, while BRADFORD shows his weakness and lack of decisiveness.)

DONNA: Oh yes, the now wealthy Dr. Garland. How does it feel to be bought off with MY money!

GARLAND: Charmed, as always, my dear.

BRADFORD: Could we take that straight-jacket off her while we're in here. It gives me the creeps.

GARLAND: I suppose we can.

(walks behind DONNA and mimes removing the straight-jacket)

DONNA: ***(in a baby voice)*** Is little Braddy-ford scared?

BRADFORD: Donna wants out, Garland.

GARLAND: She knows the price for freedom. ***(pause)*** Don't like it here, Donna?

DONNA: Of course I do. I feel great! I love this place! I can't survive out there. The drugs keep coming my way in here, and I don't even have to ask for them.

BRADFORD: My gosh, they've turned her into an addict!

GARLAND: There was no choice.

BRADFORD: I think we should let her go.

GARLAND: Let her go? She's too dangerous.

BRADFORD: I don't want her to be in here anymore.

GARLAND: We shouldn't release her, Bradford. Donna, do you want your freedom?

DONNA: Set me free. I'll pretend to be a good girl and keep everything hushy-hushy.

BRADFORD: You think people will believe you?

DONNA: You're scared, Bradford, honey. I like it when you're scared. **(moves toward him)**

BRADFORD: **(backs up)** Stay away from me. You're the one who is sick. Nobody will believe you.

DONNA: Bradford is a scaredy cat! Bradford is a scaredy cat!

BRADFORD: Stay away! Garland, tell Donna to stay away from me!

GARLAND: You insisted on seeing her again. Here she is.

BRADFORD: Please. It was a mistake. I made up my mind.

GARLAND: I'm not sure you mean it.

BRADFORD: I do mean it. You know that.

GARLAND: I want to believe you. You know that it depends on Donna. If she still feels anything for you. Donna, do you still care for Bradford?

DONNA: The word hate isn't strong enough.

BRADFORD: How can you say that about me? I've missed you.

DONNA: You've missed me?

GARLAND: Have you really missed her?

BRADFORD: I've missed you and I want you set free.

DONNA: What's in it for you if Doc here lets me out of this place?

BRADFORD: Nothing! Nothing is in it for me.

DONNA: Tell me what's in it for you!? **(SHE slaps BRADFORD across the face!)** You're the one who brought me here! Told me it was a nice place, that I'd be taken care of! I should kill you right now. I should kill you, Bradford!!

GARLAND: Just calm down, Donna. You don't want to kill anybody.

BRADFORD: That's right. Calm down. Take it easy.

DONNA: Really, I don't want to kill you, Braddy-ford. It's been a long time. I wanna know why you're here?

BRADFORD: I came to tell you that I'm getting married, again. So when you're released, I can't take you back. The divorce is finalized. You can't live with me anymore.

DONNA: I don't want to live with you, anyway. Who are you going to marry, Bradford? **(Pause)** Afraid a scandal might break?

BRADFORD: How can I expect you to understand?

DONNA: What happens when the new lady finds out? You gonna put her away, too?

BRADFORD: She'll never find out!

DONNA: So you are going to marry another woman! Why? Why not stay with me? It's not my fault.

BRADFORD: I know it's not your fault. But you're going to have to calm down. There's no point in getting excited, because she doesn't know about you. She doesn't even know that I'm here today. Nobody knows I'm here.

DONNA: **(pause)** Her daddy is probably very rich.

BRADFORD: There is no rich daddy.

DONNA: You gonna get all her money after she's committed?

GARLAND: Bradford doesn't want her money. You're so suspicious, Donna. This isn't a good sign if you want to get out of here.

BRADFORD: It's not the money...and you're not listening to what I'm telling you!

DONNA: What are you telling me?

GARLAND: He's trying to tell you that you've been given a choice. I'd set you free—if somehow I knew you'd keep your mouth shut.

DONNA: Oh-the Doc is scared, too. What's my other choice?

GARLAND: That's it.

BRADFORD: **(pause)** The option to keeping quiet is to remain here forever...or worse.

DONNA: Because I know too much? Because my knowledge could bring you and your whole political party to its knees.

BRADFORD: Like I said, no one would believe you.

DONNA: But you're afraid someone MIGHT believe me. It's possible.

BRADFORD: But hardly probable. **(to GARLAND)** I don't think I can go through with it.

GARLAND: You're not doing a very good job.

BRADFORD: But...

GARLAND: We must follow through with our plans! Don't mess everything up! We have an agreement.

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