



Beauty and the Beast

by Stephen Duckham

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Beauty *and the* Beast

CAST

Rose Fairy	
Horridana	A Sorceress
Beauty	
Panisse	Her Father
Renee	The Innkeeper
Madam Lotte	
Charlie	Her son
Prince Rowan/The Beast	
Thomas	His Servant and Friend
Fifi	A Chambermaid
Henri	The Gardener
Jacques	A Servant
Moaning Martha	
Double for the Beast	

Chorus of Villagers and Castle Servants

(Note: The part of the Innkeeper, Renee, can be played by a female. The name can be changed to Yvette.)

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

SCENE 1	A ROSE BOWER
SCENE 2	THE VILLAGE OF PRETTYBELLE
SCENE 3	A CORRIDOR IN THE CASTLE
SCENE 4	THE VILLAGE OF PRETTYBELLE (A year later)
SCENE 5	A CORRIDOR IN THE CASTLE
SCENE 6	THE WOODS NEAR THE CASTLE
SCENE 7	THE TERRACE GARDEN OF THE CASTLE
SCENE 8	A ROOM IN PANISSE'S HOUSE
SCENE 9	A CORRIDOR IN THE CASTLE
SCENE 10	THE GREAT HALL OF MIRRORS

ACT TWO

SCENE 1	HORRIDANA'S DOMAIN
SCENE 2	THE TERRACE GARDEN
SCENE 3	A CORRIDOR IN THE CASTLE
SCENE 4	THE TERRACE GARDEN
SCENE 5	A ROOM IN PANISSE'S HOUSE
SCENE 6	THE TERRACE GARDEN
SCENE 7	A CORRIDOR IN THE CASTLE
SCENE 8	THE BALLROOM

PRODUCTION NOTES

Although there are several scene changes in *Beauty and the Beast*, the staging of the pantomime can be quite simple with just a few adjustments.

The script calls for four full sets, one half set, three front cloths and a set of black tabs. If front cloths are a problem the black tabs can be used with a few additions.

Obviously, the more lavish you can make the production the better, but if space and facilities are limited the following may prove useful.

The Village, the Terrace, the Great Hall of Mirrors and the Ballroom are all full sets. The Great Hall can double as the Ballroom for the Finale if another set is impractical.

The three front cloths are The Corridor in the Castle, Panisse's House and the Woods. The Woods is only a short scene and could be played on tabs. Act One Scene 1 and Act Two Scene 1 can be played on tabs.

BEAUTY'S NIGHTMARE (Act Two Scene 5)

If space and facilities allow it would be an advantage if this sequence were played on a more spacious scene than the front cloth of Panisse's House. After the lights fade down to a pin spot on Beauty stage right, the backcloth could fly or wipe to reveal a black backing, star cloth or the Terrace. This would give the dancers and principals extra room for the dance. At the end of the sequence, as Beauty is waking up, the cloth flies back in and the lights return to the main scene.

CHARACTERS

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Beauty | Just as her name suggests. Must be a strong actress able to cover a wide range of emotions and possess a fine lyrical singing voice. |
| Prince Rowan | A handsome leading man. Requires a strong singing voice. Could be played as a Principal Boy, although it is essential that the make-up for the Beast be strong and masculine. A full head mask and hair is the best effect as long as the actor can speak and sing clearly through it. There is plenty of time to change from Prince to Beast and back using the Double. |
| Horridana | A strong determined woman. She should be quite beautiful, but with startling facial features and make-up to give the impression of being more the Sorceress than the 'girl next door'! |
| Madam Lotte | The Pantomime Dame. Full of comedy and a good rapport with the audience. As many changes of costume that the actor and the wardrobe department can cope with – outrageous and comic. Never get away from the fact that it is a man in a frock! |
| Charlie | Good comic timing. Has to be able to sing and have a good sense of knockabout. |
| Panisse | White haired, absent minded father to Beauty. Able to play comedy and pathos well. Small amount of singing, but not essential. |

Fifi	Girlfriend to Charlie. Flirtatious. Good sense of comedy and needs to be able to sing well.
Thomas	Servant and friend to the Prince. Strong actor with the ability to play comedy and sing. Age could be between 25 – 40.
Renee/Yvette	The Innkeeper. An older actor/actress nearer to Panisse's age.
Rose Fairy	Charming and sensitive. The design of her costume should represent a rose.
Henri Jacques	Castle servants. Part of the Chorus. Ages up to mid 30's
Messenger	Small featured part in the Chorus.
Moaning Martha	A cameo role whose lines may be divided between Chorus Members if so required.

As with the original fairy tale, the story has a French setting. I suggest that you *don't* use French accents with the possible exception of Fifi. If the actress playing the role can achieve a more comic character without the loss of clarity, then by all means try it.

MUSIC

The placing of musical numbers and who sings them is suggested in the script, but it is up to the director to decide what to use. A word of advice: Pantomime audiences – particularly the younger members – like the story to keep moving, so don't make the musical sequences too long, especially ballads.

A song sheet specially written for this script is available from NODA.

I hope you enjoy doing this version of 'Beauty and the Beast' and have a great success with your production.

Stephen Duckham

ACT ONE
SCENE 1 A ROSE BOWER

[The scene is either a front cloth showing a profusion of roses or a curtain, with acting areas down right and left. The ROSE FAIRY is discovered down right holding a white rose.]

ROSE FAIRY Beautiful, isn't it? A white rose, each petal perfect in every detail. I am the Rose Fairy. My very existence is centred around this bloom. By day I watch that it is well watered and not battered about by too many storms, and by night I make myself as tiny as a bee so that I can curl up and sleep inside its petals. I love this flower and over the years I have watched as it has brought joy and happiness to so many people. One person in particular who is passionate about roses is a charming young Prince by the name of Rowan.

