

Cinderella

by Bill Robertson

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BITESIZE THEATRE COMPANY, 8 Green Meadows, New Broughton, Wrexham, LL11 6SG

cast

F	Rose	Ella/Cinderella		
F	Mrs. Bridges	Stepmother	Fairy	
M	Geoffrey	Grizelda	Messenger1	Footman1
F	Lily	Deirdre	Dandini	Footman2
M	Hudson	Prince	Messenger2	Coachman

Cinderella

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This draft 20/11/02

Scene 1 **Hardiman Hall** **The Kitchen**

[Slapstick with *SERVANTS* running hither and thither doing their work. *ELLA* enters smiling.]

ELLA: Hello everyone.

ALL: Hello Miss Ella.

ELLA: Isn't it a wonderful day ? [ELLA exits]

LILY: Humph! Not for us !

[Song: *It's the Hard-Knock Life/Annie.*]

ALL: **It's a hard knock life for us! It's a hard knock life for us!**
'Stead of treated, we get tricked, 'Stead of kisses, we get kicked.
It's a hard knock life.
Got no life to speak of, so. It's a hard knock row we hoe.
Cotton blankets 'stead of wool. Empty bellies 'stead of full.
It's a hard knock life.
Don't it feel that the wind is always howlin ?
Don't it seem like there's never any light ?
Once a day don't you want to throw the towel in.
It's easier than puttin' up a fight.
It's a hard knock life for us ! It's a hard knock life for us!
'Stead of treated we get tricked, 'Stead of kisses we get kicked.
It's a hard knock, It's a hard knock, It's a hard knock life.

GEOFF: [notices the audience.] Oh! Hello everybody.

ALL: Hello Geoffrey.

GEOFF: No! Not you lot. I meant the boys and girls. Hello boys and girls. [*audience: Hello (feebly).*] Oh! come on now, you can do better than that. I said, hello boys and girls. [*audience: Hello*] That's better. Now, my name's Geoffrey so when I shout "Hello boys and girls", you should all shout back "Hello Geoffrey". Will you do that for me ? [*audience: Yes*] Good. So hello boys and girls. [*audience: Hello Geoffrey*] Well done! Now I'm the valet, here at Hardiman Hall. Do you know what a valet is ?

ALL: A wet muddy place between two hills ?

GEOFF: Nooooo! It's my job. It means that I look after the master, Baron Hardiman himself. The Baron is a rich gentleman and Hardiman Hall is his house. Yes! I can see you're all very impressed. [*SERVANTS start to grumble*] And once upon a time this was a happy house. Back when the Baron's first wife was alive, that is.

BRIDGES: Oh! Yes, the first Baroness was a lovely woman. And so kind.

HUDSON: Yes! Very kind and generous. Always saw the best in everyone.

LILY: Never a cross word to any of us.

BRIDGES: That's right. A lovely woman, she was. You just have to look at Miss Ella to see that.

HUDSON: Yes, Miss Ella's the spitting image of her mother.

GEOFF: [*sighs*] Yes, this used to be a happy house... but unfortunately, Miss Ella's mother is no longer with us and the Baron has gone and married again. This time to the widow lady who used to run the local pie shop....Mrs.Miggins. And I know I shouldn't be sayin' this but she's a right one. Bossing everyone around, barking orders left, right and centre, never so much as a by-your-leave, let alone a please or a thank you. Makes our lives a complete misery.

BRIDGES: The new mistress is a nasty piece of work alright.

GEOFF: And to make matters worse she's only gone and brought her two daughters with her. Grizelda and Deirdre.

ALL: [*They all shiver.*] Urgh!

GEOFF: You wouldn't want to meet either of them in a dark alley, if you catch my drift. And what's more, they're so jealous of Miss Ella that they'll do anything to make her life miserable too. I only wish there was something I could do to help her. You see... I'm in love with Miss Ella.

[*ROSE & MRS.BRIDGES shake their heads and exit.*]

HUDSON: You know it's hopeless Geoffrey.

GEOFF: [*sighs*] Yes, Mr. Hudson. Hopeless!

LILY: You ought to remember your place, Geoffrey. She's a rich man's daughter and you're just a valet.

HUDSON: And an idle one at that. Haven't you got work to do?

LILY: I know I have, Mr.Hudson.

HUDSON: Yes, Lily. We all have. So get on with it.

