



Beauty & the Beast

A Traditional Family Pantomime by Brian Luff

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Beauty & the Beast

A Traditional Family Pantomime by Brian Luff

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Beauty - The Heroine

The Beast / Leopold - a prince.

Dame Peekaboo - The Cook

Lampard – Dame Peekaboo’s pet sheep.

Elvinia - A wicked fairy

Aurora - A good fairy

Tom Goodenough – Beauty’s Father

Bernice)
) Beauty’s sisters
Denise)

Bertie Piddle-Hinton)
) A pair of hopeless aristocrats
Aubrey Huffington)

Bernard - The Beast’s Butler

Mrs Pickles – The Beast’s servant

Chives – Goodenough’s housekeeper.

Plus, a chorus of fairies, townspeople, children, party guests and castle guards.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

Scene One - Beauty's House.

Scene Two - Fairyland

Scene Three – Beauty's House.

Scene Four – Beauty's Garden

Scene Five – The Grounds of the Beast's Castle

Scene Six – Beauty's House.

Scene Seven - The Beast's Castle

ACT TWO

Scene One - The Ballroom

Scene Two - Fairyland

Scene Three - The Ballroom

Scene Four - A Country Lane

Scene Five - Beauty's Cottage

Scene Six - A Country Lane

Scene Seven - The Beast's Castle

ACT ONE

Scene 1

Elvinia enters on tabs, accompanied by evil-sounding, discordant music. An eerie, green light floods the stage.

Elvinia *(To audience)* Welcome, one and all, to our pantomime. I'm Elvinia. Some people call me a "wicked" fairy but I don't really think that does me justice. I am actually the nastiest, naughtiest, most vicious and mischievous fairy in all the land.

Audience Boooooo!

Elvinia *(To audience)* Boo me all you like! Do you think I care? I love it! I drink it up like nectar. Your displeasure invigorates me and makes me stronger.

Elvinia stretches out her arms as if ready to cast a spell.

Elvinia *(Evil laugh)* Ah, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Ah, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!

She walks downstage and chats to the audience.

Elvinia I think that's enough evil laughing for the time being. Between you and me it kills my throat. Right, *(clap)* on with the plot. I have an important announcement to make. I have decided to get married again! All my previous husbands met with... unfortunate accidents. One fell in a river, one fell down a well, and the other one was poisoned, strangled and then he jumped out of a window. Of course, none of these accidents were anything to do with me. I just collected the life insurance and moved on. But there is still nothing I like better than the sound of wedding bells. So, I've already decided who my next husband is going to be. He's very rich, he's very handsome, and he is extremely eligible. The only problem is, he doesn't yet know that I exist. But fear not, I shall bewitch him with my beauty...

The lights change to a normal daylight setting. Enter Prince Leopold.

Elvinia Here he comes now. *(To Leopold)* Excuse, me...

Leopold Yes?

Elvinia Have you got a moment?

Leopold I am quite busy.

Elvinia My name is Elvinia.

Leopold Charmed, I'm sure.

Elvinia I was just wondering if you would like to marry me.

Leopold Marry you?

Elvinia Yes.

Leopold Of course I don't want to marry you. We literally only met three seconds ago! And in any case, you look to me like a wicked fairy!

Elvinia How dare you.

Leopold Just sayin'

Elvinia Have you ever heard of "Married at First Sight"?

Leopold What's that?

Elvinia A television show.

Leopold What's "television"?

Elvinia *(To audience)* Oh dear, I completely forgot. The year is 1750 and it's still the olden days.

Leopold Go away and leave me alone.

Elvinia grabs the prince and talks to him nose to nose.

Elvinia Look into my eyes! Are they not like bottomless pools of deep blue, tranquil water?

Leopold Actually they look a bit bloodshot.

Elvinia Bloodshot?

Leopold Yes. Bloodshot and a bit... puffy round the edges.

Elvinia I am losing my patience with you, Prince Leopold.

Leopold How do you know my name?

Elvinia I've been stalking you on social media.

Leopold I'd rather die than marry you, you old witch!

Elvinia I am not a witch! I'm an evil fairy!

Leopold Same difference! If you don't leave me alone I shall call the castle guards and have you thrown into jail.

She grabs him again.

Elvinia Now you listen to me. I'll give you one last chance, lover boy. Agree to marry me or I will... cast a spell.

Leopold I'm not afraid of your silly spells! There is no such thing as magic.

Elvinia Then you leave me no choice. I shall place a curse on you.

Leopold A curse?

Elvinia Yes!

Leopold Do your worst!

Elvinia *(To Leopold)* Right! You asked for it. *(Rolling up her sleeves)* Bear with me everyone, this next bit has to rhyme. Which can be quite tricky.

Thunder and lightning.

“As I command this thunderstorm,
Your face so fair I shall transform.
Those noble cheekbones will revert,
An elegant profile I'll convert.

Your handsome features will stagnate,
That stately chin will trans-mutate.
At once, you'll feel your fine looks cease,
I'll turn you now from man to beast!”

Leopold What's happening?

Elvinia Hold on, I haven't finished yet...

“Your privileged life will disappear,
When folks see you they'll quake with fear,
You shall be stuck like that for life,
And wish you'd taken me for your wife!”

Elvinia waves her arms to cast the spell. There is a final crash of thunder and lightning.

Blackout. Leopold exits. The good fairy Aurora plods on.

Aurora *(To audience)* Oh, for heaven's sake! That Elvinia just gets worse and worse. She really is the nastiest fairy in the kingdom. But, as I'm sure you boys and girls will know, for every bad fairy there is a good fairy. And that's where I come in. I am Aurora - the fairy of all things delightful, delectable and enchanting. Butter would not melt in my mouth. *(Aside)* Or, indeed, any other kind of dairy spread or butter substitute. If Elvinia really has succeeded in turning that poor prince into a hideous beast, then I'll need to come up with a plan to save him. And luckily, good fairies are just as powerful as bad fairies. I'll go and look up some really good magic spells and I'll get back to you later. In the meantime, you can drop in on a party. It's a birthday party for the most popular girl in all the land. I'm sure you will not be surprised to hear that her name is... Beauty.

Aurora exits. Tabs open to reveal Beauty's House, decorated for a party.

Song 1

The party guests sing and dance a big opening number. Enter Beauty and her father Tom Goodenough who join in with the song. At the end of the song...

Beauty What a wonderful party! Thank you so much for organising it for me, father.

Goodenough Nothing is too good for my little girl. *(Sadly)* I only wish your mother could have been here to see it.

Beauty Yes, where is mother?

Goodenough She's living in Bognor Regis with a plastic surgeon.

Enter Goodenough's servant Chives.

Chives *(To Goodenough)*. Excuse me sir, there are two young gentlemen here to see you.

Goodenough Mm. They're probably trying to gatecrash the party. Tell them to go away.

Chives They are very insistent, sir.

Goodenough Oh, very well, send them in. *(To Beauty)* I'm guessing they're going to ask me for your hand in marriage.

Beauty What, *both* of them?

Goodenough Beauty, you are a victim of your own success. News of your loveliness has traveled far and wide.

Beauty's sisters Bernice and Denise enter. Beauty and Goodenough walk upstage to chat with the party guests.

Chives *(To the audience)* Look out, it's the ugly sisters. They're in the wrong panto, but no-one has noticed yet.

Chives exits.

Bernice Stand aside, peasants...

Denise Make way for Britain's Next Top Model...

Bernice That's me...

Denise No, that's definitely me!

Bernice I'm Bernice...

Denise And I'm Denise...

Bernice Together we are...

Bernice/Denise *(Together)* Bernice & Denise.

Bernice We are known around here as "the party animals."

Denise We get invites to everything! Opening nights...

Bernice Closing nights.

Denise Tea parties...

Bernice Ski parties

Denise Last week we got an invite to the opening of an envelope.

Bernice Pool parties...

Denise April Fool parties...

Bernice Baby showers, after hours....

Denise Graduations, celebrations.... and of course... soirées.

Bernice That's French, that is.

Denise But of course we don't get invited to half as many parties as our step-sister Beauty.

Bernice No! She is little-miss popular pants.

Denise She gets sack-loads of invitations every day. Banquets, balls, block parties...

Bernice And she gets about 20 proposals of marriage every week.

Denise All from posh, rich suitors.

Bernice I like a posh, rich suitor.

Denise So do I, Bernice.

Bernice But we're not bitter, are we Denise?

Denise No! Not bitter at all.

Beauty walks over to her step-sisters.

Beauty Hello Bernice, hello Denise. How nice of you to come to my party.

Bernice Well, we didn't have much choice, did we?

Denise Father said we had to come or he'd stop our allowance.

Bernice Who are those two gorgeous men waiting outside?

Beauty They've come to ask for my hand.

Bernice We'd give them more than our hands, wouldn't we Denise?

Denise Too right. They could have our heads and shoulders, knees and toes.

Bernice And eyes and ears and mouth and nose.

Denise Let's go, Bernice. We shouldn't be seen talking to her.

Bernice She's *so* uncool.

Beauty I am not uncool!

Denise You are!

Beauty I am not!

Bernice You are!

Beauty Leave me alone!

Dame Peekaboo the cook enters, carrying a tray of nibbles.

Dame Peekaboo For heaven's sake, ladies. Stop squabbling!

Bernice We weren't talking to you, Mary Berry

Dame Peekaboo Why don't you make yourselves useful? Go and hand out these Twiglets to the guests.

Bernice, Denise and Beauty run off.

Dame Peekaboo *(to audience)* Hello, everyone! Nice to meet you! My name's Dame Peekaboo. I'm the cook around here. I also do all the other chores as well: I have to clean the floors, polish the doors, tidy the drawers and stock the stores. But seeing all your lovely smiling faces has cheered me right up. I tell you what, every time you see me why don't you shout out "How are you, Peekaboo?" Can you do that?

Audience Yes!

