

# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

By Justin Arnold

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# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

By Justin Arnold

*BASED ON THE CLASSIC TALE BY JEANNE-MARIE LEPRINCE DE BEAUMONT*

**SYNOPSIS:** Beauty asked for only a rose. When her father picks one from a castle garden, he must pay the ultimate price. Unwilling to let her father die, Beauty takes his place as prisoner to a volatile Beast. Beauty's spirit cannot be broken and soon the Beast softens. The castle and its cursed inhabitants thrive with Beauty's presence and she cannot help but fall in love with her new home and the Beast. When her greedy sisters plan to ransack the castle's riches and kill her newfound friend, Beauty will risk everything to break the Beast's curse and live happily ever after.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(4 females, 4 males, 2 either, 5-20 extras)*

BEAUTY (f) .....	A kind and brave young woman. <i>(289 lines)</i>
BEAST/PRINCE (m).....	A cursed prince. Savage and cruel with a deep sensitive side. <i>(146 lines)</i>
MONSIEUR MAISON (m) .....	Beauty's loving father. A merchant. <i>(102 lines)</i>
MADAME FLORICA (f) .....	The Enchantress in disguise. <i>(77 lines)</i>
MARGUERITE (f) .....	Beauty's wicked and greedy sister. <i>(129 lines)</i>
CHARLOTTE (f).....	Another. Vain and whiny. <i>(80 lines)</i>
JEAN-LUC (m).....	Beauty's neighbor. Smitten by both her and Marguerite. <i>(80 lines)</i>
JOLY (m).....	Timid servant to the Beast. A gargoyle. <i>(9 lines)</i>
GYPSY 1 (m/f) .....	Follows Madame Florica. <i>(12 lines)</i>

GYPSY 2 (m/f) ..... Follows Madame Florica.  
(6 lines)

**ENSEMBLE:**

GYPSIES (m/f)..... A band that follows Madame Florica. (*Non-Speaking*)

TREE NYMPHS (m/f) ..... Dancers who make up the dark forest. (*Non-Speaking*)

THE STATUES (m/f)..... Servants of the Beast. (*Non-Speaking*)

**DURATION:** 100 minutes

**SETTING:** France.

**TIME:** Once upon a time.

**SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

**PROLOGUE:** Castle Garden

**ACT ONE**

SCENE 1: Beauty's Cottage

SCENE 2: Beauty's Cottage

SCENE 3: The Forest and Castle Garden

SCENE 4: Castle Dining Hall and Castle Garden

SCENE 5: Gypsy Camp

SCENE 6: Beauty's Cottage

SCENE 7: Castle Foyer, Beauty's Bedroom

SCENE 8: Beauty's Cottage

SCENE 9: Beauty's Bedroom, Castle Garden, and Castle Dining Hall

SCENE 10A: The Forest

SCENE 10B: Beauty's Cottage

SCENE 10C: Castle Garden and The Forest

*INTERMISSION*

**ACT TWO**

SCENE 1: Beauty's Bedroom

SCENE 2: The Forest and Castle Garden

SCENE 3: The Forest

SCENE 4: Beauty's Bedroom, Beauty's Cottage, and The Forest

SCENE 5: Castle Dining Hall

SCENE 6: Beauty's Bedroom

SCENE 7: Beauty's Cottage

SCENE 8A: Castle Foyer and Beauty's Bedroom

SCENE 8B: The Forest

SCENE 8C: A room inside The Castle

SCENE 9: Castle Garden

## SET DESCRIPTION

### BEAUTY'S COTTAGE

**Inside:** Beauty's cottage is a cozy but destitute place. Shipping crates are draped with cloths and pillows to give the illusion of furniture. There are hardly any possessions, among those are: a couple of candle sticks, a small stack of books, and a teapot and a few cups.

**Outside:** A small garden with bench/stoop.

### THE CASTLE

**Castle Dining Hall:** A table and chairs laid out with a dinner service, covered platter(s), candles, glasses, napkins, silverware, and a bottle of wine. Also has a stuffed chair and foot stool for Act One, Scene 4.

**Castle Garden:** Trees dot the view and beyond them: the castle is framed with red rose bushes. Need a removable rose placed in the bushes.

**Beauty's Bedroom:** Bed with pillows, vines and flowers tangle up around the bed.

**Castle Foyer:** Long hall way, STATUES with candelabras line the walls.

**FOREST:** Trees and vines.

**GYPSY CAMP:** Gypsy sitting and sleeping area, possible camp fire. This is located near Beauty's Cottage in a clearing.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

Beauty's Transforming Dress: (Optional.) The idea is similar to a Cinderella transformation, and meant to add another layer of magic to the Beast's castle. To be honest, this effect was cut in the original production. Beauty entered already in the dress, and the line where she wishes for the dress was left out. If you are able to work out the effect and can afford that extra bit of magic, please utilize it. If not, no sweat.

Deer: This can be a prop, projection, or creative embellishment.

Statues: It is important for statues to be absolutely still so the audience does not know for certain.

Beast: Costume can be as elaborate or minimal as you wish. (See Author Notes for original production ideas.)

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

- Thunder and Lightning
- Fog/Dry Ice (Optional)
- Snowfall
- Howl
- Wailing Animal
- Rustling in Trees
- Brook

## COSTUME PROPS

MADAME FLORICA: Hooded cape

MONSIEUR MAISON: Coat and Hat

BEAUTY: Cloak and Shawl

CHARLOTTE: Scarf

STATUES: Candelabras

**PROP LIST**

- Bucket of water
- 2 Scrub brushes/cloths
- Tea Pot and Teacups
- Fan
- Drinking Gourd
- Flowers
- Book
- Nature Book
- Valise
- Map
- Covered Platter
- 2 Wine Glasses
- Napkin
- Bottle of Wine
- Red Rose
- Lantern
- Red Rose
- Books
- Candelabras
- “Magical” herb packets
- Vase with Red Rose
- Bucket
- Broom
- Two Pillows
- Magic Mirror (first enters gift wrapped), needs ability to light up
- Necklace in a gift box
- Satchel containing jewels, dresses, a tiara, and the magic mirror
- Two Ropes
- Dagger
- Treasure chest of jewels, coins, and a necklace
- Tree Branch

## AUTHOR NOTES

When writing *Beauty and the Beast*, I wished to keep our setting open to allow for a more creative (and fairy tale) inspired design. The only two things that were set in stone were that it is set in France, and it was “once upon a time.”

However, I do find that the story often works best with some sort of historical setting. That setting, of course, is up to you! For example, the original production took inspiration from both the Renaissance and the late 1700s — quite a wide range of styles to play with for each character! But do not feel that you must play. If you wish to set your production in a specific year or time, go for it! Personally, I would love to see a production that was accurate to the time it was written, with the large wigs, buckle shoes, and powdered white faces. That choice is best left to you.

The original production employed flats on both stage right and left. One side was the wall of Beauty's Cottage, while the other was the wall of Beauty's Bedroom in the castle. A curtain of leaves and vines were pulled across them when not in use. The castle stood up center with a platform and archway. Steps went down both sides of the platform. The rose bushes stood in front. Two trees on wheels were pushed in and out for the forest, and also for locations not in or around the castle.

Acting blocks and crates were arranged and draped with cloths for all furniture, making it easier to create a dining table and bed, which were just as easily removed.

For the Beast's costume in the original production, we used a prosthetic mask that was painted and attached to a wig. It slipped on the actor easily (and made his final transformation a simpler process). I believe it is more important that the actor utilizes himself to portray a 'monster' than to rely on expensive effects.

Overall, it is up to you and your production team which direction to take the costumes. At its roots, *Beauty and the Beast* is a fairy tale, and it works in any time and style.