[*Suddenly, ELLA is propelled into the kitchen by her STEPMOTHER.*]

LILY: It's the mistress. Quick! [*Everyone snaps to attention.*]

STEMP: I'm glad you're all here because I have something to tell you. The Baron has had to go away... on business and naturally he has left me in charge. And now that I'm in charge, I have better things to spend his money on, than a bunch of no-good idle servants. So we will be having a few changes around here. [*SERVANTS grumble*] Quiet! First... since there is no master to look after, we won't be needing a valet... will we Geoffrey?... so.... you're sacked. You can join Mrs. Bridges and Rose. I've already sent them on their way.

LILY: Ow, maam! If there's just Mr. Hudson and me, who'll do all the cooking and the like ?

STEMP: Well now Lily, you needn't worry your empty little head about that..... because Mr.

Hudson and you... are also sacked. But since you ask, I'll tell you who's going to do all the work around here from now on. [*pushes ELLA forward*] Meet the new kitchen maid.

LILY: Miss Ella ?

GEOFF: But Miss Ella isn't used to hard work, she's a lady.

STEPM: Oh, I'm sure she'll manage... if she want's to eat that is. Now, you can all get out.

LILY: Ow! [*Slapstick. Mr.HUDSON & LILY exit.*]

STEPM: From now on Ella, you will rise before daybreak, bring in the water from the well, light the fire, cook the meals, wash the clothes, clean the house, make the beds...and anything else I ...or my girls [*ala Jean Brodie*] require you to do.

GEOFF: But you can't do that to Miss Ella.

STEPM: Are you still here Geoffrey ?

GEOFF: It's not right. You can't do it. [*Goes towards STEPM*]

STEPM: Oh, can't I ? Just watch me. [*laughs*]

ELLA: [*stopping him*] Geoffrey! No!

GEOFF: Oooooh! Will you boo her with me boys and girls ? [**audience: Yes**] OK after 3. 1.2.3. [**audience: Boo**] Louder than that ! [**audience: Boo**] That's better.

STEPM: [*laughs*] Get out!

ELLA: Go Geoffrey, please. You'll only make things worse.

GEOFF: Oh! Alright! I'll go, if you're sure..... Bye Miss Ella..... I'm sorry.

ELLA: Goodbye Geoffrey ... and good luck. [*GEOFFREY leaves, shaking his head*]

STEPM: How touching. [*laughs. ELLA starts to leave sobbing*] And where do you think you're going?

ELLA: To my room.

STEPM: You have no room. I've given your room to Grizelda. It's far too nice for you and besides my girls need a room each.

ELLA: But where will I sleep?

STEPM: Let me see? Mmm! Yes! You can sleep here, in the kitchen where you belong. So now that that's settled, you might as well get started, I expect dinner in one hour.... [*exits laughing.*]

[*song: Close every door/Joseph.*]

ELLA: **Why does she shout at me, spurn me and laugh at me?
What have I done to be punished this way ?
Perhaps it's all meant to be, this is my destiny
Being a servant in what was my home.
But I've nowhere else to go, no other choice and so
There's no use in wishing for happier times.
I'll wash and I'll clean for them, cook every meal for them.
Make sure there's nothing which meets with their scorn.**

ELLA: **Just-smile and pretend to be, happy and so carefree.
Sleep in the cinders and rise with the dawn.
My Mother said that I'd a guardian angel in the sky
Who would look after me and keep me from harm.
Where can that angel be ? I wish she'd come to me,
Or send me a sign to show I'm not alone.
But I know I will pray and I'll wish every day
That someone will rescue me from all of this woe .**

GRIZELDA: *[off]* Ella, run my bath.

ELLA: Yes Grizelda.

DEIRDRE: *[off]* Ella, make my bed.

ELLA: Coming Deirdre.

STEPM: *[off]* Ella, where's my breakfast.

ELLA: Just a minute.

STEPM: *[off]* Get it now, you insolent girl.

ELLA: Yes, stepmother.

[Enter Ella's step-sisters; GRIZELDA, who is short-sighted, and DEIRDRE who is overweight. They knock the breakfast tray out of ELLA's hands. They engage in a fast, patter routine]

GRIZEL: Get that cleaned up, you clumsy oaf.

DEIRDRE: Who are you calling clumsy, Grizelda ?

GRIZEL: Ella, of course. Although if the cap fits.

DEIRDRE: Well, you're the one who's always bumping into things. You should get your eyes checked.

GRIZEL: There's nothing wrong with my eyes, Deirdre, they've always been plain blue. Besides who are you to talk? You can't walk into a room without tripping over your own feet.

DEIRDRE: Rubbish ! I've always been considered light on my feet *[she does a little dance]*.