Dame Peekaboo Let's have a little practice, shall we?

She runs off and comes on again.

Dame Peekaboo Yoo hoo!

Audience How are you, Peekaboo?

Dame Peekaboo What was that??? I could hardly hear you! Let's try it again.

She runs off again and comes back on.

Dame Peekaboo Yoo hoo!

Audience How are you, Peekaboo?

Dame Peekaboo That's more like it! I'm sure we're all going to be the very best of friends. I tell you what, later in the show I'll teach you my favourite song. Would you like that, boys and girls?

Audience Yes!

Dame Peekaboo Now, let me tell you a bit about myself. Unfortunately, I am a poor window...

Audience Aaaahhhhhh!

Dame Peekaboo Come on, you know the drill. It's sadder than that.

Audience Aaaahhhhhh!

Dame Peekaboo Thank you. Much appreciated, I'm sure. It's quite tricky running the kitchen in this place. My master, Tom Goodenough is a nice old fella - I could quite fancy him on a good day - But his step-daughters are a bloomin' nightmare and they have some *very* unusual eating habits. Bernice will only eat things that rhyme with "beans". So I can only give her greens, nectarines, sardines and tangerines. Meanwhile, Denise will only eat meals that rhyme with "pepperoni". So, I have to cook her baloney, cannelloni, macaroni, minestrone and rigatoni. If you think that's odd, their father likes to eat snails, which posh people call "escargot". Every day, snails, snails, snails. He says it's because he can't stand fast food. And Tom's youngest daughter Beauty eats loads of yoghurt. She says it's good for her skin, but I think it's because she's so cultured.

Enter Lampard, the sheep.

Dame Peekaboo Oh, and this is Lampard, my pet sheep.

Lampard (*To audience*) Evening.

Lampard stares intensely at the audience.

Dame Peekaboo It's a rare breed of talking sheep from the Shetlands. It's quite intelligent but it does have a tendency to stare. Lampard, stop staring at the boys and girls.

Lampard I'm not staring.

Dame Peekaboo You are staring. Look at me.

Lampard quickly looks at Peekaboo. But his head then slowly moves back to stare at the audience.

Dame Peekaboo You're doing it again.

Lampard I'm not.

Dame Peekaboo Lampard keeps me company when I'm outside looking after my little garden. Actually, I was going to plant a *herb* garden...

Lampard But she couldn't find the thyme.

Dame Peekaboo Lampard! I've told you before, do not jump in and do my punchlines.

Lampard Sorry.

Dame Peekaboo Where was I? Oh yes, I was going to plant a herb garden...

Lampard But she had to “Herb Her Enthusiasm”.

Dame Peekaboo Lampard! You did it again.

Lampard Sorry.

Dame Peekaboo (*To Lampard*) And stop staring at the audience!

Lampard I am not staring!!!

Dame Peekaboo What else can I tell you about herb gardens?

Lampard There’s never a dill moment?

Dame Peekaboo Oh, get out of here!!!

Lampard I’m going, I’m going.

Exit Lampard.

Dame Peekaboo That bloomin’ sheep. It’ll be the death of me. Now let me tell you about the family. Bernice and Denise are both *very* jealous of their step-sisters’ good looks. Every man in the village wants to marry Beauty, but Bernice and Denise are just getting snogged and avoided. They are desperate, I can tell you. Desperate! It makes me grateful that I am such an attractive woman. I’ve never had any problem at all getting a man. I think it must be my natural charisma...

Song 2

Dame Peekaboo sings a song about being sexy. At the end of the number Goodenough enters with Bertie and Aubrey.

Goodenough This way gentlemen.

Aubrey (*Very posh*) I say! What a simply delightful house!

Bertie (*Even posher*) Yes! It’s quite super-duper! I’m sure I saw it on Grand Designs!

Dame Peekaboo (*To audience*) Oh dear, who are these two clowns?

Aubrey (*To Goodenough*) Who designed the wallpaper?

Goodenough B&Q.

Aubrey How charming.

Aubrey Allow me to introduce myself. I am Aubrey Oxlade-Chamberlain Huffington.

Bertie And I am Lord Bertie Piddle-Hinton.

Goodenough Dame Peekaboo, these gentlemen will be eating with us.

Dame Peekaboo Certainly, master. *(To Aubrey)* Any food allergies?

Aubrey Yes, we're both allergic to shellfish.

Bertie What's for dinner?

Dame Peekaboo Shellfish.

Aubrey Ah!

Dame Peekaboo Don't worry, I'll rustle up a couple of omelettes.

Dame Peekaboo exits.

Goodenough What brings you two gentlemen here?

Bertie I should have thought that was obvious, sir!

Aubrey We want to marry your daughter.

Goodenough My daughter? Which daughter?

Bertie You have more than one daughter?

Goodenough Why, yes. I have three.

Bernice runs on. She latches herself onto Bertie.

Goodenough This is Bernice...

Bernice *(To Bertie)* Hello, sweetie!

Denise dashes on and hooks her arm into Aubrey's.

Goodenough This is Denise...

Denise *(To Aubrey)* Come here, big boy.

Enter Beauty, who stands between the two gentlemen and her step-sisters.

Goodenough And this is... Beauty.

Beauty Hello.

(Beat)

Aubrey Oh, my! This girl is quite beautiful.

Bertie She looks so innocent and pure of heart.

Bertie & Aubrey both drop down on one knee.

Bertie & Aubrey *(Together, to Beauty)* Will you marry me?

(Beat)

Bernice & Denise We will! We will!

Bertie What?

Goodenough That's settled, then. You have officially proposed to my daughters...

Aubrey No!

Goodenough In front of witnesses...

Bertie But...

Goodenough And they have both accepted your proposal.

Bernice & Denise *(Jumping up and down)* Yippee!

Bertie *(to Aubrey)* Aubrey...

Aubrey *(to Bertie)* Yes, Bertie?

Bertie What just happened?

Aubrey I think we got engaged.

Beauty Congratulations, gentlemen! I hope you'll be very happy.

Bertie Can I just say...

Dame Peekaboo enters with some party guests.

Dame Peekaboo Yoo hoo!

Audience How are you, Peekaboo?

Dame Peekaboo I'm very well thank you. And thanks for asking. Oooh I do love an engagement. (*Aside*) And so early in the show.

Goodenough I hereby announce the engagement of my two lovely daughters to these two (*cough*)... fortunate young gentlemen.

Aubrey and Bertie Help!!!

Aubrey and Bertie run off in a panic.

Dame Peekaboo I think that calls for a song, don't you?

Song 3

Dame Peekaboo and Denise & Bernice lead everyone in a big celebratory song. At the end of the song, curtain.

Scene 2

Elvinia enters on tabs. Lighting suggests Fairyland.

Elvinia Hello, you horrible bunch. Are you still here?

Audience Boooooooo!

Elvinia Would you care to see the results of the little "makeover" I did for Prince Leopold?

Audience Boooooooo!

Elvinia He's trying to hide himself away from the public, but I thought you might like an exclusive... private viewing.

Audience Boooooooo!

Elvinia "And now behold a frightful scene,
A ghastly, gruesome, grim imposter,
Prince Leopold the handsome royal
Has now become a hideous monster."

Thunder and lighting. Demonic music. The Beast enters and kneels in shadow. Elvinia moves towards him.

Elvinia Prince Leopold?

The Beast (*looking down*) Yes.

Elvinia Or, should I call you... The Beast?

Another crash of demonic music. The prince looks up. A spotlight illuminates his face which is now that of a frightful monster.

Elvinia You've turned out to be even more repulsive than I imagined. Do you like the prince's new look, boys and girls?

Audience No!

Elvinia (*To the prince*) I tell you what Leopold. Can I call you Leopold? I'm a reasonable woman. This spell is still entirely reversible.

The Beast Is it?

Elvinia Of course. You only have to agree to do one little thing.

The Beast What's that?

Elvinia Why, marry me, of course. Surely you would do anything for love?

The Beast Yes. But I won't do that.

Elvinia (*To audience*) I'm sure I've heard that somewhere before.

The Beast Leave me in peace!

Elvinia By the time I've finished with you, you will rest in peace forever!

Elvinia conjures more thunder and lightning.

Elvinia "My patience now is wearing thin,
So here your torment shall begin.
If you'll not take me as your wife,
You'll live a miserable, lonely life!"

Take him away!

The Beast's butler Bernard enters and leads him slowly off stage, his back painfully hunched.

Elvinia (*To audience*) Not entirely the outcome I was hoping for, but there's nothing like an evil curse to start the day off with a bang!

Enter the good fairy Aurora.

Aurora Elvinia!

Elvinia *(To audience)* Oh, here she comes....

Aurora You hateful, wicked creature!

Elvinia *(To Aurora)* Get out of here! *(To audience)* There's nothing worse than a good fairy. They are so *pleased* with themselves.

Aurora You are mean, conceited and vain, Elvinia! Just because that poor man won't marry you, that is no reason to torture him!

Elvinia And what exactly are *you* going to do about it, Aurora? You know very well that my magic is every bit as powerful as yours.

Aurora Then, how shall we settle this?

Elvinia Well, how about a little... wager?

Aurora A wager?

Elvinia Yes. A simple challenge. Good versus evil.

Aurora What do you propose? Arm wrestling?

Elvinia No.

Aurora Table tennis?

Elvinia Don't be facetious.

Aurora Then what?

Elvinia Here is my proposal. If you can find a girl who will fall in love with the Beast, then I will lift the curse and set him free.

Aurora You promise?

Elvinia I solemnly swear.

Aurora That is a fiendish challenge indeed.

Elvinia And just to make it interesting we'll have a shilling on the side.

Aurora Very well. I accept.

Elvinia It would have to be a girl who is truly pure of heart.

Aurora Yes.

Elvinia A girl who can see past the frightful exterior of the Beast and learn to love the man inside.