**DEDICATION**

*To JB Nutter, who saw this coming, and to Rachel K. Nipper,  
who took a chance on this kid.*

*—Justin Arnold*

**PROLOGUE**

**AT RISE:** *Dim lighting in the Castle Garden. Enter MADAME FLORICA, as an old and withering gypsy woman, wearing a hooded cape.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** Once upon a time...

*Lights rise slightly. PRINCE, as a dark figure, stands with his back to the audience.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** There lived a handsome prince. He had all of the gold and jewels he could wish for, countless servants at his whim, but he was selfish, and wicked. Then, one black night...

*SFX: Thunder and lightning.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** *(Dawns her hood and approaches PRINCE. Throws herself at his feet.)* Please, your highness, allow me to seek shelter until this storm passes!

**PRINCE:** *(Barely turns to look at MADAME FLORICA.)* Shelter? In my castle? ...Stand, and allow me to see your face.

*MADAME FLORICA does so.*

**PRINCE:** *(Repulsed.)* Away with you, hag!

**MADAME FLORICA:** Please, I will give you anything.

**PRINCE:** You can give me nothing without beauty.

**MADAME FLORICA:** Your roses. I can preen and garden your roses! They will be the most beautiful in the land.

**PRINCE:** *(Offended.)* You offer me roses that I already have?! Go away!

**MADAME FLORICA:** Please, help me!

**PRINCE:** I said GO AWAY!

*PRINCE violently shoves MADAME FLORICA, knocking her to the castle steps. MADAME FLORICA hits her head in the fall, she appears dead.*

**PRINCE:** *(Looks at MADAME FLORICA, mortified. Crosses to her and kneels.)* Dear God. What have I done?!

*PRINCE slowly reaches to pull the hood away. Before he can, MADAME FLORICA springs back to life as a beautiful enchantress. PRINCE is stunned. MADAME FLORICA, without touching PRINCE, shoves her hands toward PRINCE and knocks him on his back.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** You would kill one whose only crime is being ugly?

**PRINCE:** I did not mean to—

**MADAME FLORICA:** But of course you have the right. You are beautiful on the outside.

*As MADAME FLORICA speaks, she knocks PRINCE about more and more with her power.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** But inside, your heart is repulsive. Hideous. A monster.

**PRINCE:** Please! I am sorry!

*MADAME FLORICA motions like she is grabbing PRINCE'S throat, he reacts. Slowly she moves in. Standing in front of him, she waves her hands. PRINCE screams in agony. Finally, there is only silence. A furry, clawed hand wraps around, gripping MADAME FLORICA'S cape.*

**BEAST:** Wh—What have you done to me?

**MADAME FLORICA:** I have made you as ugly on the outside as you are in. Even the most beautiful woman will be disgusted by you.

**BEAST:** Please! Change me back!

**MADAME FLORICA:** I'm afraid only you can do that. When you can learn to love, be loved for what you are, then you will be a man. But with each day, you will become more and more of a beast, until you lose your humanity for eternity.

**BEAST:** No!

*Lights dim as MADAME FLORICA laughs. She turns to the audience as a spotlight hits her face.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** The Beast locked himself inside his castle gate. He spent his time tending the roses, the only thing of beauty left in his life. And so he would remain, resigned, to always be a beast.

*Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 1

**AT START:** *Lights up on Beauty's Cottage. BEAUTY enters with a bucket of water walking towards the cottage. She stops for a breath of fresh air.*

**MARGUERITE:** *(Offstage.)* Beeeeeauty! Where are you?

**BEAUTY:** *(Happiness disappears from face.)* Coming! *(Crosses to cottage.)*

**MARGUERITE:** *(Enters and looks about the room wide-eyed, waking from a deep sleep.)* Every day for a month I awaken and think, "Has God saved me from purgatory?" then I look around and see we are still here.

**BEAUTY:** *(Setting the bucket on the floor.)* You make it sound as though we live in a chicken coop.

**MARGUERITE:** Something is missing.

**BEAUTY:** Father went to sell more things today.

**MARGUERITE:** More?! *(Crosses to the tea pot and pours herself a cup.)*

**CHARLOTTE:** *(Enters and screams.)* Where did the chaise go?!

**MARGUERITE:** That's what it was!

**CHARLOTTE:** We've been robbed!

**BEAUTY:** Relax, Charlotte. We haven't been robbed. Father sold it this morning.

**CHARLOTTE:** That was the last piece of real furnishing we owned!

**BEAUTY:** We are in a lot of debt. Most of the things on Father's ship were already paid for.

**MARGUERITE:** Of all the things our father could have been, he had to be a merchant.

**BEAUTY:** It's not his fault that his ship sank. *(Kneels and using the bucket, begins to scrub the floor.)*

**CHARLOTTE:** But now we're poor. How I miss the mansion! The curtains, the chandeliers. The cream for our bread.

**MARGUERITE:** I shall never recover from the shame of leaving. The neighbors' faces. They laughed at us! We are disgraced. We shall never marry.

**BEAUTY:** At least you have your pretty faces.

**MARGUERITE:** Beauty, could you be a dear and get my fan? I'm frightfully hot.

*BEAUTY complies. When her back is turned, MARGUERITE knocks her cup of tea to the floor.*

**MARGUERITE:** Oh, my. I'm not myself today.

*BEAUTY looks at MARGUERITE, but she chooses to be kind and hands MARGUERITE the fan before cleaning up the cup.*

**CHARLOTTE:** Oh, I have a terrible pain in my shoulder. Beauty, could you...

*BEAUTY reluctantly rubs CHARLOTTE'S shoulders.*

**MARGUERITE:** Oh, my back. It itches so!

*BEAUTY scratches her back, then moves on.*

**MARGUERITE:** And Beauty—

**BEAUTY:** What?! Fluff your beds, braid your hair, feed you chocolates?

**MARGUERITE:** I was going to say thank you.

*BEAUTY, exasperated, turns to cleaning the cup.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** *(Enters, dressed in hooded cape.)* Pardon me.

**MARGUERITE:** (*Startled.*) Oh! A gypsy! Away with you, gypsy woman.

**BEAUTY:** Marguerite, be kind! We are still new here and she could be a neighbor. Bonjour, my name is Beauty.

**MADAME FLORICA:** Beauty... I am sorry to startle you. I am Madame Florica. Please, could I trouble you for a drink of water?

**CHARLOTTE:** Don't drink from our—

**BEAUTY:** Of course. Come with me.

*BEAUTY takes a gourd from one of the crates and leads MADAME FLORICA to the bucket. BEAUTY dips it and hands the gourd to MADAME FLORICA, who drinks it thirstily.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** Thank you. Your kindness shall not go unrewarded.

**BEAUTY:** It is only water.

**MADAME FLORICA:** It is not what is given, but the act of giving that matters.

**BEAUTY:** Very wise. Now, I'd best get back to my sisters.

*BEAUTY begins to exit. While her back is turned, MADAME FLORICA transforms into the beautiful enchantress.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** Do you believe in gypsy magic?

**BEAUTY:** I have never witnessed it.

*BEAUTY turns to MADAME FLORICA and stares in disbelief.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** Give me your palm.

*Hesitant, BEAUTY offers her hand. MADAME FLORICA runs her fingers across BEAUTY'S palm, nodding. Then she stops, mystified.*

**BEAUTY:** What is it?

**MADAME FLORICA:** You are a pure spirit. Great things will happen to you. You shall set the tortured one free.

*MONSIEUR MAISON enters staggering, out of breath.*

**BEAUTY:** Father! (*Tries to help him.*)

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I can manage, I'm not an old man!

**BEAUTY:** Of course not. I'm sorry. Father, this is Madame Florica, Madame Florica, this is my father, Monsieur Maison.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Bonjour.

**MADAME FLORICA:** A pleasure, Monsieur. Happy to see the cottage occupied. It has always been empty when I've crossed here.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** We've been here a month. So you are returning?