[The mood changes and HORRIDANA enters down left in a green spot.]

HORRIDANA *[In an irritated mood.]* Rowan! You speak of him with too much familiarity.

ROSE FAIRY Horridana!

HORRIDANA Princess Horridana to you. And keep that wretched flower away from me – I detest roses.

ROSE FAIRY You seem very angry.

HORRIDANA And so I should be. Prince Rowan and I have been betrothed since birth by a treaty drawn up by our fathers. When he returns from his travels I shall insist that we be married at once – *[With mock serenity.]* – and so preserve the harmonious atmosphere that exists between our two countries.

ROSE FAIRY Are you so sure that he is ready to settle down?

HORRIDANA *[Back to her demanding voice.]* Ready or not he must keep to the bargain.

ROSE FAIRY But love cannot be forced. It is delicate – like the petals on this rose. Slowly they take shape until one day they form into a perfect flower. The same applies to love. Day by day it grows between two people until – *[SHE is cut short by HORRIDANA.]*

HORRIDANA Oh cut the poetry! Love has had twenty-one years to blossom between Rowan and me! But if he should renege on the arrangement, he will feel the full force of my wrath.

ROSE FAIRY What do you mean?

HORRIDANA I have studied the dark arts and have perfected the ability to transmute and change anyone or anything I please. Nothing and no one shall stand in my way. So be warned my handsome Prince – make your decision quickly. And for your own sake, let it be the right one. For if I am spurned in favour of another then all too soon the world will see how quickly the man can become the beast.

[No doubt the audience will 'boo' and SHE gestures and curses them as SHE exits.]

ROSE FAIRY Oh dear, I do hope that Prince Rowan will be all right. Horridana is not a woman to be scorned. She does indeed have powers that few know about. But as I am a protector of this delicate flower, so I shall endeavour to watch out for all those who hold it dear to them – especially Prince Rowan.

[SHE smiles at the audience and begins to exit as the lights fade and the scene changes to]

SCENE 2 THE VILLAGE OF PRETTYBELLE

[A typical village square and one that lives up to its name. There are shops and houses dotted around and to stage right is an Inn. Stage left we see the exterior of PANISSE'S establishment. He is a merchant and purveyor of fine goods and wines. As the scene starts the annual fete – sponsored by PANISSE – is about to begin. Bunting and flags are hanging from some buildings and there are various stalls upstage. The CHORUS of villagers is out in all its finery ready to start enjoying the fete. RENEE, the INNKEEPER, is also part of the group.]

OPENING CHORUS

[During the number BEAUTY, PANISSE'S daughter enters and joins in with the singing. At the end of the number two CHORUS members stretch a ribbon across the centre of the stage in readiness for the opening of the fete.]

RENEE *[To BEAUTY.]* Where's your father, Beauty? We can't start the fete without him. *[MOANING MARTHA, the village grouch, steps forward.]*

MARTHA Yes. Where is Panisse? Never around when you want him.

BEAUTY He should be here any minute. *[ALL start calling "Panisse".]* He was checking his speech. You know how absent-minded he gets.

MARTHA It's not his speech we want. *[Points to the ribbon.]* It's his scissors. *[ALL laugh. BEAUTY crosses to the store on stage left and calls inside.]*

BEAUTY Come on father. We're waiting for you.

PANISSE *[Off stage.]* Coming. *[HE enters from the store. HE is a white-haired man with a cheery disposition. In one of his coat pockets is a pair of scissors and in the other is a rolled-up speech. HIS glasses are perched on top of his head.]* Beauty, my dear I can't seem to find my glasses. You haven't seen them, have you?

BEAUTY They're where they always are, father. On top of your head. *[SHE takes them from his head and hands them to him.]*

PANISSE Oh, silly me. *[To the CHORUS.]* Hello all. What are you waiting for?

MARTHA You! You great fool.

PANISSE Really. How nice.

BEAUTY They're waiting for you to open the fete.

PANISSE The fete! Of course. I'd forgotten. Now, where's my speech? *[HE puts his glasses back on the top of his head and searches for his speech.]*

RENEE Isn't that it in your pocket, Panisse?

PANISSE Ah yes. I knew I'd put it somewhere safe. *[HE takes it out and looks at it. HE can't read it.]* Oh dear now where are my glasses?

ALL *[Pointing to his head.]* On top of your head.

PANISSE *[Reaching for them.]* Oh yes! *[HE puts them on, clears his throat and starts to read.]* It is with much regret that I received news of Great Aunt Nellie's passing!

MARTHA *[Surprised.]* Now what's he on about?

BEAUTY Father, that's not your speech.

PANISSE Oh no. It a letter to your Great Uncle Archibald. So sad about aunt Nellie. *[To the CHORUS.]* She died of exposure you know waiting for a - *[Name of railway or bus service.]*

RENEE Get on with opening the fete.

MARTHA Open it? It'll soon be time to close it!

MAN Come on Panisse, we want to start enjoying ourselves.

PANISSE *[Crosses to the MAN.]* Hold on there young woman!

MAN What? *[On hearing a MAN'S voice, PANISSE puts the glasses back on top of his head to see who he is talking to.]*

PANISSE Oh! Sorry about that.

BEAUTY Why don't you forget about the speech, father, and just open the fete?

PANISSE Very well. Where are the scissors?

BEAUTY In your other pocket.

PANISSE Oh yes. Of course. *[HE takes out the scissors and goes to cut the ribbon. Because of his eyesight he misses and cuts the belt of a MAN holding the ribbon. The MAN'S trousers fall down. Everyone laughs.]* Oh dear. I am sorry. Where are my glasses?