Aurora You don't have to explain it, Elvinia, I think we all get the idea.

Elvinia Just to be clear.

Aurora Actually, I think I know the very girl.

Elvinia Impossible!

Aurora Don't be so sure.

Elvinia What's her name?

Aurora Well, I'm not going to tell you, am I? You'd probably go and put a curse on her too.

Elvinia I wouldn't do that, would I boys and girls?

Audience Yes!!!

Aurora There's no time to lose. I shall start straight away on my quest.

Elvinia Good luck, Fairy Aurora. You'll need it!

Elvinia and Aurora exit in different directions.

Scene 3

Tab's open on Beauty's House. Next morning. Dame Peekaboo and some of the guests are tidying up after the party.

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* Yoo hoo!

Audience How are you, Peekaboo?

Dame Peekaboo I'm very well, thank you, and thanks for asking. It turned out to be quite a *wild* party last night. But what a bloomin' mess! There's red wine on the white carpet, white wine on the red carpet...

Enter Lampard carrying a traffic cone.

Lampard And I just found this traffic cone.

Dame Peekaboo Where was it?

Lampard Under the sofa with a couple of road signs.

Dame Peekaboo Oh, dear.

Lampard There is also someone asleep in the sink.

Dame Peekaboo The sink?

Lampard I tried to wake him up but he just rolled over. And then his bottom spoke.

Dame Peekaboo Oh dear. What did it say?

Lampard It said... *(he makes the sound of passing wind)*

Dame Peekaboo What was that again?

Lampard makes the sound again.

Dame Peekaboo Mm. That sounds like the vicar. I'd better take him a cup of coffee, he's got a christening at three.

Lampard And I'll go and fish that shopping trolley out of the lake.

Exit Peekaboo and Lampard.

Dame Peekaboo Look out, it's the Cheeky Girls!

Enter Bernice and Denise.

Bernice Well, that was a night to remember!

Denise Was it?

Bernice Don't you recall doing your impression of Lady Gaga on the kitchen table?

Denise Nope!

Bernice Do you remember trying to water ski across the fish pond?

Denise Oh! I wondered why I woke up with a water lily behind my ear.

Bernice I'm sure you must recall getting engaged.

Denise Oh, yes! How could I forget that?

Bernice What a magical moment!

Denise Where are our fiancés?

Bernice I just caught Bertie trying to abseil out of the bathroom window.

Denise Oh, dear.

Bernice I had to wrestle him to the ground and then sit on him until he stopped kicking.

Denise I last saw Aubrey attempting to clamber into the back of an Uber.

Bernice Bless him.

Denise I pulled him out and dragged him back into the house by his ears.

Bernice You have to let 'em know who's boss.

Denise Oh, yes!

Bernice Heads up! Here they come now.

Enter Bertie and Aubrey.

Bernice / Denise *(together)* Good morning, boys!

Aubrey / Bertie *(together, exhausted)* Good morning, ladies.

Bernice and Denise run and grab their fiancés by the arm.

Bernice What would you like for breakfast, flirty Bertie?

Aubrey Our freedom?

Bernice That's witty. Isn't that witty, Denise?

Denise Very droll.

Bertie Actually, I am a bit hungry. Do you have any Rice Crispies?

Bernice Rice Crispies?

Bertie They snap, crackle and pop.

Bernice You're making me snap, crackle and pop.

Bertie Am I?

Bernice Oh yes. Feel my heart.

Bertie puts his hand on Bernice's heart. SFX bongo drums.

Bertie Oh, I say.

Denise *(To Aubrey)* What can I get for you, chu-chi face?

Aubrey Shredded Wheat?

Denise How many would you like?

Aubrey I'll have the same number as you?

Denise I usually have ten.

Aubrey Ten Shredded Wheat?

Denise With Heinz Spaghetti on top.

Aubrey Ughh!

Bernice It puts hair on her chest.

Denise Come on Bernice, let's go and make ourselves beautiful for the boys.

Bernice I'm going to pluck my chin.

Denise You can help me shave my legs.

Denise / Bernice *(Together)* See you later!

Aubrey *(To Bertie)* This is going to get worse before it gets better, isn't it?

Bertie Oh, yes.

Song 4

Bertie & Aubrey sing a song together. At the end of the song, they exit.

Curtain.

Enter Goodenough and Beauty on tabs. He is holding a letter.

Goodenough Beauty, I have to travel to the city today.

Beauty Oh?

Goodenough I've been called to an urgent meeting. I've no idea what it's about.

Beauty Don't worry, father. I'll keep an eye on everything while you're away.

Goodenough Thank you, Beauty.

Bernice and Denise run on.

Bernice / Denise (*Together*) Step-father!

Goodenough (*Sighing*) Hello, ladies.

Bernice Did we hear you correctly?

Denise You're going to London?

Goodenough Yes!

Denise London!!!

Bernice Can we come?

Goodenough Absolutely not!

Denise Pretty please.

Goodenough No.

Bernice Then you must bring us some presents!

Denise From Oxford Street!

Bernice And Carnaby Street!

Denise And Bond Street!

Bernice I need a new hat!

Denise I want a new dress!

Bernice A new coat!

Denise A silk scarf!

Bernice Oooh, and some lovely sparkly jewellery?

Denise And shoes!

Bernice O.M.G., lots and lots of shoes!

Denise I love shoes!

Goodenough Ladies, ladies, I have a meeting in London. I won't have time to go shopping for you!

Denise (*To Bernice*) Well, I never did! That is *so* hash-tag selfish!

Bernice We're way more important than meetings.

Bernice We're more important than anything!

Denise I'm going to throw myself on my bed and sulk!

Bernice I'm going to throw myself on my fiancé!

Denise and Bernice run off.

Goodenough Oh dear, whatever am I going to do with those two? They only ever think of themselves.

Beauty Father...

Goodenough Yes, Beauty?

Beauty I only desire one thing.

Goodenough What's that?

Beauty That you return home safely.

Goodenough Aw! Thank you, Beauty. That's a very kind thing to say. I'm sure I'll find time to get a little gift for you.

Beauty Really, father there's no need.

Goodenough I insist. But don't tell your step-sisters.

Goodenough and Beauty hug. Enter Aurora in a single spotlight.

Aurora Hello! Sorry to interrupt again, but it's time for another update from fairyland. If you haven't already guessed, it was *me* who wrote that letter to Beauty's father. When he's on his way to London he'll get caught in an enchanted storm. He'll fall from his horse, and in search of shelter he will stray into the grounds of The Beast's castle. And it's there that this magical story will truly begin...

Fairy music. Goodenough and Beauty exit. Curtain.

On tabs, Aurora is joined by a company of little fairies.

Song 5

Aurora and the fairies sing a song about dreams coming true. At the end of the song, they all exit.

Scene 4

Tabs open to reveal the garden outside Beauty's House. Dame Peekaboo and Lampard the sheep are on stage. Peekaboo is standing behind a raised section of garden soil. She is prodding at the soil with a little trowel. Lampard is next to a table which is covered with a selection of vegetable plants in pots. There is plastic sheeting on the stage.

Dame Peekaboo Come on you lot! Time to make yourselves useful!

Enter Bertie, Aubrey, Bernice and Denise.

Denise I hate being useful. It's against my principles.

Bernice I'd much rather be painting my toenails. *(To Bertie)* Or even better, painting your toenails, flirty Bertie.

Bertie Get off!

Aubrey What do we have to do, Peekaboo?

Dame Peekaboo You are going to help me and Lampard plant some vegetables in the kitchen garden.

Aubrey Ugh! I hate vegetables.

Denise And I hate that sheep. He's always staring at me.

Dame Peekaboo Lampard stop staring at Denise!

Lampard Sorry.

Bernice Vegetables are way too healthy.

Denise We like chicken nuggets and skinny fries.

Bernice And onion rings.

Dame Peekaboo Oh, stop moaning! Come and stand over here.

Bertie, Aubrey, Bernice and Denise stand behind the raised section of soil.

Dame Peekaboo And keep your eyes peeled. There are a lot of moles in the garden at this time of year.

Bertie Moles?

Lampard Little furry animals that live underground.

Denise I thought moles were imaginary.

Bernice Like gnomes.

Dame Peekaboo No! Moles are real. They tunnel under the earth and pull the vegetables down before we can pull them up.

Aubrey Well, I never.

Bertie How utterly beastly.

Lampard gives Bertie a flowerpot with a spinach plant in it.

Lampard Here you are, Bertie. You can start by planting this.

Using a little trowel, Bertie plants his spinach in the soil. Lampard hands out three more plants to the others.

Dame Peekaboo Aubrey can plant the cauliflower, Bernice can plant the lettuce, and Denise can plant the celery.

Dame Peekaboo walks over to the table - her back turned to the others. They all quickly plant their vegetables in the earth.

Suddenly, a mole (hand puppet) pops up at the end of the row of vegetables. It looks around, then quickly disappears. The audience react.

Bertie Bernice...

Bernice Yes Bertie?

Bertie I think I saw a mole.

Bernice A mole?

Bertie Yes, a mole in a hole.

Bernice Where?

Bertie There.

Bernice Did you see a mole in a hole, boys and girls?

Audience Yes!!!

Bernice Where?

Audience There!!!

Another mole appears next to the cauliflower plant. It looks around then disappears. Almost immediately the cauliflower is yanked down into the soil. Dame Peekaboo turns around.

Dame Peekaboo (To Aubrey) Aubrey, I thought I told you to plant that cauliflower.

Aubrey I *did* plant the cauliflower.

Dame Peekaboo (To Aubrey) Well, where is it? Did you see what happened to the cauliflower, boys and girls?

Audience Yes!!!

Lampard What happened? Was it the mole?

Audience Yes!!!

Dame Peekaboo I'll go and get another cauliflower.

Dame Peekaboo returns to the table - her back once again turned to the others. Lampard hands her a cauliflower.