**MADAME FLORICA:** We always return, as sure as we always leave.

**BEAUTY:** We?

*MADAME FLORICA whistles. GYPSY 1, GYPSY 2, and a band of GYPSIES enter, each holding a flower.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** My caravan. Do not be alarmed. We only pass.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** It is almost dark. Why don't you set up camp?

We could use the company.

**BEAUTY:** Yes, please rest a while.

**MADAME FLORICA:** It is too much trouble.

**BEAUTY:** Please stay. Think of it as payment for the palm reading.

**MADAME FLORICA:** Very well. Gypsies, we make camp!

*GYPSIES cheer. As they exit, each GYPSY hands their flower to BEAUTY.*

**BEAUTY:** Thank you very much!

**MADAME FLORICA:** No, thank you.

*MADAME FLORICA exits with the GYPSIES. BEAUTY and MONSIEUR MAISON cross toward the house.*

**BEAUTY:** Any luck with the sofa?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Enough to pay off the last of the debt. But I'm afraid that has left us with only air to breathe.

**BEAUTY:** We need air to live.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** You are a treasure. Sometimes I wish you would get angry with me, tell me how poor of a job I'm doing in providing for you. Really let me have it like your sisters.

**BEAUTY:** But you already gave us so much.

*MONSIEUR MAISON kisses BEAUTY on the forehead.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** How are your sisters holding up?

**BEAUTY:** Ask them.

*MONSIEUR MAISON and BEAUTY enter the house. MARGUERITE and CHARLOTTE immediately spring to their feet.*

**CHARLOTTE and MARGUERITE:** (*Jumbled.*) Oh, father! Do tell us you have a way out of here! We can't stay here another night! I'll die of shame!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** There now, daughters. Stay strong. We are together, we have fresh air, and the soil beneath our feet. We will manage.

*MARGUERITE dramatically drops to the crate sofa.*

**MARGUERITE:** Practically an old maid. And no dowry! I'll never be wed!

**BEAUTY:** I'll get the water for these flowers.

*BEAUTY crosses to retrieve the bucket. JEAN-LUC enters, he stares at the house longingly.*

**JEAN-LUC:** (*Bowing to BEAUTY.*) Bonjour, Beauty.

**BEAUTY:** Good evening, Jean-Luc. What brings you out here?

**JEAN-LUC:** Oh, I was just passing through... I was walking... I thought maybe... Is Marguerite home?

**BEAUTY:** She is. It may just be your night. She's lamenting the lack of a husband.

**JEAN-LUC:** Do not torment me.

**BEAUTY:** I mean it. I think if you want her, take her. Get her off my hands.

**JEAN-LUC:** Thank you, Beauty! Thank you!

*JEAN-LUC leans in and snatches one of the flowers from BEAUTY's bouquet, smooths his hair, takes a deep breath, and gestures for BEAUTY to lead him. BEAUTY sighs and crosses into the house.*

**BEAUTY:** Our favorite neighbor is here.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Jean-Luc! What brings you here?

**JEAN-LUC:** Oh, I was just taking a stroll and I saw this flower. Its beauty reminded me of Marguerite. I just had to give it to her.

**MARGUERITE:** Thank you, Jean-Luc. I love gifts that die.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Marguerite...

**CHARLOTTE:** Well I think flowers are perfectly lovely. Oh, Jean-Luc! (*Flirtatiously.*) Bonjour.

**JEAN-LUC:** Bonjour, Charlotte. (*To MARGUERITE.*) Marguerite, I was wondering, with your permission, Monsieur, perhaps you would like to finish that stroll with me?

**MARGUERITE:** Stroll? Outside?

**JEAN-LUC:** Where else?

**MARGUERITE:** I've told you before, Jean-Luc. I am allergic to dirt!

**JEAN-LUC:** Oh... that's right. Of course! Well then, I shall take my leave. Goodnight, Monsieur. Mademoiselles. (*Exits in quick shame.*)

**BEAUTY:** Now, Marguerite, here you were sad at no marriage prospects. A handsome and kind man asks to court you, and you send him away!

**MARGUERITE:** Who? Jean-Luc? He isn't eligible!

**BEAUTY:** What do you mean?

**MARGUERITE:** Allow me to put it this way. He is richer than us... but so is a church mouse. The man I marry shall afford only the finest things. Jewels, silver—

**CHARLOTTE:** And a great big carriage!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** There is more to love, daughters, than the size of his carriage.

*MADAME FLORICA, GYPSY 1, and GYPSY 2 enter.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** We are all set up, Monsieur. We wish to thank you again. If you should like, we will work your land for you in return.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** There is no need for that. You are welcome. Please, make yourself a campfire and be merry.

**MARGUERITE:** Wait. She is staying?

**BEAUTY:** Not just her. The entire caravan! Isn't it exciting? I've only read about gypsies.

**MARGUERITE:** They can't!

**CHARLOTTE:** They'll rob us blind!

**MADAME FLORICA:** We can't rob those who have nothing.

**CHARLOTTE:** (*Whiny.*) Oh!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Be nice, daughters. They will do you no harm.

**MADAME FLORICA:** If you wish, come by the camp any time. We will entertain you. Dance. Tell stories. I will read your fortunes.

**BEAUTY:** That would be wonderful!

**MADAME FLORICA:** Until then, goodnight.

*MADAME FLORICA, GYPSY 1, and GYPSY 2 exit. BEAUTY picks up a book and sits on a crate to read it.*

**MARGUERITE:** Can this place get any stranger? Poor suitors, no sofa, gypsies in the yard. And this one thinks she's in a palace on a cloud! (*Snatches the book away from BEAUTY.*) What have we here?

**BEAUTY:** Give that back to me!

**MARGUERITE:** One moment, I just want to see what is so fascinating. "And the prince gave the maiden a single red flower as they went inside to live happily..." Fairy stories? Really, Beauty, aren't you a bit too old for that?

**BEAUTY:** Well, if we want to talk old, Marguerite...

**MARGUERITE:** You little snipe!

*MARGUERITE claws at BEAUTY, who defends herself trying to get the book back. CHARLOTTE stands on the crate, rooting them on.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** (*Stands in a fury.*) STOP THIS!

*ALL halt.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I had hoped that by now we could be a family here. When will you all get along like sisters should? Go to bed, it is getting late. Now!

**CHARLOTTE:** I'm taking the bed by the window.

**MARGUERITE:** No. I am. I'm the eldest.

**CHARLOTTE:** I can't breathe dirty air. I have an affliction!

**MARGUERITE:** In your brain.

**CHARLOTTE:** At least I don't have a wart right on my—

**MARGUERITE:** How dare you?!

*CHARLOTTE and MARGUERITE exit. MONSIEUR MAISON sighs and sits down, rubbing his temples.*

**BEAUTY:** (*Picks up the book and timidly approaches MONSIEUR MAISON.*) I'm sorry, Father. I didn't mean to distress you.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** We are all tense these days. If only I could give my daughters back their lives.

**BEAUTY:** They'll grow and see. It's not the money that is important. Goodnight. (*Kisses MONSIEUR MAISON'S forehead and beings to exit.*)

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Wait a moment. Come here, why don't you read me one of those fairy stories? A happy ending would be good to hear.

**BEAUTY:** (*Eagerly sits at MONSIEUR MAISON'S feet and opens the book.*) "Once Upon a Time."

*Blackout.*

**ACT ONE, SCENE 2**

**AT START:** *Lights up on the garden outside Beauty's Cottage. BEAUTY sits with a large nature book. She reads a bit, looks at the greenery around her. Back at the book, turns the page, and so on.*

**BEAUTY:** Come now, what can you be?

**JEAN-LUC:** *(Enters.)* Good morning, Beauty.

**BEAUTY:** Morning! If you're looking for Marguerite, I'm afraid you won't see much of her. She's been in bed all morning with a headache. She claims she won't make it through the night!