ALL On top of your head. *[PANISSE puts on his glasses.]*

PANISSE I declare this year's fete well and truly open. *[HE cuts the ribbon. ALL cheer and begin to enjoy the fete. During the next dialogue, the CHORUS exits.]*

MARTHA About time too!

BEAUTY Come on father, let's try your hand at the lucky dip.

PANISSE Much as I would like to, I'm afraid I haven't a lot of time to spare. I'm expecting a delivery from the port. My ships should have docked two days ago and all my new goods despatched straight away.

BEAUTY That's wonderful, but surely you can take a little time off?

PANISSE I really should be here when they arrive. But you go off and enjoy yourself and I'll join you later.

BEAUTY All right. Don't be too long. *[SHE gives him a quick kiss and follows the others off.]*

RENEE You have a lovely daughter there, Panisse.

PANISSE Yes. And the image of her mother, bless her. *[RENEE turns to go into the Inn.]* Oh by the way, you haven't seen anyone with my shipment from the port, have you?

RENEE No – sorry. The only people to arrive are some travellers who have stopped by for some refreshments. *[HE exits into the Inn.]*

PANISSE Oh well, I shall just have to be patient. *[HE heads for the Inn as MADAM L'ESCARGOT BIDE CHEMISE SANS CULOTTE enters. SHE is a jolly, buxom woman and known as LOTTE. SHE and PANISSE collide.]*

PANISSE Oh I'm sorry young man!

LOTTE It's a long time since anyone called me young!

PANISSE *[Quickly putting on his glasses.]* Oh, I do beg your pardon madam.

LOTTE Well it's a long time since anyone called me a madam! When's your next appointment with – *[Local optician.]*

PANISSE I really should wear my glasses more often.

LOTTE Oh that's all right. And who might I be *distressing*?

PANISSE *[Indicating his store.]* I am Monsieur Panisse, a merchant and purveyor of fine goods.

LOTTE Really.

PANISSE And what brings you to our village?

LOTTE My friends and I are just passing through on our way home. We've been on a little tour. Rome, Athens, Paris – *[Neighbouring town.]*

PANISSE Well I hope you enjoy your stay. It's our annual village fete today.

LOTTE Oh good. I'll try my hand on the 'test your strength'. I usually ring someone's bell!

PANISSE I bet you do.

LOTTE *[Giggling.]* Saucy man! *[SHE gives him a push and HE goes flying.]*

PANISSE *[A little shocked.]* Well, if you'll excuse me.

LOTTE Why, what have you done? *[PANISSE hurries into his shop. LOTTE addresses the audience.]* Hello there. Are you visiting as well? *[Audience reaction.]* Nice little place, isn't it? Mind you I'm used to something a bit grander. You see I live in a castle! Do any of you live in a castle? *[Audience reaction. SHE picks out one man.]* Oh you do, sir? What's it called? The Queen and Castle! Well, the one I live in is a little more upmarket than that. You see I'm Madam L'Escargot Bidet Chemise Sans Culotte – but that's a bit of a mouthful so you can call me Lotte. I'm nurse, housekeeper, private secretary, and personal confidant to His Royal Highness, Prince Rowan. *[SHE claps her hand to her mouth.]* Oh but I shouldn't have told you that. You see we're travelling incognito. I would have preferred travelling in a private jet, like other Royals – but we're in a horse and carriage parked round the back! You won't say anything, will you? *[Audience reaction.]* Oh ta ever so. You see Prince Rowan is betrothed to Princess Horridana of our neighbouring kingdom – and a right horrid Anna she is too. She's pushing him to tie the knot but I don't think he's that keen, poor lamb. But he has to fulfil his obligations or who knows what might happen. Anyway, enough of all that. I'm very pleased to meet you all. Bon jour! *[SHE looks at the audience.]* Well come on. You're supposed to say "Bon jour" back. It's a custom we have over here! Would you like to try it? *[Audience reaction.]* Now say "Bon". *[Audience responds.]* Now say "Jour". *[Audience responds. SHE doesn't think much of their pronunciation.]* That sounded a bit odd! You have to shape your lips like this. *[SHE purses her lips in a comical fashion.]* Jour! Now you do it. *[Audience responds again, LOTTE picks out a woman in the audience.]* That's right dear – purse them, purse them!! *[Ad lib with audience.]* That's better. Now once more – all together. Bon Jour. *[Audience responds.]* Splendid. We'll have you talking the lingo in no time. Now every time I say Bon jour, you say Bon jour Lotte. OK? *[Audience responds.]*

CHARLIE *[Off.]* Mum. Mum – where are you?

LOTTE Oh look out. That's my son, Charlie. He helps me at the castle. Well when I say help – *[To ladies in the audience.]* – you know what I mean girls? Men around the house are less than useless. By the time you've explained what you want doing and shown them how to do it, you may as well have done it yourself! You know what I mean, don't you misses? Charlie takes after my late husband. He used to be a shift worker. When I mentioned work he'd shift.

[LOTTE moves upstage as CHARLIE enters down right carrying a brown paper bag. HE is a pleasant lad, if a little slow at times. HE doesn't notice LOTTE at first and addresses the audience.]

CHARLIE Mum! Oh where has she got to? *[HE spots the audience.]* Oh hello. I'm looking for my Mum. She's a biggish woman, with a deepish voice and lorry driver hands – and a very weird dress sense! Ring any bells? You haven't seen her, have you? *[The audience will react and CHARLIE ad libs with*

them.] She's over here, is she? [HE points left and crosses.] No she's not! Are you having me on? [Audience reaction.] It's more likely she's over there in the pub? [HE crosses to the Inn and looks through the door.] No, can't see her. [LOTTE crosses down beside him.] You can't miss her – she stands out in a crowd. [HE turns round and bumps into LOTTE.]