Another mole pops up and runs backwards and forwards along the line of vegetables. As soon as it disappears, the spinach, lettuce and celery plants are all pulled down into the soil, one after the another.

Dame Peekaboo turns around.

Dame Peekaboo Where are all the vegetables? Did you see what happened, Lampard?

Lampard No.

Dame Peekaboo Did you see what happened, boys and girls?

Audience Yes!!!

Lampard Was it another mole?

Audience Yes!!!

Dame Peekaboo Right! This is not over!

Dame Peekaboo quickly replants four new vegetables. Within seconds two moles appear, look around, then quickly vanish. One by one, all four vegetables disappear into the soil.

Aubrey Crikey! Did you see that?

Denise This is hopeless.

Lampard What are we going to?

Dame Peekaboo There's only one thing for it.

Lampard What?

Dame Peekaboo There is something that moles hate more than anything?

Bertie Brussels sprouts?

Dame Peekaboo No.

Aubrey Marmite?

Dame Peekaboo No.

Bernice Is it Dominic Cummings?

Dame Peekaboo No. It's a well-known fact that moles cannot stand water.

Dame Peekaboo runs off.

Lampard (*To the audience*) I can see where this is going.

Dame Peekaboo returns with an armful of big water pistols.

Dame Peekaboo These water pistols should do the trick.

She hands them out.

Dame Peekaboo One for you, one for you, one for you, one for you, one for Lampard and one for me.

Aubrey Oh goody! Water pistols.

Dame Peekaboo Keep your eyes peeled, everyone!

They all stand in a line and point their water pistols at the soil.

Lampard I don't think the moles are going to come out now.

Dame Peekaboo They will. We just have to be patient.

A mole slowly appears. Aubrey squirts it with water and it disappears again.

Ad lib several moles pop up and Dame Peekaboo, Bernice, Aubrey, Denise Bernice and Lampard each squirt them with water. Now and again, a little of the water misses the moles and hits the audience. Eventually, the moles stop appearing.

Bertie I think we've done it. The moles have gone away.

Dame Peekaboo I wouldn't bank on it.

Lampard They've probably just called for reinforcements.

At that moment, a very large mole appears upstage. (This time it's not a puppet, it's a person in a mole suit.) The mole is armed with two large pump-action water pistols. Dame Peekaboo and the others do not see it at first. The audience react.

Aubrey What's that boys and girls? Can you see another mole?

Audience Yes!!!

Bernice Where is it?

Audience Behind you!!!

Denise Is it behind us?

Audience Yes!!!

They all turn around.

Dame Peekaboo Wow, that is one big mole!

Lampard I'll bet he eats Shredded Wheat for breakfast.

All Run away!

The mole chases them all around the stage, squirting them with water.

Lampard What do you suggest we do now?

Dame Peekaboo There's only one thing for it, Lampard.

Aubrey What's that?

Dame Peekaboo We'll have to do a song.

Blackout. Curtain.

Song 6

On tabs, Dame Peekaboo, Lampard, Bertie, Aubrey, Bernice and Denise enter. They do a comedy song and the big mole does a little dance to accompany them. After the song they all exit.

Scene 5

Tabs open to reveal the rose garden of The Beast's domain. Evening. On the backdrop we can see his tall castle towering above the grounds. Downstage is a neat little row of rose bushes.

Enter the Beast's butler Bernard and a servant called Mrs Pickles.

Mrs Pickles Oh, Bernard, I haven't seen Prince Leopold for days.

Bernard Mrs Pickles, you know the master now only comes out of his rooms after dark.

Mrs Pickles I feel so sorry for him. He's no longer free to come and go as he pleases.

Bernard Not since Elvinia placed that curse on him.

Mrs Pickles Leopold is such a kind man. I suppose he just doesn't want to frighten people.

Bernard Indeed. That wicked fairy has made the master a prisoner in his own castle.

Mrs Pickles If only there was something we could do to help.

Bernard It's getting dark. He will be out soon and will wish to walk in the castle grounds alone.

Exit Bernard and Mrs Pickles. Enter Tom Goodenough. He looks lost...

Goodenough *(To audience)* Did you see that terrible storm? My horse reared up and threw me from the saddle. I awoke with this big bump on my head and my horse had run away. I seem to have been walking for hours. I am completely lost.

Goodenough notices the little rose garden.

Goodenough My, what a lovely rose garden! I did promise I'd get a little present for Beauty, and one of those beautiful red roses would make a perfect gift.

Goodenough crosses to the rose bushes. He checks to see that no-one is about..

Goodenough I'm sure no-one would mind if I picked just one little rose.

He picks a rose. As he does so, The Beast appears. Goodenough is clearly shaken by the sight of his face.

The Beast *(Furious)* Stop! Step away from that bush!

Goodenough backs away.

The Beast Who told you that you could take one of my roses?

Goodenough I'm sorry. I - I... didn't know they belonged to you.

The Beast Guards! Seize him!

Two castle guards appear and grab hold of Goodenough's arms.

The Beast What is your name?

Goodenough Tom Goodenough. I fell from my horse during the storm. I'm lost.

The Beast Storm? There has been no storm!

Goodenough *(To audience)* That's odd.

The Beast Now you listen to me, Tom Goodenough! See that castle?

Goodenough Yes.

The Beast *(Getting angrier)* That's *my* castle. These castle grounds are *my* castle grounds.

Goodenough I understand.

The Beast The castle is mine, the castle grounds are mine, the rose garden is mine. Are you following this so far?

Goodenough Yes.

The Beast That rose bush is mine and therefore, the rose you are holding in your hand belongs to...

Goodenough You?

The Beast Yes!!!

Goodenough Sir, you have my most humble apologies.

The Beast Do I? And what possible use is that to me if you have my rose?

Goodenough What are you going to do with me?

The Beast You are a thief, sir! You have broken the law! How do you plead?

Goodenough Guilty?

The Beast Very well. In this land the penalty for theft is... death.

Goodenough Death? That's a bit harsh!

The Beast What can I tell you, Tom? These are the dark ages.

Goodenough Yes.

The Beast But, since you have confessed to the crime, I shall reduce your sentence...

Goodenough Thank you!

The Beast From death to... life imprisonment!

Goodenough Life?

The Beast In my dungeons, yes. Do you have a lawyer?

Goodenough No.

The Beast Then I shall pass sentence.

Goodenough But... I picked the rose for my daughter!

The Beast Your daughter?

Goodenough I promised her a gift.

The Beast How very touching.

Goodenough My daughter's name is "Beauty". She is famed throughout the kingdom for her....

The Beast Let me guess. Her skill at badminton?

Goodenough No.

The Beast For restoring old clocks?

Goodenough No.

The Beast Could it be for her... beauty?

Goodenough Yes. The clue is in the name.

The Beast I see.

Goodenough I beg you, don't throw me into a dungeon for the rest of my life! Beauty's heart would be broken..

The Beast You love your daughter very much, don't you?

Goodenough Of course I do. She is kind, and gentle, and so caring...

The Beast Then, Beauty shall have her rose. And I shall overlook your minor offence.

Goodenough Thank you!

The Beast In return, you can do something for me.

Goodenough Anything!

The Beast You must swear that you will return and visit me again.

Goodenough I swear.

The Beast And both you and your daughter Beauty shall be my guests at the castle.

Goodenough Both of us?

The Beast Tom, I do not have many guests. The way I look tends to frighten people.

Goodenough Oh, I find that very hard to believe. You are a very handsome... creature.

The Beast You're just being kind, Tom. But we both know the truth.

Goodenough I will be more than happy to visit you again. And yes, I shall bring my daughter to meet you.

The Beast Excellent! But first you must join me for dinner this evening.

Goodenough Dinner?

The Beast Then, I shall lend you a fresh horse and you can return home.

Goodenough That's very generous of you.

The Beast Don't mention it. *(To the audience)* It's quite a while since anyone called me generous. *(Calling offstage)* Bernard!

Enter Bernard.

Bernard Yes, master?

The Beast Bernard, this gentlemen will be eating with me this evening. Show him to the dining room.

Bernard Very well. *(To Goodenough)* Follow me, sir.

Bernard, Goodenough and the castle guards exit. The Beast walks downstage. The tabs close behind him.

The Beast *(to audience)* I cannot believe that I seriously considered taking that man's life. Simply for picking a rose in my garden. Am I truly turning into a beast? The smallest thing sends me into a furious rage. I must guard my temper well.

Song 7

The Beast sings a song. At the end of the number, fade to black.

Scene 6

Tabs open to reveal Beauty's House. Bertie, Bernice, Aubrey and Denise are on stage. There is a row of 4 chairs in the centre of the room.

Enter Dame Peekaboo.

Dame Peekaboo *(To the audience)* Yoo hoo!

Audience How are you, Peekaboo!

Dame Peekaboo *(To the audience)* I'm very well, thank you, boys and girls. And thanks for asking. *(To the others)* What are you lot up to?

Denise We are playing musical chairs.

Dame Peekaboo Ooh! That's my favourite game.

Bernice You can help if you like.

Dame Peekaboo Ooh, goody! Yes please!

Denise *(To Peekaboo)* You can be the one who takes the chairs away after each round.

Dame Peekaboo Leave it to me. But no cheating!

Bernice We never cheat!

Dame Peekaboo Now, let's see. There's one, two, three, four, of you and one, two, three, four chairs. We need to take one chair away!

Bertie But if you take a chairs away, one of us won't have anywhere to sit!

Dame Peekaboo That's the idea of the game, you nitwit!

Bertie Is it?

Dame Peekaboo Yes!

Bernice He's too posh to stand up!

Peekaboo picks up a chair and walks off with it stage left. Music starts. Bertie, Bernice, Aubrey and Denise walk around the chairs.

Before Peekaboo comes back on, Lampard dashes on from stage right and places a new chair next to the others, before running off again. Peekaboo enters, clapping along to the music..