**JEAN-LUC:** Such a shame. For such an exquisite beauty to die so young!

**BEAUTY:** She's acting, Jean-Luc. Nothing is wrong with her.

**JEAN-LUC:** Oh... then she's saved for another day! What are you doing?

**BEAUTY:** I'm trying to identify what kind of bush this is. It seems to me there should be flowers on it.

**JEAN-LUC:** Oh, that's easy. It's a rose bush.

**BEAUTY:** How can you tell?

**JEAN-LUC:** There aren't any roses on it. *(Laughs.)* Sorry, let me explain. Roses do not bloom in this part of the land. They haven't for many years. I was only a boy when they stopped.

**BEAUTY:** Why did they stop?

**JEAN-LUC:** No one knows. It just is.

**BEAUTY:** Well that's disheartening. Roses are my favorite things. I was hoping to decorate the cottage with them should I find any. I feel like something as simple as a rose can make any problem disappear.

**JEAN-LUC:** You are a strange girl, Beauty.

**BEAUTY:** Am I?

**JEAN-LUC:** I mean no offense. I like strange. *(A faint glimmer of affection crosses his face but is quickly erased.)* So Marguerite cannot be bothered?

**BEAUTY:** I'm afraid not. Only riches would heal her.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** *(Offstage.)* Daughters! Daughters! We're saved! *(Rushes on, frantic. Runs to BEAUTY and grabs her shoulders.)* Beauty! It's wonderful! Where are your sisters?

**BEAUTY:** In bed. Father, what is it?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** We're saved, my girl! Saved!

*MONSIEUR MAISON runs into the house. BEAUTY and JEAN-LUC follow.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Marguerite! Charlotte come down at once, we are saved!

*MARGUERITE and CHARLOTTE enter from another room in the cottage, dazed.*

**MARGUERITE:** My head is splitting.

**CHARLOTTE:** What's all the fuss?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** We are saved, daughters!

**BEAUTY:** That is what you say, but what do you mean?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** My ship! My ship is all well. The sailors, they got out with the life boat, they thought the ship had sunk. It hadn't! It was spotted off a coast, it's been brought into a port! I've but to claim it and we are saved! I am a merchant again!

**BEAUTY:** That's wonderful!

**MARGUERITE:** We're rich!

**CHARLOTTE:** Our shame will be removed!

**JEAN-LUC:** I am so happy for you, Monsieur Maison. (*Crosses to MARGUERITE.*) My warmest congratulations mademoiselle.

**MARGUERITE:** Oh, stop it, you fool! I will be courted by King Midas!

**BEAUTY:** I'm sorry, Jean-Luc. You aren't quite Midas.

**JEAN-LUC:** If that be my only fault, I will accept it. I wish you well, Beauty. Good day. (*Exits, scorned.*)

**MARGUERITE:** Oh father, you must bring me back fine dresses. The best dresses! Made of silk and satin, embroidered in pearls!

**CHARLOTTE:** And jewels for me! The biggest most exquisite jewels!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** (*Not impressed, nods.*) Very well. (*To BEAUTY.*) And you, Beauty? What will you have?

**BEAUTY:** I need nothing, father. Your happiness is enough.

**MARGUERITE:** Oh, don't play the saint. Ask for something. Silver, ask for beautiful silver to dine with!

**CHARLOTTE:** Do better than that. A golden tiara, to wear in your hair!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** So what will it be, Beauty? No gift is too much to ask.

**BEAUTY:** If you must bring me something... Bring me a rose.

**MARGUERITE:** A what?

**BEAUTY:** None grow in this part of the land. And I do love them so.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Very well. You shall have the most beautiful red rose that I see.

**BEAUTY:** And since roses are so easily torn, you will just have to keep it safe and deliver it to me unharmed. And that way you will return safely.

*Touched, MONSIEUR MAISON embraces BEAUTY. MARGUERITE and CHARLOTTE begin to exit.*

**MARGUERITE:** Goodbye, Father! Be safe! And don't crease the dresses!

**CHARLOTTE:** Make haste and return fast, Father! Beauty, will you bring me some tea?

*MARGUERITE and CHARLOTTE exit.*

**BEAUTY:** Can't I go with you?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Absolutely not. Who would tend those greedy monsters in my absence?

*BEAUTY laughs.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** *(Looks at BEAUTY thoughtfully.)* It is too dangerous. I do not want you anywhere near that forest.

**BEAUTY:** Nor I you. Together we could keep each other safe.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** The answer is no. I shall bring you a rose, and return safely. And that shall just have to be good enough for you.

**BEAUTY:** Oh it is.

*BEAUTY and MONSIEUR MAISON embrace. BEAUTY helps MONSIEUR MAISON don his coat and hat, hands him his valise. MONSIEUR MAISON kisses BEAUTY'S forehead and exits down the center aisle. BEAUTY waves, fighting back tears.*

**CHARLOTTE:** *(Offstage.)* Beeeauty! Where is my tea?

*With a deep breath, BEAUTY turns. Blackout.*

### ACT ONE, SCENE 3

**AT START:** *Lights up on The Forest. It is night, the fog is dense. The trees are closed in. Some of the TREE NYMPHS are hidden partially, backs turned. MONSIEUR MAISON stumbles in, squinting at a map.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I turned left... left at the... didn't I? Where can I be? *(Crosses each way, but recognizes nothing.)* What a terrible day. My ship ransacked, empty. No wealth. No fine dresses or jewels for my daughters. *(Throws his hands up.)* Alright, nature! You've bested me again! Proving once more that I am worthy of no success. My eldest daughters have turned on me. When will you take Beauty away?

*SFX: Thunder. Lights shift and TREE NYMPHS snap to life. MONSIEUR MAISON tries to resume his journey, but gets lost in the trees as they dance and rotate. Storm picks up power, until the MONSIEUR MAISON is weak and tired. The fog thickens. TREE NYMPHS move back to reveal the castle. Partially hidden on each side is a STATUE, unmoving.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** *(Shouting.)* Help! Is anyone there?!

*TREE NYMPHS weave around him like vines, bringing him to the ground.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Please! Someone help me!

*He reaches for the steps. Just as he almost touches them, he goes weak and faints. TREE NYMPHS untangle, exit. Lightning flashes one last time, just as the STATUES suddenly turn and reach out toward MONSIEUR MAISON. Blackout.*

#### ACT ONE, SCENE 4

**AT START:** *Lights up on the Castle Dining Hall. MONSIEUR MAISON is asleep in a large arm chair, his feet on a stool. A table is nearby, laid out with a dinner service. Four STATUES stand unmoving in various poses, two of them are positioned at the table. Slowly, MONSIEUR MAISON wakes up. He looks about himself, disoriented.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Hello? *(No answer.)* Is anyone there?

*MONSIEUR MAISON starts to stand. As he does, one of the STATUES takes his hat and freezes again. MONSIEUR MAISON turns around, realizes the hat. Shrugs it off. He goes to the table, takes in the food. A STATUE pushes in the arm chair behind him, forcing him to sit. MONSIEUR MAISON whirls around, only to see the STATUE has frozen again. While his head is turned, another STATUE uncovers the platter. MONSIEUR MAISON rubs his temples and turns back to see the dinner laid out. He looks up.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** *(To himself.)* What strange place is this? *(Raises his voice.)* Whoever you are, thank you for your hospitality!

*MONSIEUR MAISON lays a napkin over his leg and lifts a knife and fork and begins to eat. He dabs the napkin to his lips and drops it. He bends over to retrieve it. At this time, JOLY stands from behind the table. Quickly he pours wine into the glass and darts down just as MONSIEUR MAISON turns back around. MONSIEUR MAISON stops, lifts the glass and inspects it. Sniffs it and then drinks it.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** This host is surely a good fairy. (*Finishes the plate and rubs his face.*) Oh, my head.