LOTTE *[In a booming voice.]* You were saying?

CHARLIE Oh, hello Mum!

LOTTE I'll give you 'hello'. Have you done all the chores I gave you?

CHARLIE Yes.

LOTTE Checked to see if the horses have been watered?

CHARLIE Yes.

LOTTE Secured all the luggage?

CHARLIE Yes.

LOTTE Cleaned all the sweet wrappers out of the carriage?

CHARLIE Yes.

LOTTE Picked up my new supply of sweets for the rest of the journey?

CHARLIE *[Giving HER the bag.]* Here they are.

LOTTE *[Looking in the bag.]* Oh, but some of these have got hard centres. You know they're no good. They play havoc with my dentures.

CHARLIE Sorry Mum. Are we going home now? We've been away for such a long time and I'm missing my little Fifi.

LOTTE *[To the audience.]* That's his girlfriend before you start making up your own jokes! She works as a chambermaid at the castle. Everyone likes her. She's very popular – she's got seven million 'likes' on Tic Toc! *[OR other social media.]*

CHARLIE That's what I'm worried about. It's not that I don't trust her, but she's just very kind-hearted and sometimes I think people take too much advantage of her. *[LOTTE gives the audience a knowing look.]* But all that will change when we are married.

LOTTE And when will that be?

CHARLIE Very soon. I told her that when I got home we would tie the knot. Then we would settle down in our own little house.

LOTTE Does that mean you won't be living at the castle anymore?

CHARLIE That's right.

LOTTE You won't be helping me with all the chores.

CHARLIE 'fraid not.

LOTTE You won't be under my feet twenty-four seven?

CHARLIE *[Shaking his head.]* Uh-uh.

LOTTE *[Grabbing HIS hand and pulling HIM up stage.]* Let's get the carriage! *[To the audience.]* See you later. *[THEY exit up right as PRINCE ROWAN and THOMAS (his servant and friend) enter from the Inn.]*

ROWAN Well, that was a welcome break, Thomas.

THOMAS Indeed it was your Highness. But we ought to be on our way if we are to make the castle by nightfall.

ROWAN Yes, I suppose so. Although I wish we could extend our tour for a little longer.

THOMAS But we've been away for three months, sir. Your bride-to-be will be growing more and more impatient.

ROWAN Don't I know it? She's been growing impatient ever since kindergarten! Wherever I go, I feel I'm being watched. It's as if she knows my every move. And recently I seem to hear her voice in my head all the time. Constantly reminding me of our betrothal and demanding I return and face our destiny.

[Suddenly the stage darkens and HORRIDANA'S voice is heard as if in ROWAN'S head.]

HORRIDANA *[V/O.]* And face it you shall. I demand you return at once and let us fulfil the agreement laid down by our fathers.

ROWAN *[Startled.]* Horrinator!

THOMAS *[He can't hear HORRIDANA.]* Sir?

HORRIDANA *[V/O.]* Return to the castle by nightfall, Rowan. Or suffer the consequences.

[The lights return and THOMAS sees how worried ROWAN looks.]

THOMAS Are you all right, sir?

ROWAN *[Still shaken.]* What? Oh, yes. *[Smiling at THOMAS.]* Just a little tired from all the travelling.

THOMAS After you're married, you can take a long relaxing honeymoon with your bride.

ROWAN *[Shuddering.]* Oh, please, Thomas!

THOMAS Married life can't be all that bad!

ROWAN *[Smiling.]* That's good coming from someone who's been keeping most of the eligible girls at the castle waiting for far too long.

THOMAS *[With a slight smile.]* I don't know what you mean.

ROWAN Don't play the innocent. You should think about settling down.
THOMAS Plenty of time for that, sir.

ROWAN I wish I could say the same. I'd give anything to be able to have the freedom you have. If I don't go through with this marriage all ties with our neighbouring country will be severed. And that would be disastrous for everyone.

THOMAS And if you do go through with it?

ROWAN It will be disastrous for me.

[The sound of the VILLAGERS returning to the square is heard.]

THOMAS Why don't I leave you for a while to enjoy some time at the fete?

ROWAN The condemned man's last hours of freedom you mean?

[THOMAS smiles at him and starts to exit upright as some of the CHORUS MEN enter with BEAUTY. ROWAN moves downright]

1st MAN Come on Beauty, let me take you on the Ghost Train.

BEAUTY You did that last year and came out shaking like a leaf! *[The OTHERS laugh.]*

2nd MAN How about a ride on the Dodgems?

BEAUTY The way you drive!! *[More laughter. ROWAN notices BEAUTY for the first time.]* I must find my father. I want him to enjoy the fete with the rest of us.

MEN All right. See you later. Etc.

[THEY exit as BEAUTY turns and almost bumps into ROWAN. There is a musical sting and THEY freeze as the ROSE FAIRY enters downright.]

ROSE FAIRY *[To the audience.]* Now I know I shouldn't interfere, but I can't stand by and see Rowan resign himself to a life with Horridana – especially if there may be someone more suitable, and more in tune with his own views on life. *[SHE makes a pass and the couple unfreeze.]*

BEAUTY Oh, I am sorry.

ROWAN No. It is I who am sorry. Sorry we've not met before. *[For a moment their eyes are transfixed. The ROSE FAIRY smiles at the audience and exits. BEAUTY finally breaks the moment.]*

BEAUTY I'm looking for my father. An elderly man, probably with glasses perched on the top of his head. You haven't seen him, have you?