Dame Peekaboo "Round and round the chairs you go, like a silly so and so, circle round without delay, till the music goes away!"

The music stops abruptly. They all sit on a chair.

All Hoorah!

Dame Peekaboo Hold on a minute! How come there's still four chairs? Did you cheat?

All No!

Dame Peekaboo Did they cheat, boys and girls?

Audience Yes /No /It was Lampard!

Dame Peekaboo Right, this time I'm going to take away two chairs.

Peekaboo picks up two chairs and walks off with them stage left. Music starts. Bertie, Bernice, Aubrey and Denise walk around the two remaining chairs.

Lampard runs on with two chairs and places them next to the others before dashing off again. Peekaboo comes back on.

Dame Peekaboo (*Clapping*) "Round and round the chairs you go, like a silly so and so, circle round without delay, till the music goes away!"

The music stops abruptly. They all sit on a chair.

All Hoorah!

Dame Peekaboo Wait a minute, there's *still* four chairs! Did you cheat again?

All No!

Dame Peekaboo Did they cheat again, boys and girls?

Audience Yes /No /It was Lampard!

Dame Peekaboo Right, I'm going to put a stop to all this.

Bernice We're not cheating

Aubrey Honestly we're not!

Dame Peekaboo Listen to me, you lot! This time I'm going to take away all the chairs but one, and I'm going to keep a very close eye on all of you.

Peekaboo stacks three chairs and takes them off stage left. Music starts. While Peekaboo is still off stage left, Lampard dashes on with four chairs and puts them next to the remaining one. There are now five chairs on stage. This time Lampard joins in the game.

Dame Peekaboo comes on again.

Dame Peekaboo (*Clapping*) “Round and round the chairs you go, like a silly so and so, circle round without delay, till the music goes away!”

The music stops abruptly. They all sit on a chair.

Dame Peekaboo Hold on a minute. Now we’ve got more chairs than we started with!

Denise Wow, that’s spooky.

Dame Peekaboo (*To Lampard*) And what are you doing here?

Lampard Playing musical chairs.

Dame Peekaboo I can see that!

Bertie I say, a talking sheep!

Dame Peekaboo I’ve had enough of this. You all cheated again!

All We didn’t

Dame Peekaboo You did!

Bertie Oh, no we didn’t!

Dame Peekaboo Oh, yes you did!

All Oh, no we didn’t!

Audience Oh, yes you did!

Ad lib with audience.

Dame Peekaboo Well, if you’re not going to take this game seriously, I refuse to play anymore.

Enter Goodenough.

Goodenough Hello, everyone! Sorry to interrupt your game.

Dame Peekaboo (*To Goodenough*) Don’t mention it, Tom. (*To the others*) Go on, get lost you lot! Bunch of cheats!

Lampard Spoilsport!

Lampard, Aubrey, Denise, Bertie and Bernice each grab a chair and run off.

Dame Peekaboo (*Calling off*) Beauty, your father's here!

Beauty runs on and throws her arms around her dad.

Beauty Father! You're home!

The pair walk downstage and the tabs close behind them.

Goodenough Yes, Beauty. But I've got something to tell you.

Beauty Is it about your business trip?

Goodenough In a way, yes.

Beauty Why are you looking so worried? What's wrong?

Goodenough Well, on my way to London there was a terrible storm.

Beauty That's odd. The weather here has been glorious since you left.

Goodenough That is rather strange, isn't it? Anyway, my horse was frightened by the thunder and ran away. I was looking for shelter when I came to the grounds of a castle.

Beauty A castle! How exciting!

Goodenough The castle garden was full of roses.

Beauty I love roses.

Goodenough I know. That's why I picked one for you.

He gives Beauty the red rose.

Beauty How lovely! It smells wonderful! Thank you father.

Goodenough I'm afraid that's not the end of the story, Beauty.

Beauty Oh?

Goodenough A monster appeared. He had the body of a man and the head of a beast.

Beauty But... that's terrifying!

Goodenough The beast said he was going to punish me for stealing the rose from his garden. I pleaded with him and he finally agreed to let me come home. But...

Beauty But what?!

Goodenough He made me swear that I'd return.

Beauty Return? But you can't go back to a monster's castle!

Goodenough There's something else.

Beauty Something else?

Goodenough I'm so sorry, Beauty. I should never have promised it...

Beauty Promised what?

Goodenough I said I would take *you* to meet the beast. I gave him my word.

Beauty I see. Well, father you always taught us that we must keep our promises.

Goodenough Oh, Beauty...

Beauty Chives! Can you come here, please!

Enter Chives.

Chives (*To Beauty*) Miss Beauty, are you ok? You sound upset.

Beauty Will you please put this rose in some water.

Chives Ah! What a lovely rose!

Beauty And then I need you to help me pack a bag. I have to go away.

Chives Go away?

Beauty Yes, I have to go and visit a monster in a castle.

Chives Oh, get away with you. You're pulling my leg!

Goodenough I'm afraid Beauty is telling the truth.

Chives Really?

Beauty Yes. Father took that rose from a monster's garden and...

Goodenough It's complicated.

Chives Is the monster dangerous?

Goodenough I don't think so. Actually, he invited me to have dinner with him.

Chives Dinner?

Goodenough We had roast beef and Yorkshire pudding.

(Beat)

Chives *(To audience)* There's never a dull moment in this family.

Chives exits.

Beauty Come on, father, I'm sure everything will be fine.

They exit. Fade to black.

Scene 7

Tabs open to reveal the rose garden of The Beast's castle. Eerie lighting and mist. Elvinia appears in a single spotlight.

Elvinia *(To audience)* A thousand curses!

Audience Booooooo!

Elvinia *(To audience)* So, by using her puny, white magic, Aurora has succeeded in luring a beautiful girl to this castle!

Audience Booooooo!

Elvinia *(To audience)* Oh, shut your gobs, I'm trying to move the story forward! In the extremely unlikely event that Beauty falls in love with the Beast, my evil plan will be foiled and I shall be forced to lift the curse on Prince Leopold. What's worse is that I will have to give that wretched good fairy a shilling! But, you don't think I'm just going to stand by and let that happen, do you? You know what they say, boys and girls, if you don't cheat, you're not trying hard enough!

Audience Booooooo!

Elvinia *(To audience)* Time for an evil laugh, I think. Ah, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! See you later, peasants...

Elvinia exits. Lighting changes to an evening glow. Goodenough and Beauty enter.

Goodenough Well, we're here! The castle of the Beast.

Beauty Oh father, it's so beautiful. I was expecting something a bit more... creepy.

Goodenough Creepy?

Beauty With spiders' webs and bats flapping around everywhere.

Goodenough Bats? The Beast is not a vampire, Beauty. He's a Beast.

Beauty Should we go and ring the front door bell?

Goodenough No. I'm sure he will come to meet us.

The Beast appears. On seeing his frightful face, Beauty screams and leaps backwards in horror.

Beauty Aaggghhhhh!

The Beast Good evening.

Beauty I am so sorry, I didn't mean to scream like that.

The Beast Don't worry, I'm used to it. At least you didn't faint. Some people faint.

Beauty You just took me by surprise, that's all. I wasn't expecting you to be so....

The Beast Hideous?

Beauty That's not what I meant.

Goodenough This is my daughter, Beauty.

The Beast You are well named, my dear.

Beauty Thank you.

The Beast (*To Goodenough*). I must confess to being slightly surprised that you returned.

Goodenough A promise is a promise, sir.

The Beast Beauty, did you enjoy your rose?

Beauty Oh, yes, thank you. It was beautiful.

The Beast It came from one of my best rose bushes. As a matter of fact it was a prize-winner at the Chelsea Flower Show. Monty Don said it was one of the most beautiful rose plants he'd ever seen.

Beauty You obviously take a lot of care of your flowers.

The Beast I do, yes. I love my roses. That's why I was so angry when your father...

Beauty Let's talk about something else, shall we?

The Beast (*To Goodenough*) You must be very proud of your daughter.

Goodenough I am. I love her very much.

Beauty If you love others, then that love will surely be returned.

The Beast You would think so, wouldn't you? But when the people look at me, there is no love in their eyes. They are simply afraid.

Beauty I'm not afraid.

The Beast You do not need to be. You have nothing to fear from me.

Beauty I can sense that.

The Beast I'm glad.

Beauty In any case, my father is here to look after me.

The Beast Oh, dear. There's seems to be some confusion here. Your father cannot remain here.

Goodenough What?

The Beast Beauty must stay... alone.

Beauty No! Let him stay!

The Beast Beauty, your father agreed to bring you here.

Goodenough Yes, but...

The Beast (*To Beauty*) And now, you belong to me.

Goodenough I didn't know you meant that!

The Beast (*Menacingly*) Are you trying to go back on your promise?

Goodenough Beauty, I don't know what to do!

The Beast (*To Beauty*) Don't worry, my dear. You will be safe with me. You'll have everything your heart desires.

Beauty You're going to keep me as a prisoner?

The Beast "Prisoner" is such an ugly word. You will be my guest.

Beauty Guest?

Goodenough runs to Beauty and hugs her.

Goodenough What have I done???

Beauty Don't worry, father. I can take care of myself. I'm sure everything will turn out alright in the end.

Song 8

Goodenough and Beauty sing a duet together. At the end of the song...

The Beast Guards! Show this man out of the castle grounds!

Two castle guards appear. They grab Goodenough roughly.

Goodenough Beauty! I'm sorry!!!

Beauty Oh, father!
The guards march Goodenough off stage.

The Beast (*To Beauty*) Come, my dear.

The prince takes Beauty's hand and they begin to exit.

The Beast I shall give you a tour of the castle.

Beauty Wait!

Beauty stops and bends down to look at the roses.

The Beast Beauty, you will have plenty of time to admire the roses. In fact, you will have the rest of your life...

Blackout. Curtain.