*While his face is covered, STATUES shift, cleaning up, lifting the candles. When MONSIEUR MAISON looks again, he is stunned.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** (*Standing quickly.*) Thank you very much! I feel well now, I will be on my way. If there is any way to repay you...

*Curtains in the archway move back to reveal the exit. MONSIEUR MAISON catches sight of them.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Well, then. If you are certain.

*MONSIEUR MAISON exits. JOLY stands from behind the table and scampers nervously after him. STATUES exit.*

*The light changes. SFX: a thin fog rolls over the ground. MONSIEUR MAISON emerges from the arch and makes his way down the steps. JOLY scurries behind him, remaining unseen and nervous.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I've only to return home and tell my daughters there will be no clothes or jewels. (*Spots the rose bushes.*) But...

*MONSIEUR MAISON spots a beautiful red rose among the bushes, he stares at it a moment. JOLY watches him, eyes wide. MONSIEUR MAISON crosses to the rose bush, and plucks the red rose. As soon as he does, BEAST roars from inside the castle. JOLY is frightened, runs away. MONSIEUR MAISON is scared into stillness. Lights dim and BEAST enters pouncing, knocking MONSIEUR MAISON to the ground.*

**BEAST:** (*Shouting, almost in agony.*) What have you done?!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Please! I meant no harm—

**BEAST:** You picked my roses?! You could have taken anything! And you take my beautiful roses!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I am sorry! I did not know better! Mercy!

*BEAST lifts MONSIEUR MAISON and holds him almost in the air.*

**BEAST:** The world has shown me no mercy. And I shall bestow the same!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I beg of you! Please, the rose is not for me, but for my youngest daughter.

**BEAST:** *(Softens slightly. He looks away.)* Daughter?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Yes. It is all that she has ever asked from me. To return home and give her a rose. Please. Allow me to give her that.

*Slowly, BEAST lowers MONSIEUR MAISON.*

**BEAST:** If it is for the girl, I will allow it... but you must promise to return.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** *(Relieved. Picks up the rose, slowly backs away.)* Of course. Yes, whatever you say. I shall return!

**BEAST:** You take me for a fool?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** What?

**BEAST:** You patronize me and expect me to wait? *(Angered, grabs MONSIEUR MAISON.)* You will pay! If you do not return in three days, I shall find you and prey on your entire family! Be gone!

*BEAST tosses MONSIEUR MAISON. TREE NYMPHS enter, and entwine around MONSIEUR MAISON as he is escorted away.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I will return! Please! Spare my family!

*TREE NYMPHS exit with MONSIEUR MAISON. BEAST kneels at his remaining roses and embraces them. Blackout.*

**ACT ONE, SCENE 5**

**AT START:** *Lights upon the Gypsy Camp. GYPSIES sit around, laughing, joking. MARGUERITE sits with JEAN-LUC, he is trying to woo her, but she is not interested. CHARLOTTE is busy flirting. BEAUTY sits by a lantern, staring into its light, distant. MADAME FLORICA sees her, approaches.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** What is wrong, child?

**BEAUTY:** Hmm? Oh. I was just thinking about my father. He should have returned by now.

**MARGUERITE:** Oh, he'll be back when he is back. Though I do hope he hurries, I would like so much to put on one of my new dresses!

**JEAN-LUC:** You would outshine the stars in the sky.

**MARGUERITE:** I hope I blind you when I do.

**BEAUTY:** I should have insisted and gone with him. Then at least I would know where he is.

**CHARLOTTE:** *(To MARGUERITE.)* Aren't gypsy men the most ravishing, most romantic men there are? Look, Marguerite. He gave me a scarf. A real gypsy scarf!

**MARGUERITE:** If you lowered yourself anymore, Charlotte, you'd be licking up the mud.

**CHARLOTTE:** You spiteful little monkey!

*CHARLOTTE and MARGUERITE swat at each other. MADAME FLORICA pushes between them.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** I'll not have cruelty around my caravan!

*MONSIEUR MAISON enters, holding the rose. He looks distraught and distant. BEAUTY takes him into an embrace.*

**BEAUTY:** Father! You've come home! *(Steps back, sees MONSIEUR MAISON'S face.)* What is it?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** *(Holds out rose, stiffly.)* Your rose, child. Take it and cherish it.

*BEAUTY hesitantly takes the rose. MONSIEUR MAISON kisses her head absently and walks past her.*

**MARGUERITE:** Father! Where are my dresses?

**CHARLOTTE:** My jewels?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** There are none.

**MARGUERITE:** What?!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** There is nothing.

**MARGUERITE:** Well, that isn't fair! Beauty got her silly old rose!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** (*Loses temper.*) I said there is nothing! Only myself, and even I am no more.

**MADAME FLORICA:** (*To GYPSIES.*) All of you, go to your tents. I'll be in after a bit.

*GYPSIES reluctantly exit. MONSIEUR MAISON crosses to a nearby seat and sits.*

**JEAN-LUC:** (*Approaching MARGUERITE.*) I had better leave as well. I enjoyed our dance, Marguerite. I hope it is the first of many.

*JEAN-LUC kisses MARGUERITE'S hand, she ignores him. JEAN-LUC exits.*

**BEAUTY:** What do you mean "there is nothing"?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** The ship was empty. No cargo. It had been completely ransacked. I'm no merchant after all.

**MARGUERITE:** No wealth?

**CHARLOTTE:** Back into shame.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I am sorry, my daughters. I wanted so to please you.

**MADAME FLORICA:** Something else is troubling you. (*Gestures to the rose.*) How did you find that?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** That is none of your concern. Now, I must go to the house and rest. I must leave again soon.

**BEAUTY:** But you've only just returned!

**MADAME FLORICA:** Tell them the truth, Monsieur. They do deserve that.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** What business is it of yours?

**MADAME FLORICA:** That rose. It came from the castle, did it not?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** How did you—

**MADAME FLORICA:** Tell them, Monsieur.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** (*Distraught, crosses to BEAUTY, takes rose.*)

I came upon a castle in the woods. I was given shelter, food, and rest. As I departed, I saw a garden of roses and thought of my daughter's only wish. I picked it, thinking the master would not mind. After all, it was one rose of many.

**MADAME FLORICA:** And did the master mind?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** ...Yes. The master, who had shown me kindness only moments before, threatened my life. For this rose.

**BEAUTY:** But it's only a rose!

**MADAME FLORICA:** It must mean the world to him.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** And so you see I must return. I cannot endanger my family. (*Sits.*)

*BEAUTY rushes to MONSIEUR MASION and sits at his feet.*

**MARGUERITE:** You will be killed?

**BEAUTY:** I am sorry, Father. I should not have asked for something so silly.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** It was not silly. I could have journeyed anywhere else for that rose, not steal it.

**CHARLOTTE:** Whatever will we do?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** There is nothing to be done.

**MARGUERITE:** (*Confronting BEAUTY.*) This is all your fault! Now our father will die because of your stupidity!

**CHARLOTTE:** She doesn't care! Look, she doesn't even cry!

**BEAUTY:** I do not because he will not die! I will go to the master in your place, Father.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** No! I will not allow it!

**BEAUTY:** Marguerite is right, this is my fault. How can I live knowing you have paid for this?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** You don't know what it is you are doing. Now all of you go to the house, I wish to be left alone.

**BEAUTY:** No—

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I will not leave without saying goodbye. Go, so I can think.

*Reluctantly, CHARLOTTE and MARGUERITE leave. BEAUTY hugs her father, then slowly exits. When they have exited, MONSIEUR MAISON stands.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** You are going now?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** It is best to vanish.