ROWAN I'm afraid not. What is your name?

BEAUTY My father calls me Beauty.

ROWAN What an excellent taste he has in names.

BEAUTY *[Starting to move away.]* I really ought to find him.

ROWAN Please don't go. I'm only here for a short while. I would be honoured if you would let *me* take you on the Ghost Train – or even the Tunnel of Love.

BEAUTY *[Turning back to him.]* But sir, you don't

ROWAN *[Stopping her.]* Don't say, "you don't know me". I know that you have a beautiful name to go with a beautiful face. And that's all I need to know.

BEAUTY But

ROWAN Rowan. My name is Rowan.

BEAUTY Rowan. It reminds me of a rose. My favourite flower.

ROWAN Mine too. You see. We already have so much in common. *[THEY both laugh.]*

DUET – ROWAN AND BEAUTY

[At the end of the number ROWAN and BEAUTY move down left as THOMAS enters up right.]

THOMAS *[Crossing to ROWAN.]* Everything is ready, your Highness.

BEAUTY *[Taken aback.]* Highness?

ROWAN I'm afraid so. I have been travelling with my friends and we are about to return home.

BEAUTY *[Moving away.]* Oh.

THOMAS We should be on our way, your Highness – if we are to be home by nightfall.

ROWAN Of course. I'll be just a moment. *[HE moves back to BEAUTY.]* I promise I will return in the next few days – if you would like me to.

BEAUTY *[Smiling.]* I would like that very much.

[LOTTE enters surrounded by some of the MEN. SHE carries a large stick of candyfloss and a cuddly toy she has won at the fete. The rest of the CHORUS follow on.]

LOTTE *[To audience.]* Bon jour. *[Audience responds.]* Well, I must say the boys in this village know how to show a girl a good time! I've been wooed on the Waltzers, pinched on the Pirate Ship and tampered with in the Tunnel of Love! I'm sorry to be leaving.

ROWAN *[With a look at BEAUTY.]* I too am sorry to be leaving.

[CHARLIE comes running on.]

CHARLIE Are we going?

LOTTE *[Eyeing the men.]* If we must.

ROWAN *[Quietly to BEAUTY.]* Until we meet again, which I know will be soon.
[ROWAN, THOMAS, LOTTE and CHARLIE all exit up right. BEAUTY follows a step as PANISSE enters from the store and crosses to her.]

BEAUTY Goodbye.

PANISSE Who were you saying goodbye to?

BEAUTY *[Looking away.]* Oh just someone I met at the fete. *[Back to PANISSE.]* Any sign of your shipment?

PANISSE I'm beginning to get rather worried. It should be here by now.
[RENEE enters very agitated.]

RENEE Panisse? Where is Panisse? *[The CHORUS point him out. From this point the CHORUS continue to enjoy the fete and do not listen to the following conversation. RENEE crosses to PANISSE.]* Panissé, I've just received some terrible news.

PANISSE *[In a panic.]* My shipment?

RENEE All gone! A terrible storm at sea. The ships and all on board were lost.

BEAUTY *[Comforting PANISSE.]* Father.

PANISSE Nothing saved?

RENEE The news is vague, but it seems nothing has been salvaged. I'm so sorry.

PANISSE What am I going to do?

BEAUTY You must not worry father. We'll get through this somehow.

PANISSE Oh Beauty, what would I do without you?

VILLAGER Is everything all right, Panisse? *[PANISSE puts on a brave face not wanting to dampen the spirits of the villagers.]*

PANISSE Yes, yes. Fine. Continue enjoying the day.

ENSEMBLE NUMBER – CHORUS

[During the singing PANISSE grows increasingly distressed at the news and BEAUTY helps him into the store. At the end of the number, the lights blackout and the scene changes to]

SCENE 3 A CORRIDOR IN THE PRINCE'S CASTLE

[A front cloth scene. CHARLIE enters right.]

CHARLIE Well here we are back home. I can't wait to see Fifi again. We've been apart for so long she's bound to have missed me. When she sees me she'll throw herself at me and smother me in kisses. *[FIFI enters left and listens to what he is saying. SHE is a very pretty girl and a terrible flirt.]* Then she'll tell me how much she has missed me and beg me never to leave her side again. She'll say how irresistible I am and how she never wants to be with anyone else.

FIFI And how I couldn't care less if you never came back.

CHARLIE *[Not realising she is there.]* And how she couldn't care less if I never FIFI!

FIFI Not one letter. Not one postcard. Not a word do I hear in all the time you've been away.

CHARLIE But Fifi, we've been travelling constantly. I never had a chance to write.

FIFI So you couldn't be bothered to think of me here. Not knowing if you were in any danger, if you were lost in a forest or been attacked by wild animals.

CHARLIE But Fifi

FIFI And not once thinking how I was. If I was lonely – if I was worried sick.

CHARLIE Oh I knew you'd be all right.

FIFI *[With a toss of her head.]* Too true I was all right. *[HENRI, the gardener, enters right and crosses left.]* Oh hello Henri.

HENRI Hello Fifi. Great film we saw the other night.

FIFI *[Flirting with him.]* Yes.

HENRI Must do it again sometime. *[HE exits left.]*

CHARLIE Must do what again sometime?

FIFI A few of us went to the pictures the other night. The cinema was full, so we had to sit on the back row!

CHARLIE *[Suspicious.]* Really!

[JACQUES, a male servant enters right and crosses left.]

FIFI Hello Jacques.

JACQUES Hello Fifi. Fab disco last week. You're a great dancer. Let me know when you next have a night off and we'll do it again! *[HE exits left as SHE waves and blows him a kiss. CHARLIE is giving her a stern look.]*

FIFI You didn't think I was going to sit pining away for you?