ACT TWO

Scene 1

Tabl open to reveal a grand ballroom in The Beast's castle. There is a very long table centre stage. The Beast's servants are setting the table for dinner and generally tidying and cleaning the room.

Enter the butler, Bernard. Music begins...

Bernard Come on, chop, chop! I want this place looking spick and span. Polish the silver! Lay the table, and set a great big crackling log fire in the grate. The master has a very special guest!

Song 9

Bernard leads a lively, welcoming number with the servants. After the song Beauty and the Beast enter. They sit at opposite ends of the very long table. Bernard pours the Beast a goblet of wine.

The Beast *(To Beauty)* Good evening, my dear. Are you hungry?

Beauty *(Calling out)* Pardon?

The Beast *(Calling out)* I said "Are you hungry?"

Beauty *(Calling out)* I'm sorry, I can't hear you! This is a very long table.

The Beast *(Calling out)* What?

Beauty *(Calling out)* I said, it's a very long table! You're too far away!

The Beast *(Calling out)* You'll have to speak up. *(Beat)* It's a very long table.

Beauty *(Calling out)* Sorry?

The Beast *(Calling out)* I said, you'll have to speak more loudly.

Beauty *(Calling out)* Right!

The Beast *(To Bernard)* Bernard, Beauty cannot hear me.

Bernard I am aware of that, master. It's a very long table.

The Beast Could you please move my guest a little closer?

Bernard Yes, master.

Bernard walks to the other end of the table.

Bernard *(To Beauty)* Miss Beauty, the master asks that you join him at the other end of the table.

Beauty That's a good idea. *(Beat)* This is a very long table.

Bernard Indeed. Follow me.

Beauty stands up. She watches as Bernard moves her chair closer to the Beast. Then she goes and sits little more than an arm's length away from him.

Beauty That's much better. Why have you got such a very long table?

The Beast Pardon?

Beauty *(Calling out)* I said...

The Beast I'm only joking. I can hear you perfectly well now. I have a very long table because I used to have a very long list of friends. Of course, they have all deserted me now.

Beauty I'm sorry to hear that.

The Beast *(Indicating his face)* The reason is clear to see. Would you like a goblet of wine?

Beauty Thank you.

The Beast Bernard?

Bernard pours a goblet of wine for Beauty.

Beauty Thank you, Bernard.

The Beast Do you like my castle? It's Grade III listed, you know.

Beauty Is it?

The Beast Oh, yes.

Beauty It reminds me of a castle in a fairy story.

The Beast Really? Which fairy story?

Beauty I can't remember its name. It's about a pretty girl with two ugly sisters...

The Beast That sounds familiar. Does she meet a handsome prince?

Beauty Yes. Then she falls in love and lives happily ever after.

The Beast I only wish I could be your handsome prince. But I'm afraid that is no longer possible.

Beauty Can I ask a question?

The Beast Of course.

Beauty This is a ballroom, isn't it?

The Beast It used to be a ballroom. We've had some marvellous parties in here.

Beauty We'll then, why don't you start having parties again? You could make new friends.

The Beast No-one wants to come to a party at the castle anymore.

Beauty Have you asked them?

The Beast No.

Beauty Then how do you know? If you are kind and friendly and sociable, people will not care how you look.

The Beast If only that were true.

Beauty Well, you won't know until you try. Bernard!

Bernard Yes, Miss Beauty?

Beauty The prince is going to have a party.

Bernard Is he?

The Beast Am I?

Beauty Absolutely. A Grand Fancy Dress Ball!

The Beast Oh, I've just remembered the name of that fairy story!

Beauty What is it?

The Beast Cinderella!

Beauty Of course! Cinderella!

The Beast Will you come to my ball as Cinderella?

Beauty Yes. But only on one condition...

The Beast What's that?

Beauty You must be Prince Charming. You'll make a splendid prince.

The Beast Then I agree.

Beauty Excellent!

The Beast We shall hold a Grand Fancy Dress Ball! Bernard!

Bernard Yes, master?

The Beast Tell the servants. We have a lot of planning to do!

Blackout. Curtain.

Scene 2

From opposite sides of the stage, Elvinia and Aurora enter on tabs. Lighting suggests Fairyland.

Aurora Hello, boys and girls! It looks like my plan is working, doesn't it? Beauty is already starting to fall in love with the Beast!

Enter Elvinia in an eerie green light.

Audience Booooo!

Aurora Elvinia! How nice of you to join us! Soon you will have to admit defeat and lift your evil curse as we agreed!

Elvinia You foolish fairy! Do you really think I'm going stand by and let you humiliate me? This fairy tale is far from over!

Aurora Do your worst, you wicked sprite!

Elvinia You have not yet seen my worst, Aurora! I shall send a letter to Beauty, telling her that her father is gravely ill.

Aurora Ill?

Elvinia She will beg the Beast to let her go and he will of course forbid it.

Aurora But that would drive a wedge between them that can never be repaired!

Elvinia Exactly! It's a clever little twist, isn't it? One of my better ones, I think. Beauty will spend the rest of her days trapped in that castle with a monster who she despises!

Aurora Elvinia, that is the most despicable plan I've ever heard.

Elvinia Thank you. Now, if you will excuse me, I have a letter to write.

Elvinia exits.

Aurora *(To audience)* Don't worry, boys and girls. I'm sure true love will find a way.

Exit Aurora.

Scene 3

Tabs open to reveal the ballroom at The Beast's castle. It has been decorated and festooned for a party. To grand, triumphant music, the chorus enter one by one - each one dressed as a character from a fairy tale or pantomime.

Finally, Beauty enters with the Beast. They are dressed as Cinderella and Prince Charming. The Beast offers Beauty his arm then leads her to the centre of the dance floor.

Song 10

The couple perform a swirling and romantic dance together and sing a duet. At the end of the song, the guests disperse.

Beauty What a wonderful party. I'm having such a nice time.

The Beast I'm glad. Your presence has once again made the castle a splendid place to visit. I suppose the guests think I am wearing some kind of scary fancy dress.

Beauty Well, I think you look very handsome.

Bernard enters holding a letter on a silver tray.

Bernard I'm sorry to interrupt the party, Miss Beauty, but a person just delivered this letter for you.

Beauty A person?

Bernard A very strange person, as a matter of fact. To be honest, she gave me the willies.

The Beast She?

Bernard She did not leave a name.

Beauty opens the letter and reads it. She looks upset.

Bernard Is it bad news, Miss Beauty?

Beauty Yes. It says my father is ill.

The Beast That is bad news indeed. I will send Bernard to your father's house to see what is happening.

Beauty But, if my father is seriously ill, I must go and visit him right away.

The Beast My dear, you know that is impossible!

Beauty Impossible?

The Beast (*Angry*) I simply cannot allow it! You live here with me now!

Beauty I hate you!

Beauty runs off.

The Beast (*To the audience*) Well, that's certainly put a bit of a damper on the party.

Bernard Master, if Miss Beauty's father is ill then she needs to be with him.

The Beast Bernard, you know perfectly well that if I let her leave she will never return!

Bernard You cannot know that for sure.

The Beast Beauty has made me feel alive again. I love her.

Bernard Then you must let her go. And if she returns, you will know that she returns your love.

The Beast That's not a risk I am willing to take.

Bernard Master, you must. If not, I fear you may have already lost her heart.

The Beast Very well, Bernard. Bring Beauty to me.

Bernard exits.

Song 11

The Beast sings a heartfelt love song. At the end of the song Beauty is led onto the stage by Bernard. She dries her eyes. Bernard exits.

The Beast Beauty, if your father is ill you must go to him.

Beauty Do you mean it? It's not another trick?

The Beast No. You're free to go. Bernard can go with you for company.

Beauty (*Calmly*) Thank you. But what made you change your mind?

The Beast I should have thought that was clear. I love you, Beauty. How can I refuse you anything?

Beauty I will come back.

The Beast Do you promise?

Beauty I will return as soon as I know my father is well.

The Beast That's more than I could have hoped for.

Beauty I swear.

Beauty takes Leopold's hand.

Beauty Au revoir.

The Beast God speed.

Beauty runs off.

The Beast I miss her magical presence already. I fear that without Beauty in my life, even for a few days, I will surely die.

The Beast exits. The lights dim and fairy Aurora enters in a single spotlight.

Aurora Hello boys and girls! It's me again. Time for another bulletin from Fairyland. The good news is that it looks like Elvinia's evil plan to make Beauty hate the Beast has failed. The Beast had no choice but to let her go and visit her father. The bad news is that if she doesn't return to the castle as she promised, Elvinia will win her wager and the Beast will be cursed for all eternity!

Aurora starts to exit.

Aurora (*Shrugging to audience*) Sometimes it's hard being a good fairy!

She plods off. Fade to black. Curtain.

Scene 4

Enter Dame Peekaboo on tabs. Birdsong. Lighting suggests the countryside.

Dame Peekaboo Yoo hoo!

Audience How are you, Peekaboo?

Dame Peekaboo I'm very well, and thanks for asking! As it's such a lovely day today, I thought I'd come for a long walk in the countryside. The sun is shining, the birds are singing and it's so peaceful.

We suddenly hear loud, repetitive, bouncing SFX. Like the sound of someone jumping up and down on bedsprings.

Dame Peekaboo Well, it *was* peaceful. What on earth is that racket? Can you hear that noise, boys and girls?

Audience Yes!

Dame Peekaboo (*Looking offstage*) It's coming from over there.

Enter Bertie, riding a Space Hopper. The SFX play in sync with his bouncing. While waving to the audience, he bounces around in a circle then comes to rest in the centre of the stage.

Dame Peekaboo Bertie, what on earth are you doing?

Bertie Bouncing.

Dame Peekaboo I can see that! But what is that contraption you are sitting on?

Bertie It's called a Hoppy Hopper!

Dame Peekaboo A Hoppy Hopper?

Bertie Yes. It's the latest super-duper craze. Everybody's doing it!