**MADAME FLORICA:** The Beast is no one to trifle with. I would be careful, old man.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I am not an old man! *(Exits.)*

*Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 6

**AT START:** *Night outside Beauty's Cottage. JEAN-LUC stands center.*

**JEAN-LUC:** Shall your hair... uh, be woven in moonlight? Shall your lips, be ripe as a cherry. Sweet... juice filled... *(Shakes his head.)* Stupid stupid! Your—your skin, like cream on a... ugh.

*While JEAN-LUC practices being suave, BEAUTY enters, exiting the cottage wearing a cloak. She rushes, looking behind her to ensure no one is following. When she crosses JEAN-LUC, she stops. He doesn't notice her.*

**JEAN-LUC:** The fatal blossom of your kiss, lingering, withering on the vine...

**BEAUTY:** Jean-Luc?

**JEAN-LUC:** *(Startled.)* Beauty! I didn't see you. Um, how long have you been here?

**BEAUTY:** Long enough.

**JEAN-LUC:** Why are you out here at night? Alone?

**BEAUTY:** I, um, just needed some air. What are you doing?

**JEAN-LUC:** Oh, I was only practicing how I am to win Marguerite.

**BEAUTY:** I see.

**JEAN-LUC:** I shall quoth her a sonnet, and sweep her onto my finest horse. And she shall—

**BEAUTY:** She shall scream and fall off the horse. I'm sorry, Jean-Luc, but a sonnet will never make my sister swoon. Unless the sonnet is embroidered on a dress made of gold.

**JEAN-LUC:** I feared that.

**BEAUTY:** Be wise, forget her. Go find yourself a sweet and worthy girl to marry.

**JEAN-LUC:** (*Disappointed.*) I suppose you are right. You know, a casual observer might note that you are the one worthy of love.

**BEAUTY:** That's very kind of you.

**JEAN-LUC:** You know, I think this observer would be right. You are sweet. And beautiful.

**BEAUTY:** Thank you, Jean-Luc, now I must—

**JEAN-LUC:** How about it?

**BEAUTY:** How about what?

*JEAN-LUC sweeps BEAUTY into a romantic embrace.*

**JEAN-LUC:** Come away with me, Beauty. Let me take you away from this place. I will treat you like a queen!

**BEAUTY:** Jean-Luc! Only five seconds ago, you were ready to propose to Marguerite!

**JEAN-LUC:** And now I am proposing to you! Think about it! I am not Midas, but I am wealthy enough to keep you, you will never have to work again.

**BEAUTY:** Jean-Luc, stop it!

*JEAN-LUC attempts to kiss BEAUTY, but she pushes him away.*

**BEAUTY:** If I marry, it will be for love. Not for security. Besides, I cannot leave my father, not now. He never came home, I have to find him. I must go.

**JEAN-LUC:** Never. You go with me. I will take care of your father as well. Don't lie, Beauty. I am a kind and handsome man, am I not?

**BEAUTY:** I don't—

**JEAN-LUC:** Thank you, Beauty! You have rescued me from Marguerite, and I shall spend the rest of my life eternally grateful in your arms.

**BEAUTY:** *(Sighs, then gets an idea.)* Very well. Let's be off.

**JEAN-LUC:** Really?

**BEAUTY:** We could be married by sunrise.

**JEAN-LUC:** Very well!

**BEAUTY:** But first, would you please go and get my books? They are so dear to me.

**JEAN-LUC:** Where are they?

**BEAUTY:** Just inside.

**JEAN-LUC:** I shall be right back. *(Crosses into the house.)*

**BEAUTY:** Trees, please guide me to the castle. *(Exits running.)*

*JEAN-LUC rushes back with the books.*

**JEAN-LUC:** Here they are! ...Beauty? Beauty?! Marguerite! Charlotte! Come! Madame Florica! Everyone, help!

*MARGUERITE and CHARLOTTE stumble sleepily out of the house. MADAME FLORICA enters.*

**MARGUERITE:** It's too late for a stroll, Jean-Luc.

**MADAME FLORICA:** What is it, boy?

**JEAN-LUC:** It's Beauty. She's gone.

**MADAME FLORICA:** The old man as well?

**CHARLOTTE:** They'll be back soon—

**MADAME FLORICA:** Not if they went to the castle.

**JEAN-LUC:** What castle?

**MARGUERITE:** To that master? They've gone?

**MADAME FLORICA:** It appears so.

**CHARLOTTE:** Father will be killed!

**JEAN-LUC:** What? Never! I will go—

**MADAME FLORICA:** You will do no such thing.

**JEAN-LUC:** But they are in danger!

**MADAME FLORICA:** They belong to the Beast now. You will never find that castle if he does not wish you to find it.

**MARGUERITE:** Then what can we do?

**MADAME FLORICA:** If I were you, I would pray.

*Scared, CHARLOTTE kneels and begins to pray. Reluctantly, MARGUERITE follows, and then JEAN-LUC. MADAME FLORICA crosses behind them and wraps the sisters in her arms so that they are all in a huddle. SFX: light snowfall begins. Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 7

**AT START:** *A thin shafts of light fall on the Castle Foyer. STATUES hold candelabras. BEAUTY enters through the arch, slowly making her way down the steps.*

**BEAUTY:** Is anyone there?

*BEAUTY inspects a STATUE. It slowly turns. BEAUTY gasps and stumbles away.*

**BEAUTY:** My name is Beauty, I have come for my father! *(Silence.)*  
Anyone?

*BEAST roars from offstage. BEAUTY rushes to the edge of the stage and crouches in darkness. BEAST enters and tosses around MONSIEUR MAISON. He shoves MONSIEUR MAISON into the pool of light, but BEAST remains in the dark.*

**BEAST:** So you have returned, old man! *(Taunting.)* And tell me, did your daughter enjoy my rose?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** I will replace your rose. Please, don't—

*BEAST takes MONSIEUR MAISON up in a rage.*

**BEAST:** You can never replace what you have taken from me! And now you must die! *(Sets to attack.)*

**BEAUTY:** *(Stands from fright.)* No!

**BEAST:** *(Drops MONSIEUR MAISON.)* Who is there? Come out at once!

*BEAUTY runs into the light.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** What are you doing?!

**BEAUTY:** I am Beauty, this man's daughter. Who are you?

**BEAST:** I am the master of this castle!

**BEAUTY:** Then you must release my father!

**BEAST:** I am the master. Take her to the forest!

*STATUES close in and grip onto BEAUTY, who struggles.*

**BEAUTY:** No! Please, let him go. Can't you see he has meant no harm?

**BEAST:** He caused me a great deal of harm.

**BEAUTY:** I asked for the rose!

*BEAST grabs BEAUTY and practically shakes her in his tirade.*

**BEAST:** Then he shall suffer for your wrong! ...enjoy my rose, it will cost him dearly.

**BEAUTY:** Please, I will do anything.

*BEAST lets go and turns to MONSIEUR MAISON. STATUES drag BEAUTY.*

**BEAST:** There is nothing to be done.

**BEAUTY:** (*Breaking away from STATUES.*) So take me, then!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** No!

**BEAST:** (*Halts, turns to BEAUTY.*) What?

**BEAUTY:** Take me in his place.

**BEAST:** You... you would do that of your own will?

**BEAUTY:** Would you let him go?

**BEAST:** Yes. But you must promise that you will stay in this castle forever.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Don't do it, Beauty!

**BEAUTY:** ...Show me who you are.

*BEAST laughs, steps into the light. This is the first time the audience gets a clear look at BEAST. BEAUTY goes pale.*

**BEAUTY:** What are you?

**BEAST:** Make your choice.

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** (*Rushing to BEAUTY.*) Beauty, listen to me, don't—

*BEAST grabs MONSIEUR MAISON.*

**BEAUTY:** Stop it!

**BEAST:** Promise me or he dies!

**BEAUTY:** I promise.

*BEAST drops MANSIEUR MAISON. BEAUTY rushes to MONSIEUR MAISON and helps him up.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** No, I'm begging you! Leave my daughter alone!