CHARLIE You didn't have much time to by the sound of things!

FIFI *[Turning away and folding her arms.]* Well if you were out there enjoying yourself, why shouldn't I?

CHARLIE But Fifi I was always thinking about you.

FIFI *[Not believing him.]* Really.

CHARLIE Yes – really. I bought you lots of presents.

FIFI *[Changing and smiling.]* You did? Where are they?

CHARLIE Not so fast. Don't I get a welcome home kiss first?

FIFI Well. I suppose so. *[HE closes his eyes and puckers up. SHE kisses him on the forehead.]* Now where are my presents? *[SHE starts to search HIM.]*

CHARLIE Don't! You're tickling me.

[LOTTE enters.]

LOTTE Bon jour. *[Audience responds.]* What are you two up to?

CHARLIE Not a lot!

FIFI Welcome home Lotte. How was your trip?

LOTTE Oh Fifi, it was a great adventure, wasn't it Charlie?

CHARLIE Yes. We saw a lot of famous landmarks. The Eiffel Tower in Paris.

LOTTE The Acropolis in Athens.

CHARLIE The Coliseum in Rome.

LOTTE But my favourite was *[SHE names an unlikely local place or shopping mall.]* in *[SHE names the local town.]*

CHARLIE *[Rolling his eyes.]* Yes, I really enjoyed myself there!

LOTTE But it's nice to be home.

[The stage darkens and HORRIDANA enters left.]

HORRIDANA And it's about time! *[ALL cower away.]*

LOTTE Oh it's – *[SHE names a female TV character.]*

HORRIDANA Mind what you say, or when I am the mistress of this castle you may find yourself languishing in the dungeons. Where is Prince Rowan?

ROWAN *[ROWAN enters right followed by THOMAS.]*
[Without enthusiasm.] Horridana. How nice to see you again.

HORRIDANA A more affectionate greeting for your bride-to-be would not come amiss.

ROWAN *[Crossing to her.]* Horridana. We need to talk in private.

HORRIDANA Nonsense. We need to set a date for our wedding. Your servants will need to make arrangements.

ROWAN *[Defiantly.]* There are no arrangements to make.

HORRIDANA What?

THOMAS Perhaps we should leave, your Highness.

ROWAN No. This has to be said so you all may as well hear it. *[HE faces HORRIDANA.]* I'm sorry Horridana, but there won't be a wedding. It would be wrong to marry you when I am in love with somebody else.

HORRIDANA *[Furious.]* What is this treachery?

ROWAN Forgive me, but I have to do what my heart dictates.

HORRIDANA How dare you treat me, Horridana, the Sorceress this way?

OTHERS *[Amazed, each one except LOTTE repeat the word:]* Sorceress??

LOTTE You know there a terrible echo in here!

HORRIDANA Yes. I have powers beyond imagining – as you will now witness.

LOTTE What does she mean?

CHARLIE She's going to turn us into something horrible.

FIFI *[Grabbing hold of CHARLIE.]* Charlie, I'm scared.

MUSIC FOR FIRST TRANSFORMATION

[The music starts and continues through the following sequence. It should enhance HORRIDANA'S curse with musical stings.]

HORRIDANA And well you may be. *[To ROWAN.]* You say you are in love with someone else. Then let us see if she returns your love. *[SHE makes a pass and ROWAN doubles up in pain.]* For the pain and deceit you have caused I curse you. *[SHE makes another pass.]* From this moment on you will be changed from a handsome Prince into a hideous beast.

THOMAS No! Stop this. *[HE moves forward but HORRIDANA makes another pass that throws him back.]*

HORRIDANA This castle will become enchanted, but it will also become your fortress. Your servants will remain here with you. No one will be able to leave. Everything you want will be provided for you – except the love of another. *[SHE makes another pass and ROWAN falls to the floor.]*

LOTTE You can't do this. *[CHARLIE and FIFI help ROWAN to his feet. At this point he should be near an exit ready to change with a Double.]*

HORRIDANA I can do anything I wish. *[SHE makes another pass and ROWAN screams in pain.]*

THOMAS You must lift this curse.

HORRIDANA If, by the remotest possibility, someone should say and *mean* the words 'I love you' - then and only then will the curse be removed.

ROWAN *[Gasping for breath.]* Horridana – please.

HORRIDANA Change your mind now and you will be spared.

ROWAN I won't.

HORRIDANA Then suffer this terrible fate.

[The lights on the stage fade to leave HORRIDANA in a spot stage left. The OTHERS exit.]

ROSE FAIRY *[Entering down right in spot]* Horridana. No!

HORRIDANA *[SHE chants a spell. During the following the BEAST DOUBLE changes places with ROWAN.]*

I call on my powers to strengthen this curse
From which you will never be released.
Only the words 'I love you' truly spoken
Will return the Prince from the Beast.

[A spot centre stage comes up to reveal THE BEAST (DOUBLE). HORRIDANA gives an evil laugh and exits left. The BEAST lets out an agonising roar. The ROSE FAIRY holds out a white rose for him, but he turns away in despair. The ROSE FAIRY is in a spotlight downright.]

ROSE FAIRY And so the terrible curse was cast upon Rowan. A year has passed and no one dared to leave the castle. Each day in the village of Prettybelle, Beauty hoped that Rowan would return as promised, while her father struggled to keep his business going.

[The lights fade and the scene changes to]

SCENE 4 THE VILLAGE OF PRETTYBELLE – A YEAR LATER

[A sign hangs outside PANISSE'S store saying "CLOSING DOWN. EVERYTHING AT HALF PRICE". BEAUTY stands outside the Inn with RENEE. The VILLAGERS are about to start the annual fete and they sing a short reprise of the opening number. MARTHA is with them.]