Dame Peekaboo Well, I'm not doing it! You won't get me on one of those things!

Bertie You don't have to charge it up or put petrol in it, it's extremely comfortable and it's got a *very* small carbon footprint.

Dame Peekaboo Where did you get it?

Bertie sets off again. Loud bouncing SFX

Bertie (*Loudly*) I bought it from the Hoppy Hopper Shop.

Dame Peekaboo (*Loudly*) The Hoppy Hopper Shop?

Bertie Yes.

Dame Peekaboo You were a shopper at the Hoppy Hopper Shop?

Bertie Yes.

Dame Peekaboo Be careful you don't fall off.

Bertie It's perfectly safe.

Dame Peekaboo I wouldn't want you to come a cropper on your Hoppy Hopper.

Bertie stops bouncing.

Bertie Don't worry. I bought the very best model in the Hoppy Hopper Shop. This is called a Proper Hoppy Hopper.

Dame Peekaboo A Proper Hoppy Hopper?

Bertie Yes.

Dame Peekaboo (*To audience*) I suppose that's better than an Improper Hoppy Hopper.

Enter Aubrey, Bernice and Denise on Space Hoppers.

Dame Peekaboo Oh, dear, oh dear. They've *all* got them!

Denise You, hoo Peekaboo!

More loud bouncing SFX. They all bounce round and around on the stage with Bertie.

Aubrey Sorry Bertie, old chap, we got held up.

Bertie Held up?

Denise We got stopped for speeding by a couple of policemen.

Bernice Yes! Our Hoppy Hoppers were stopped by coppers!

Aubrey We got an on-the-spot fine and an endorsement on our Hoppy Hopper licenses.

Dame Peekaboo You need a license to drive a Hoppy Hopper?

Denise Oh, yes.

They all stop bouncing momentarily.

Dame Peekaboo Aubrey, why is your Hoppy Hopper bigger slightly than the other Hoppy Hoppers?

Aubrey It's a Whopper Hoppy Hopper!

Dame Peekaboo A Whopper Hoppy Hopper?

Aubrey Yes. Would you like to have a go on my Whopper?

Dame Peekaboo I beg your pardon???

Aubrey Oh, go on! *(To audience)* Should Dame Peekaboo have a go on my Whopper Hoppy Hopper, boys and girls?

Audience Yes!

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* There's a sentence I never thought I'd hear.

Denise Go on, Peekaboo!

Bernice You know you want to.

Dame Peekaboo Oh, all right! Give it here.

Peekaboo sits on the biggest Space Hopper.

All Hooray!

Denise *(To audience)* Give her a Hoppy Hopper, and nothing can stop her.

Dame Peekaboo Why isn't it moving? Do I have to put it into gear or something?

Denise Just bounce!

Peekaboo starts to gently bounce.

Dame Peekaboo Oooh! I like it. It's giving me a nice fuzzy feeling.

Aubrey dashes off stage and comes back with a fifth Space Hopper. He sits on it.

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* I don't know why, but this reminds me of my second husband for some reason.

Bernice Everyone set?

Dame Peekaboo Yes, but I think it's probably time to wrap this item up.

Aubrey Why?

Dame Peekaboo I can't think of any more words that rhyme with hopper.

Bernice What about chopper?

Dame Peekaboo You always have to lower the tone, don't you, Bernice?

Bernice Sorry.

Bertie Ready, steady, go!

All five of them bounce off stage on their Space Hoppers.

Dame Peekaboo See you later, boys and girls!

A moment after they are all gone, Lampard the sheep dashes across the stage, bouncing on its own Space Hopper.

Lampard Wait for me!

Lampard exits. Enter Beauty and Bernard.

Beauty We're nearly at the house. Thank you for showing me the way home, Bernard.

Bernard You are very welcome, Miss Beauty.

Beauty I only hope that my father is alright.

Bernard Don't worry, I'm sure he's fine.

Beauty Good bye, Bernard. You're a good friend. I'll be back as soon as I can.

Exit Bernard.

Song 12

Beauty sings a song about love and friendship. At the end of the song, fade to black.

Scene 5

Tabs open on Beauty's garden. Goodenough is sitting in a deckchair reading a newspaper. Enter Chives.

Chives Can I get you anything, sir?

Goodenough No thank you, Chives. I'm still full of Dame Peekaboo's delicious apple pie.

Chives It's good to see you smile, sir. You haven't smiled much since Beauty went away.

Goodenough No, I suppose I haven't. The days seem longer now.

Chives Why don't I make you a nice cup of tea?

Goodenough Really, Chives, I'm fine. Why don't you take the rest of the afternoon off.

Chives Thank you, sir. That's very kind of you.

Chive exits. Beauty enters upstage. She creeps up behind her dad and whispers in his ear..

Beauty Hello, father.

Goodenough Beauty! My prayers have been answered! How marvellous to see you!

They hug.

Goodenough However did you get away from the castle? Did you dig an escape tunnel?

Beauty No.

Goodenough You built a glider?

Beauty No! I didn't need to escape. The Beast let me go.

Goodenough I don't understand.

Beauty I received a letter telling me you were ill.

Goodenough Ill?

Beauty Yes, and the Beast said I could come and see you.

Goodenough I'm not ill. I've never felt better.

Beauty That's wonderful news.

Goodenough Maybe the Beast is a kinder creature than we thought.

Beauty I wonder who wrote that letter.

Goodenough It does seem rather mysterious.

Beauty Anyway, I promised to go back.

Goodenough Go back? To the castle???

Beauty Yes.

Goodenough But... you *can't* go back!

Beauty Father, just like you, I made a promise to the Beast. And you know that in this family we keep our promises.

Goodenough After all that's happened! Have you grown to *like* him?

Beauty I think so. Yes.

Goodenough You have a kind heart, Beauty. As much as I will miss you, you must return as you promised.

Beauty I knew you'd understand, father.

Goodenough Come on, let's go inside and you can tell me all about life at the castle.

Beauty and Goodenough exit. Enter Bernice & Bertie.

Bernice Oh Bertie, are you looking forward to our wedding?

Bertie Like a turkey looks forward to Christmas, my love.

Bernice That's sweet. Have you bought a nice suit?

Bertie Yes, was made to measure.

Bernice Perfect.

Bertie Unfortunately, it was not made to measure for me.

Bernice Oh.

Bertie Here come Aubrey and Denise.

Denise Hello, you two! How are the wedding plans going?

Bernice I'm all over it.

Denise Have you ordered the flowers?

Bernice Oh, yes! We've got roses, posies, petunias, daisies, daffodils, tulips and forget-me-nots. Have you got forget-me-nots, Aubrey?

Aubrey I can't remember.

Denise Oh, we've gone for *much* posher flowers. We've got delphiniums, geraniums, gardenias, chrysanthemums and orchids.

During the following argument, Aubrey and Bertie start to slowly back away towards the wings.

Bernice What about the wedding cake? We've got a cake with 4 tiers.

Denise We've got a cake with 6 tiers.

Bernice Our cake is six feet tall.

Denise Our cake is twenty feet tall. With a penthouse on the top.

Bernice Our cake is so big it's surrounded by a moat.

Denise Have you booked a church?

Bernice Of course! We getting married in Westminster Abbey!

Denise Mm, we thought the abbey was a bit common. We've booked St. Pauls Cathedral. I like a dome.

Bernice Where are you going for your honeymoon?

Denise We're going to Blackpool.

Bernice We're going to Scotland.

The sisters angrily go nose to nose.

Denise We're going to Majorca.

Bernice We're going to the Caribbean!

Denise We're going to Australia!

Bernice We're going to the moon.

Denise We're going to Mars!

Bernice We're going to the Sun!

Denise It'll be too hot!

Bernice We're going at night!

Denise That's a terrible old joke.

Bernice I know!

They suddenly stop arguing when they notice that Aubrey and Bertie have almost crept off stage.

Denise You two! Where do you think you're going?

Bertie To the pub?

Bernice Get back over here!

Dame Peekaboo enters dressed as a traffic warden. Lampard the sheep follows her on.

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* Yoo hoo!

Audience How are you, Peekaboo?

Dame Peekaboo I'm very well, thank you, and thanks for asking.

Lampard Oh, dear are those two arguing again?

Aubrey Dame Peekaboo! Why are you dressed as a traffic warden?

Dame Peekaboo It's my new part time job. You don't think I can survive on what the master pays me!

Lampard Is that your horse outside?

Aubrey Yes.

Lampard Well it's on a yellow line. She had to give it a ticket.

Aubrey It's only been there for 5 minutes.

Dame Peekaboo That's no excuse! Now, go and move it or I'll have it towed away.

Aubrey runs off, followed by Bertie, Bernice and Denise.

Dame Peekaboo (*To audience*). I'll let you into a little secret, boys and girls. The only reason I took this job is because men *love* a woman in uniform. Army uniform, police uniform, nurse. They don't care which. As long as you look like you're going to teach them a lesson.

Lampard (*To the audience*) She loves issuing parking tickets.

Dame Peekaboo I do. I can feel the power surging through my body.

Lampard She put a ticket on the royal carriage yesterday and the king had to pay eighty quid for parking next to a zebra crossing.

Dame Peekaboo Then I gave a ticket to the zebra for crossing when the lights were green. Everybody loves a traffic warden, don't they?

Audience No!!!

Song 13

Dame Peekaboo sings a funny song with Lampard. At the end of the song Beauty enters with her father Goodenough.

Dame Peekaboo Beauty? I thought I'd never see you again!

They hug.

Beauty (*Seeing her uniform*) You're a traffic warden now? Oh dear, we left our carriage on a parking meter and I didn't have any change.

Lampard Don't worry, we've done that bit.

Dame Peekaboo Beauty, is it really you?

Beauty Of course it's me!

Lampard So, the Beast didn't kill you?

Beauty No, he is far too kind to do that.