**BEAUTY:** I'm sorry, father, I had to do this.

**BEAST:** (*To STATUES.*) Take the old man to the forest, ensure he does not follow you back.

*STATUES separate BEAUTY and MONSIEUR MAISON.*

**BEAUTY:** Wait! Not yet! Father!

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Beauty!

*BEAUTY runs to MONSIEUR MAISON but is caught by the BEAST, who throws her back. BEAUTY falls to the ground and sobs. STATUES exit, dragging MONSIEUR MAISON as BEAST watches. BEAST turns to BEAUTY. For a small moment we see remorse. Then BEAST composes himself, approaches BEAUTY.*

**BEAST:** Look at me.

*BEAUTY does not move.*

**BEAST:** *(Kneels and forces BEAUTY to look at his face.)* Look at me! I want you to follow me. I will show you to your room.

*BEAUTY stands, composes herself.*

**BEAST:** You are the mistress of this castle. You can do as you please. So long as you do not leave the gates. Do you understand?

*BEAUTY remains silent.*

**BEAST:** *(Blocking BEAUTY'S path.)* Answer me.

**BEAUTY:** Yes!

*BEAST leads BEAUTY to Beauty's Bedroom. BEAST pushes BEAUTY into the room, she collapses on the bed. BEAUTY looks up at the BEAST, defiant. BEAST is taken aback, almost cowers.*

**BEAST:** Do not look at me. Not in that way. *(Tone shift. Getting close to BEAUTY'S face.)* Every night, you will join me for dinner.

*BEAST makes a quick exit. BEAUTY throws herself into the pillows and sobs. Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 8

**AT START:** *Lights up on Beauty's Cottage. MARGUERITE fans herself while CHARLOTTE stuffs her face with sweets. JEAN-LUC rubs MARGUERITE'S feet. MADAME FLORICA paces. The rose is in a vase. MONSIEUR MAISON stumbles from the forest and goes weakly into the house.*

**MARGUERITE:** Father!

**CHARLOTTE:** You're alive!

**JEAN-LUC:** Where is Beauty?

*MONSIEUR MAISON does not answer.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** She is with the Beast.

**MARGUERITE:** What beast do you keep talking about?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** The master of the castle. A horrible, monstrous beast.

**CHARLOTTE:** And Beauty is with him?

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** She... she— *(Collapses onto a crate.)*

**MADAME FLORICA:** I will prepare a drink for him. Charlotte, help him lay down. Jean-Luc, bring me a tea pot.

*CHARLOTTE eases MONSIEUR MAISON onto his back while JEAN-LUC fetches the tea pot. MADAME FLORICA prepares a strange drink of herbs that she pulls seemingly from nowhere. MADAME FLORICA brings the cup to MONSIEUR MAISON.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** Drink this, Monsieur.

*MADAME FLORICA helps MONSIEUR MAISON sit up and pours it into his throat. Soon MONSIEUR MAISON is asleep.*

**MARGUERITE:** What did you give him?

**MADAME FLORICA:** Something to help him relax.

**JEAN-LUC:** I will go and search for Beauty. Bring her home.

**MARGUERITE:** No! ...I mean, if you go, the Beast will certainly kill you. And then who would I take my strolls with?

**JEAN-LUC:** What strolls? You are allergic to dirt.

**MARGUERITE:** Well I'm all better now, and I would love for you to walk with me some time...

**JEAN-LUC:** *(Very confused, but nods.)* Very well. I will be going now. All of you get some rest. *(Exits.)*

**MADAME FLORICA:** And I will return to my gypsies. Ladies, please ensure your father rests. There is nothing to be done now. *(Exits.)*

**CHARLOTTE:** I don't understand. When will Beauty return?

**MARGUERITE:** *(An evil grin.)* She won't. She's gone.

**CHARLOTTE:** Gone?

**MARGUERITE:** Gone.

**CHARLOTTE:** Oh! ...I think I shall rearrange my bed to her part of the room.

**MARGUERITE:** I call the spot by the window.

**CHARLOTTE:** Why should you get it?

**MARGUERITE:** Because I'm the eldest!

**CHARLOTTE:** I have a sinus affliction!

**MARGUERITE:** In your brain!

**CHARLOTTE:** At least I don't have an embarrassing wart on my—

**MARGUERITE:** How dare you?!

*CHARLOTTE and MARGUERITE exit. MONSIEUR MAISON stirs, but does not awaken.*

**MONSIEUR MAISON:** Beauty... Beauty...

*Blackout.*

## ACT ONE, SCENE 9

**AT START:** *Lights up on Beauty's Bedroom. SFX: howl and a wailing animal. BEAUTY stops, she goes ashen, and senses a presence.*

**BEAUTY:** Who's there? ...I know someone is there!

*JOLY emerges. BEAUTY backs away, frightened. JOLY puts his hands out to assure her, and sweeps a gentle bow. JOLY looks up and smiles.*

**BEAUTY:** What are you?

*JOLY crosses to her.*

**BEAUTY:** A gargoyle... do you have a name?

**JOLY:** J – j – j – jo – j – jo— (*Becomes frustrated.*)

**BEAUTY:** You cannot speak. It's alright. I won't harm you... do you serve the beast?

*JOLY nods.*

**BEAUTY:** Why have you come?

*JOLY crosses behind the bed and pulls out an elegant dress.*

**BEAUTY:** No, I will remain in my own clothes, thank you.

*JOLY pleads with her.*

**BEAUTY:** Oh, very well.

*JOLY hands BEAUTY the dress. BEAUTY exits.*

*On the opposite side of stage, BEAST emerges in isolated red light. He looks at his monstrous hands. Licks them like paws. His demeanor is calm, his thirst quenched. He gets on all fours and climbs the steps of the castle, disappearing.*

*BEAUTY enters, now in the dress. JOLY gestures for her to follow him. They cross a line of STATUES holding candelabras. They come to a long table set for a meal. JOLY offers BEAUTY a chair, she sits. JOLY pours her a glass of wine and offers it to her.*

**BEAUTY:** Thank you.

*BEAUTY takes the wine as JOLY sweetly bows. He lifts a platter cover and gestures for BEAUTY to eat. She nervously lifts her silverware and begins to dine. JOLY backs away until he has exited. BEAUTY is just about to take a bite when she senses a presence. BEAST emerges from the shadows behind BEAUTY.*

**BEAST:** (*Approaching BEAUTY'S chair.*) You look lovely.

**BEAUTY:** I am not accustomed to wearing such fine things.

**BEAST:** But they suit you. Did you find your room acceptable?

**BEAUTY:** Y—yes... I had the pleasure of meeting your gargoyle—

**BEAST:** Joly. My most trusted servant.

**BEAUTY:** He is very nice...

*BEAST'S hands wrap around the chair, gently brushing BEAUTY'S shoulders. BEAUTY shivers.*

**BEAST:** Do not be afraid. I only wish to see you dine.

**BEAUTY:** It is your castle. Do as you wish.

**BEAST:** This is your home as well. If you do not wish me to stay, I will go.

**BEAUTY:** No. This is not my home. As I said, do as you wish.

*BEAST lowers himself and leans around BEAUTY so that he can see her face.*

**BEAST:** Do I repulse you, Beauty?

*BEAUTY searches for a response. Unable to answer, she turns to her meal. BEAST walks slowly to the other end of the table. BEAST lifts a napkin and dabs his lips with it like a gentleman.*

**BEAST:** I do. I would not expect less, for what I am.

*BEAUTY'S eyes have gone watery.*

**BEAST:** What is wrong?

**BEAUTY:** I miss my father.

**BEAST:** The old man means a great deal to you.

**BEAUTY:** He's not an old man. And yes. He means everything.  
Please, allow me to go to him. To say a proper goodbye—

**BEAST:** Out of the question.

**BEAUTY:** I beg of you—

**BEAST:** (*Shouting.*) You made a promise! (*Softens.*) All of your needs will be provided. Anything you could want, you need only ask. But keep to things inside the castle.