REPRISE – CHORUS

[A short reprise of the number that opened scene 2. Before the number comes to an end PANISSE enters from the store. BEAUTY crosses to him.]

MARTHA Oh here he comes. Late again – as usual!

BEAUTY Father, they are waiting for you to open the fete.

PANISSE Oh, I'm really not in the mood, Beauty.

BEAUTY But you've always done it. It's a tradition.

PANISSE Because I was a figure of importance in the village. Now look at me. Forced to sell everything off to make ends meet. I'm not worthy to do the job. *[To the RENEE.]* Renee, would you do it for me?

RENEE If that's what you want, Panisse.

PANISSE Thank you.

RENEE My friends, Panisse is not feeling too good today and has asked me to declare the fete open. *[There is some mutterings in the crowd.]* So, I declare the fete open! *[There is general rejoicing, albeit muted, and the CHORUS begins to exit.]*

BEAUTY Father, you don't look well. Why don't you go and lie down?

PANISSE I'm all right. You go and enjoy yourself.

BEAUTY Oh, I'm not really in the mood for the fete, either.

PANISSE You're still thinking of that young man you met here a year ago.

BEAUTY *[Trying to make light of her feelings.]* No, not at all.

PANISSE My dear, I know you better than you think. Every day for the last year you have looked in vain at every visitor that arrived in the village, hoping that it would be that handsome fellow.

BEAUTY He said he would return. He promised.

PANISSE Promises are easily broken when made on the spur of the moment.

BEAUTY I'm being foolish, aren't I?

PANISSE Of course not. But you mustn't dwell on the past.

BEAUTY Oh father, I feel so ashamed. Here I am thinking about myself when you have so much more to worry about.

PANISSE The only thing I worry about is you.

BEAUTY Then let neither of us think of our problems and enjoy the day.

PANISSE You go ahead. I think I will go and have that rest. *[HE kisses her on the cheek and exits into the store.]*

SONG – BEAUTY

[As the song finishes the voice of RENEE is heard off right.]

RENEE *[Off.]* Panisse. Panisse, where are you? *[HE runs on carrying a newspaper.]*

BEAUTY What's the matter?

RENEE Where is your father? I have important news.

BEAUTY He's lying down. I'll call him. *[SHE crosses to the store as RENEE and members of the CHORUS start to enter.]* Father. Father come here, there is important news.

[PANISSE enters.]

PANISSE What's going on?

RENEE Panisse, quickly read this. *[HE gives him the newspaper.]*

PANISSE *[Squinting at the paper.]* "Woman who takes in washing on Monday and Tuesday is looking for somewhere to hang out Wednesday and Thursday."

RENEE No! Not that. Further down the page.

PANISSE I can't quite make it out. Where are my glasses?

ALL On top of your head!

PANISSE Oh yes. *[HE puts them on and reads.]* "We reported a year ago that, due to a violent storm at sea, all the merchant ships and their contents were lost. It now appears that one survived and has been undergoing repairs in the port of Cadiz. It is now on its way home and should dock any day." *[ALL respond excitedly to the news.]* Beauty, this could be one of my ships. I must go to the port immediately.

BEAUTY Oh father. I knew something would turn up. I'll go with you.

PANISSE No, no. I'll be fine. But I will bring you back a present. What would you like?

BEAUTY I just want you back safe and well.

PANISSE Don't worry, I can take care of myself. Now come on tell me what you would like.

BEAUTY Well, if it's not too difficult to find, what I would really like is a white rose.

PANISSE A white rose? Is that all? *[SHE nods.]* Very well, a white rose it is. Now I must be off.

RENEE You can take my horse.

PANISSE That is very kind. I will see you are recompensed on my return.

RENEE I'll get you some food for the journey.

PANISSE Thank you.

1st MAN Good luck, Panisse.

MARTHA *[Still the grouch.]* Let's hope you get your cargo. It's about time you had some new things to sell!

PANISSE *[Ignoring her.]* Thank you all, my friends. Now please – enjoy the fete!

REPRISE (any of the previous 'fete' songs)

[The COMPANY resumes singing as PANISSE bids goodbye to BEAUTY and exits. ALL wave to him as the lights fade and the scene changes to

SCENE 5 A CORRIDOR IN THE PRINCE'S CASTLE

[The front cloth again. As the lights come up HORRIDANA is discovered on stage left.]

HORRIDANA So, a year has passed since I was spurned by Prince Rowan. I wonder if his confinement in this castle has weakened his determination to ignore the commitment made by our fathers. His hideous appearance means that he won't be able to face anyone who doesn't know what happened. But here he comes. Let's see whether he has changed his mind. *[The BEAST enters right.]* Greetings.

BEAST What are you doing here?

HORRIDANA Can't I visit an old friend, Prince Rowan?

BEAST Not Rowan. I am called Beast now.

HORRIDANA Very well. And may I say how well you are looking!

BEAST Do not think you can provoke me with your jibes. You are not welcome here.

HORRIDANA I only called to see if you had decided to repent and fulfil your obligations.

BEAST Never. You are wasting your time. Now go and leave me in peace.

HORRIDANA You will never be at peace confined here in your prison and doomed to remain a Beast forever.

BEAST *[Roaring.]* Get out.

HORRIDANA I'll go. But one day you will beg me to return and release you from this life of misery. *[SHE laughs and exits left.]*

BEAST How I detest that creature. *[HIS voice softens.]* Oh Beauty. How I wish things were different and that I could see your face again. But I know it is hopeless. You could never love me as I am.

[LOTTE and THOMAS enter right.]