Enter Bernice and Denise.

Bernice Look out everyone, she's back.

Denise (*To Beauty*) We thought we'd seen the last of you.

Dame Peekaboo (*To Bernice & Denise*) That's quite enough out of you two! Welcome your step-sister home this instant or I shall never cook a meal for either of you again!

Bernice/Denise (*Sarcastically*) Welcome home, Beauty.

Dame Peekaboo Without the sarcasm.

Bernice/Denise Welcome home, Beauty.

Dame Peekaboo (*To Bernice/Denise*) Well done.

Lampard That didn't hurt, did it?

Bernice I hate that sheep.

Denise (*To Beauty*) Why did the Beast let you go?

Beauty He was being kind. We thought that father was ill.

Goodenough All that matters is that Beauty is home.

Song 14

Goodenough, Beauty, Peekaboo, Lampard, Bertie, Denise, Aubrey and Bernice sing a song together. At the end of the song Peekaboo, Lampard and Beauty walk downstage and the tabs close behind them.

Scene 6

On tabs. Lighting suggests the countryside.

Dame Peekaboo It must feel great to be home, Miss Beauty?

Beauty Of course it is.

Lampard Even if both your step-sisters need a personality transplant.

Dame Peekaboo Lampard! Don't be so rude!

Lampard It's true.

Dame Peekaboo And don't stare!

Lampard Are you really going back to the castle, Beauty?

Beauty I have to. I've already been away far too long. I shall set off at first light tomorrow.

Dame Peekaboo Well, before you go, can you help me with something?

Beauty Of course.

Dame Peekaboo I promised I'd teach the boys and girls my favourite song. Will you help me to do that?

Beauty Yes, that'll be fun...

Dame Peekaboo Lampard, go and get that big board with the words written on it.

Lampard I'll tell you what?

Dame Peekaboo What?

Lampard I'll go and get that big board with the words written on it.

Song 15

Still on tabs, Peekaboo, Lampard and Beauty teach a song to the audience. At the end of the song, they both exit.

Scene 7

Tabs open to reveal the castle. The Beast lies in the centre of the stage. He is covered with a blanket. Bernard is kneeling next to him.

Enter Beauty.

Beauty Bernard! What's going on?

Bernard Miss Beauty, you're back at last! The master thought he was never going to see you again..

Beauty Is he ill?

Bernard I've been trying for hours to wake him up, but he seems to have fallen into a deep sleep. Perhaps he will awake if *you* talk to him.

Beauty kneels down next to the Beast. Bernard stands up and walks away.

Beauty It's Beauty. I've come back as you asked. Can you hear me?

There is a little movement in the Beast's body.

The Beast Beauty? Is that you?

Beauty Yes. I'm sorry I was away so long.

The Beast You came back.

Beauty Of course I came back, my darling.

The Beast looks up at Beauty.

The Beast I thought you'd left me forever. And now, I fear I am dying.

Beauty Please! Don't die! I love you.

There is a crash of thunder and a flash. Dramatic, soaring music. The lights quickly fade to black.

After a few moments, the lights slowly fade back up, revealing that The Beast has transformed back into Prince Leopold. He is standing before Beauty.

Leopold Beauty...

Beauty obviously does not recognise him.

Beauty Good day, sir. May I ask, how do you know my name?

Leopold Beauty, we are not strangers to each other as it might appear. You know me.

Beauty Do I?

Leopold Yes.

Beauty Sir, your voice is indeed familiar, but...

Leopold I am he that people called... The Beast.

Beauty The Beast?

Leopold Yes. But now you can call me by my real name. I am Leopold.

Beauty Leopold?

Leopold Prince Leopold.

Beauty You're a prince?

Leopold Yes.

Beauty studies Leopold's face and gently touches his hair with her hand.

Beauty I don't understand. Why do you now look so... different?

Leopold An evil fairy put a curse on me when I refused to marry her.

Beauty A curse?

Leopold She turned me into that frightful creature you knew. A creature that no-one could ever love.

Beauty Why didn't you tell me?

Leopold Because, Beauty, I wanted you to admire the man within. Not dismiss me for the way I looked.

Beauty Then, why was the spell broken? Why now?

Leopold I think it must have been when you said you loved me.

Beauty I do love you.

Leopold Even now that you have seen my real face.

Beauty It's a very nice face.

Leopold Thank you. But I fear I probably need a haircut.

Beauty (*Laughing*) I'll book you an appointment.

Leopold Thank you.

Beauty Can I bring my family to the castle? I'd like them to meet my handsome Prince Charming.

Leopold Of course. Then, I can tell everyone that I am in love with the most beautiful girl in the world, and we can start to plan... our wedding.

Beauty Our wedding? But, you haven't asked me to marry you.

Leopold gets down on one knee. Romantic music swells.

Leopold Beauty...

Beauty Yes, Leopold?

Leopold Will you do me the great honour of being my wife.

Beauty throws her arms around him, and he spins her around.

Beauty Of course I will!

Song 16

Beauty and Leopold sing a love duet together. At the end of the song, Aurora and Elvinia enter from opposite sides of the stage.

Elvinia I do so *hate* happy endings.

Aurora Your power grows weaker every day, Elvinia. Your curse is lifted and good has once again triumphed over evil!

Elvinia Don't rub it in!

Aurora Oh, and one last thing...

Elvinia What's that?

Aurora You owe me a shilling.

Elvina storms off, growling to herself.

Aurora *(To audience)* Didn't I tell you that everything would turn out fine in the end? You should always put your trust in a good fairy...

Aurora exits. Lighting change. Enter Bernard, Dame Peekaboo, Goodenough, Aubrey, Denice, Bernice, Bertie, Lampard, Chives and Mrs Pickles. The ugly sisters are dressed up to the nines with enormous hats.

Dame Peekaboo Yoo hoo!

Audience How are you, Peekaboo?

Dame Peekaboo I'm as happy as happy can be. We've all been invited to a grand royal wedding at the palace, and I'm going to bake the biggest wedding cake you've ever seen!

Beauty Dame Peekaboo, may I introduce you to my fiancé Prince Leopold?

Dame Peekaboo *(To Leopold)* Charmed, I'm sure.

Leopold *(Bowing)* I've heard so much about you.

Dame Peekaboo *(To the prince)* Nothing good, I hope.

Beauty And this is Peekaboo's sheep, Lampard.

Lampard Good evening.

Leopold Well I never. A talking sheep. *(To Peekaboo)* Why is it staring at me?

Dame Peekaboo Lampard stares at everyone.

Leopold It's very unnerving.

The prince produces a pair of completely opaque sunglasses.

Leopold Here, puts these on.

He gives the sunglasses to Lampard who immediately puts them on.

Leopold That's better.

Lampard *(To audience)* This guy is cool.

Leopold kisses Dame Peekaboo's hand.

Leopold Welcome to my castle Dame Peekaboo.

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* Oooh, I've gone all unnecessary again. *(Fanning herself)* My hormones are raging! He's the best looking beast I've seen for a long time. I hope he's house trained.

Beauty *(To the Prince)* Of course, you've already met my father.

Leopold Good evening, Mr Goodenough.

Goodenough You can call me Tom.

Leopold Tom.

Goodenough After all, you are going to be my son-in-law.

Leopold Yes.

Goodenough You look very different without your... in the absence of having... I mean... I wasn't expecting you to be so...

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* This is awkward.

Beauty *(Jumping in)* Er... and this is our housekeeper. Chives, this is Crown Prince Leopold.

Chives takes one look at Leopold and faints to the floor with a thud. Dame Peekaboo runs to revive her.

Meanwhile, Bernice, Bertie, Denise and Aubrey draw closer to the happy couple.

Aubrey Well, this is simply spiffing. I've never met a real prince before.

Bertie I wonder if he's in line for the throne.

Denise He looks more like he's in line for the supermarket checkout. The royals are such a scruffy bunch these days, aren't they?

Bernice He's not nearly as handsome as you, flirty Bertie. *(Squeezing his cheek)* You're my little beastie boy, aren't you?

Bertie *(Unenthusiastic)* Yes, my love.

Beauty Leopold, these are my two delightful step-sisters and their husbands-to-be.

Leopold Delighted to meet you ladies. Glad to see you didn't go to too much trouble to dress up. As you can see we are very informal here at the castle.

Denise Check!

Bertie *(To Leopold)* Your Highness, I am Lord Bertie Piddle-Hinton...

Leopold Your lordship...

Aubrey And I am Aubrey Oxlade-Chamberlain Huffington. We are delighted to hear that our proud families will soon be joined.

Leopold The pleasure is all mine.

Bertie We were just wondering if you wouldn't mind lending us a few quid...

Leopold What?

Aubrey Just to tide us over until our benefit cheques arrive.

Leopold Oh dear, whatever has happened to the British aristocracy?

Bernard *(To the audience)* And now, by royal decree, I declare this fairy story at an end. The Prince shall marry Beauty, Aubrey shall marry Miss Denise, Bertie shall marry Miss Bernice, and I shall marry...

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* This bit's not in the script...

Bernard And I shall marry... Dame Peekaboo.

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* What???

Lampard Well, that came out of left field.

Dame Peekaboo runs and grabs Bernard by the arm.

Dame Peekaboo *(To Bernard)* Shouldn't we get to know each other first?

Bernard All in good time, Dame Peekaboo.

Dame Peekaboo *(To audience)* Should I marry Bernard, boys and girls?

Audience Yes!

Dame Peekaboo *(To Bernard)* Right, you're on. But I want a pre-nup.

Aurora runs on.

Aurora "So, concludes our pantomime,
And as the music fades away,
We all should smile and be assured
That love has surely won the day.

"We hope you've had a lovely time,
You've laughed and cried and raised the rafters.
Now, please re-join us every year,
For many Happy Ever Afters."

Song 17

Everyone sings a big finale song. Fade to black.

Walkdown and reprise of final song.

THE END