**BEAUTY:** Very well.

**BEAST:** (*Approaching BEAUTY.*) I may be a beast. But I can live as a man. You know what I love to do? Dance. Do you enjoy dancing?

**BEAUTY:** I do.

**BEAST:** Then will you do me a great honor, and dance with me?

*BEAUTY* unsure of what to say, finally nods and stands. *BEAST* leads *BEAUTY* center stage. She curtsies, he bows. They do a nervous, lumbering dance. He pulls her around and wraps her so that her back is to him. His hands sweeps up her arms, around her shoulders. He takes in the smell of her, all the while she is looking, frightened, at the ceiling.

**BEAST:** *(Almost a whisper.)* Beauty... will you marry me?

*Shocked, BEAUTY pulls away.*

**BEAUTY:** What?

**BEAST:** Forgive me, I was lost in myself.

**BEAUTY:** Goodnight, Beast.

**BEAST:** Please, stay and I will go. Enjoy the rest of your dinner—

**BEAUTY:** *(Firm.)* I have had enough, thank you.

*BEAUTY runs from the dining room. BEAST angry with himself, knocks a candelabra from its place. Blackout.*

**ACT ONE, SCENE 10A**

**AT START:** *The same night, lights up in The Forest. MADAME FLORICA and the GYPSIES trail through trees and vines. MADAME FLORICA halts. She approaches a strange shape, kneels down and touches it. She lifts her fingers to her nose and sniffs.*

**MADAME FLORICA:** The Beast has been killing again. We must keep an eye on him. Especially now that the girl is there. (*Points to GYPSY 1 and GYPSY 2.*) You two.

**GYPSY 1:** Yes, Madame.

**MADAME FLORICA:** Spy on the castle.

**GYPSY 2:** You are mad! If the Beast catches us we will be killed!

**MADAME FLORICA:** Then don't be caught. If he seems a danger to the girl, report to me. Go.

*GYPSY 1 and GYPSY 2 nod and exit. Blackout.*

**ACT ONE, SCENE 10B**

**AT START:** *Lights up on Beauty's Cottage. MARGUERITE is looking at the bucket of water, she is disgusted by it. CHARLOTTE enters with a broom.*

**MARGUERITE:** Charlotte! There you are. I prepared a nice pale of water for you.

**CHARLOTTE:** What? Why?

**MARGUERITE:** So you can scrub the floor, of course!

**CHARLOTTE:** What?! No! I am going to sweep!

**MARGUERITE:** You only sweep it under my bed! I have to begin dinner!

**CHARLOTTE:** You burned it black last time! I will sweep and make dinner!

**MARGUERITE:** No, you shall scrub!

**CHARLOTTE:** Over my dead body!

**MARGUERITE:** Don't tempt me!

*MARGUERITE grabs CHARLOTTE by the head and shoves it in the bucket. JEAN-LUC enters.*

**JEAN-LUC:** Ladies! Ladies, please!

*JEAN-LUC manages to pry MARGUERITE off of CHARLOTTE, who sits up and wipes the water from her face.*

**JEAN-LUC:** What is going on?

*MARGUERITE signs to CHARLOTTE to be coy.*

**CHARLOTTE:** ...I get so thirsty.

**JEAN-LUC:** Oh, alright then... um, Marguerite, are you ready?

**MARGUERITE:** For what?

**JEAN-LUC:** You promised me a stroll, remember?

**MARGUERITE:** Oh. I did, didn't I? Well, it's just that... since Beauty has been away, it's been so hard to get everything done around here. I simply have no time for a stroll.

**JEAN-LUC:** I see... well, would it help if I did some of your chores?

**MARGUERITE:** *(Grins.)* The floors need scrubbing.

**JEAN-LUC:** And scrubbed they shall be.

*JEAN-LUC bends down and begins to scrub. CHARLOTTE stands and goes next to her sister.*

**MARGUERITE:** Thank you, Jean-Luc. It is so kind of you to do this for me.

*JEAN-LUC takes MARGUERITE'S hand.*

**JEAN-LUC:** I would do anything for you, Marguerite. *(Kisses MARGUERITE'S hand.)*

**MARGUERITE:** *(Holding her hand out in disgust.)* A fool will do anything for love.

*MARGUERITE wipes her hand on CHARLOTTE'S arm and exits. CHARLOTTE is disgusted for a moment, but shrugs and follows. Blackout.*

### ACT ONE, SCENE 10C

*AT RISE: Lights rise in Castle Garden. Day time, TREE NYMPHS are scattered on the forest edge, still. BEAUTY sits near a tree with a book. BEAST enters from the castle and crosses to BEAUTY.*

**BEAST:** Good day, Beauty.

**BEAUTY:** I found this in your library. I hope you don't mind—

**BEAST:** As I've said, this is also your home, too.

**BEAUTY:** Thank you.

**BEAST:** It has been years since I have been outside in the day. I have forgotten how the sun feels.

**BEAUTY:** Would you like to stroll with me?

**BEAST:** If you will allow me to

*BEAUTY closes her book and stands. BEAUTY leads the BEAST, and they walk. After a bit, he stops, tired.*

**BEAUTY:** What is the matter?

**BEAST:** I am thirsty.

**BEAUTY:** Oh, I will bring you some water.

**BEAST:** No, no. I will be alright.

*Unseen, GYPSY 1 and GYPSY 2 sneak in, watching from the side.*

**BEAUTY:** If you are certain. *(Sits on ground and gestures for BEAST to sit.)*

**BEAST:** *(Sits next to BEAUTY.)* I would like to apologize for last night.

**BEAUTY:** Forget it. I've tried to.

**BEAST:** Are you frightened of me?

**BEAUTY:** Not right now.

**BEAST:** Do you look at me and see an animal?

**BEAUTY:** (*Beat.*) Not right now.

*BEAST moves to touch her hand. BEAUTY pulls back and turns away.*

**BEAUTY:** Please do not touch me.

**BEAST:** You are repulsed.

**BEAUTY:** I—

**BEAST:** You do not wish me near you. Because I am a monster.

*SFX: rustling in trees. BEAST senses an animal.*

**BEAUTY:** What is wrong?

**BEAST:** Go away.

**BEAUTY:** What?

**BEAST:** Go! Inside now!

*BEAUTY runs towards the Castle. BEAST lets out an ungodly wail and exits running towards the forest. BEAUTY stops, turns, and runs after BEAST. BEAUTY is unable to exit because the TREE NYMPHS have clustered around her. She wanders through them looking for BEAST. TREE NYMPHS part and reveal a beautiful DEER. BEAUTY watches it, transfixed. BEAST enters (without seeing BEAUTY) howls, catches DEER, and lowers his head to eat. BEAUTY screams.*

**BEAST:** (*Snapping head towards BEAUTY.*) What are you doing?! You were supposed to leave! (*Jumps to BEAUTY, grabs her violently.*) You were not supposed to see!

*BEAST throws BEAUTY down. Crying, shaking, BEAUTY crawls backwards as BEAST crawls toward her like an animal.*

**BEAST:** WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?!

*BEAST attacks and BEAUTY dodges him, scampering to her feet.*

**BEAUTY:** You monster! You dress and parade yourself like a man, but you will always be a disgusting, repulsive BEAST!

**BEAST:** I am sorry. (*Exits running.*)

*TREE NYMPHS begin close in around BEAUTY menacingly. BEAUTY screams and tries to fight, TREE NYMPHS have her completely entangled. BEAUTY screams louder then faints. BEAST enters and howls. BEAST attacks TREE NYMPHS, fighting them off. Blackout.*

END OF ACT ONE

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