LOTTE *[To audience.]* Bon jour. *[Audience responds.]* Ah, there you are dear.

BEAST What is it?

THOMAS There is a storm brewing master, and I understand from the servants that there is a man lost in the woods. He's heading this way.

BEAST I don't want strangers here.

LOTTE But he's very bedraggled. He could be near death. Couldn't we offer him shelter?

BEAST Oh very well. But don't make contact with him. Let the enchanted castle take care of his needs.

THOMAS Very well master. I'll attend to everything. *[HE exits.]*

LOTTE Won't you at least talk to him? You've not spoken to anyone from outside for a year.

BEAST *[Roaring.]* No! I will see no one, and no one must see me in this sorry state.

LOTTE Oh come on, it's not as bad as all that. You know that with a bit of work to the hair and a little bit of titivation, you'd hardly notice the difference. *[SHE glances at the audience knowing her idea is wide of the mark.]*

BEAST I know you are trying to humour me, but it won't work. A Beast I am and a Beast it seems I must stay. *[HE exits.]*

LOTTE Oh dear. I don't know what else to do. If he won't see anyone then it will be impossible for someone to fall in love with him. Oh that awful Horridana. She makes Cruella deVile - *[Or other TV or film female character known to be evil.]* - seem like a pussycat!

[HORRIDANA enters left.]

HORRIDANA Be careful of what you say, Lotte.

LOTTE Madam L'Escargot Bidet Chemise Sans Culottes to you. *[She makes as if pushing her teeth back.]*

HORRIDANA Remember that I am a strong and powerful woman.

LOTTE Yes, I can see your muscles bulging! *[To audience.]* She was in the running for Mrs Universe last year! *[LOTTE does some muscle exercises. The audience laugh and HORRIDANA sneers at them.]*

HORRIDANA Silence! *[To LOTTE.]* You've seen what I did to Rowan for turning against me. I could easily do the same to you – although I think nature has already done the job for me!

LOTTE *[Open mouthed.]* Ohhhhhh! How ever so dare you? I'm not standing here to be insulted.

HORRIDANA Well pull up a chair. I've only just started.

LOTTE Oh I'm so upset I'll have to go for a tramp in the woods. *[An afterthought as SHE leaves.]* I wonder if he's still there. *[SHE exits.]*

HORRIDANA Day by day I will wear down Prince Rowan's resolve. Very soon now he will realise that he has no alternative but to consent to our marriage. *[SHE lets out an evil laugh as the lights fade and the scene changes to]*

SCENE 6 THE WOODS NEAR THE CASTLE

[Front cloth or Black Tabs.]

MUSIC – STORM

[A great storm is raging. The sound of wolves howling is heard in the distance. PANISSE enters left looking around very frightened.]

PANISSE Help! Somebody. Oh dear I don't know where I am. This storm started and my horse bolted. I wish I'd never set out for the port. When I got there all my cargo had been taken by the bailiffs to pay off the debts I had. I'm returning home as poor as when I left. *[More thunder and lightning.]* Help! Is anyone there? *[The wolves howl again. Various ANIMALS enter and in dance form taunt PANISSE. HE is about to be attacked by them when a series of lights appear on stage right. These are lanterns carried by what seems like white-gloved hands. (This can be an effect or some of the CHORUS in black with white gloves. Possibly in UV.) The ANIMALS back away and the hands beckon PANISSE to follow them. The ROSE FAIRY enters with the lights down right to show PANISSE the way. HE hurries towards them and they all exit right. The lights fade and the scene changes to]*

SCENE 7 THE TERRACE GARDEN OF THE CASTLE

[To the left side of the stage is a window opening onto the terrace from the castle. A wall runs across the back and in the distance we see the countryside. Up right is a trellis with a beautiful display of red and white roses. Centre stage is an ornamental stone bench. The areas down right and left are kept free for props to appear. A practical hose reel stands by the fence with a short hose attached. The storm has now subsided and HENRI is tending the roses. FIFI is dusting the bench with a feather duster.]

FIFI Oh Henri, you have such a wonderful way with the roses.

HENRI Thank you.

FIFI *[Dusting a little nearer to HIM.]* You have such clever green fingers.

HENRI *[Slightly embarrassed.]* Oh not really.

FIFI *[Grabbing HIS hand.]* Look at those hands. So big and yet so tender. *[CHARLIE enters and sees HER holding HENRI'S hand.]* Like your heart I shouldn't wonder. Big and tender! And beating away just like mine. *[She pulls his hand to her heart. CHARLIE'S mouth drops open.]*

HENRI Oh Fifi, you always say the sweetest things.

FIFI Oh no.

HENRI Oh yes.

CHARLIE *[Fuming.]* Oh my! What a pretty picture!

FIFI *[Jumping and moving from HENRI.]* Charlie! I was just admiring the roses.

CHARLIE *[Through gritted teeth.]* I can see what you were admiring. *[HE grabs HER and pulls her away from HENRI then speaks to HIM.]* And you better keep your hands on your flowers – *[HE picks up the end of the hose pipe.]* - or else I might find a new use for this! *[He starts to chase HENRI around the stage with FIFI protesting. As THEY dodge HIM, HE gets wound up in the hose. THEY are all in a ridiculous pose as the BEAST enters and THEY all freeze.]*

ALL Good afternoon, Sir.

[HE grunts and nods to them.]

FIFI Just clearing up, Sir. *[SHE grabs the end of the hose and pulls it. CHARLIE spins like a top and disappears off stage. FIFI curtsies to the BEAST and follows him off. HENRI continues tending the roses.]*

BEAST After a storm they look so fresh.

HENRI Indeed, your Highness. As always they are a stunning display.