GRIZEL: Light ? Your feet haven't seen light in a month of Sundays.

DEIRDRE: Are you saying, I'm overweight, Grizelda ?

GRIZEL: You know, I would never make a joke at your expense, Deirdre. But, let's face it dear, in a Brittany Spears look-a-like competition, you would come a poor third to Mr. Blobby and the Michelin man.

DEIRDRE: At least, I have a beautiful face...unlike you.

GRIZEL: Me! Everyone can see my face is a dream.

DEIRDRE: A nightmare more like.

GRIZEL: You're just jealous.

DEIRDRE: I'm not jealous of you..... I'm the real Beauty around here. [*to audience*] They used me for the Disney film, you know.

GRIZEL: Beauty ? Huh! You're more like the Beast.... Didn't I see you in Monsters Inc. ?

DEIRDRE: No..... and I'll have you know I still have the complexion of a schoolgirl?

GRIZEL: Then you should give it back, you're stretching all out of shape and it's covered in spots.

DEIRDRE: Really ? Ooooh! Do you think a mud pack would help ?

GRIZEL: I'm absolutely certain in would, dear....until it fell off that is.

DEIRDRE: It's so depressing ! [*starts to cry*]

GRIZEL: There! There! You know, when I'm down in the dumps I always get myself a new hat.

DEIRDRE: Oh! That's where you get them from ? But you're right. What we need is some retail therapy. Let's go Shopping !

GRIZEL: Ella! Ella! Bring us our handbags. We're going shopping.

ELLA: [*off*] Yes. Grizelda.

GRIZEL: And make sure you don't get dust and dirt all over them. Have you noticed how Ella is always covered in soot and cinders, these days ? It's a disgrace. [*ELLA enters*]

DEIRDRE: Yes. Why are you always covered in cinders, Ella ?

ELLA: Well, I...suppose it's from sleeping next to the hearth. It's the warmest place.

GRIZEL: Oh! Then perhaps we should call you Cinder-Ella ? [*laughs*]

DEIRDRE: Oh! that's good. That's very good. We should call her that from now on.

BOTH: Cinderella! Cinderella! Cinderella! Cinderella! Cinderella! [*laughs. ELLA leaves in tears*]

GRIZEL: Now for the shops. A new dress. And a beefburger.

DEIRDRE: You'll look lovely dressed in a beefburger.[*laughs*]

GRIZEL: Of course. I look lovely dressed in anything. Come along.

[GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE exit]

Scene 2 **The Woods**

[*ELLA enters carrying a basket of flowers, which she places on her mother's grave. ELLA kneels deep in thought, by the grave and doesn't see the FAIRY when she enters in a puff of smoke.*]

FAIRY: Hello there.

ELLA: Oh! Where did you come from ?

FAIRY: I'm sorry I didn't mean to startle you.

ELLA: No.. No... I..I was just...

FAIRY: Yes, I know. You were just talking to your mother. It's good that you come to visit her so often. You've no idea how many people don't bother.... And it's important to have someone you can talk to when things aren't going so well, isn't it ? Although I'm afraid I'm not exactly the handsome Prince you were wishing for, am I ?

ELLA: How...? Do I know you ?

FAIRY: I don't think we've met. Although I do get around quite a bit in my line of work. Here today, gone tomorrow, that sort of thing.

ELLA: It must be nice to travel.

FAIRY: Yes. People always think that. And it is... to an extent. But I'd rather like to be able to settle down in one place for a while.... Somewhere warm and cozy and peaceful.

[song: *Wouldn't it be Lovely/My Fair Lady*].

**All I want is a room somewhere
Far away from the cold night air
With one enormous chair. Oh! Wouldn't it be lovely.
A box of chocolates for me to eat
A blazing fire making lots of heat
Warm face, warm hands, warm feet. Oh! Wouldn't it be lovely.
Oh so lovely sitting there with nowhere else to be
I could snuggle up, just me and a lovely cup of tea
All I want is a room somewhere
Far away from the cold night air
With one enormous chair. Oh! Wouldn't it be lovely.
Lovely. Lovely. Lovely. Lovely.**

[*sigh*] But enough of me...how are things at Hardiman Hall, mmm!

ELLA: Not so good... now!

FAIRY: [*She looks into the ether*] Mmmm! Yes.... Things have changed, haven't they ? But there's nothing to say that they can't change again.....Now I think it's probably time you were going.... if you're going to be in the right place at the right time, that is. But... we'll meet again. [*waves her wand casting a spell to send ELLA to meet the PRINCE*]

ELLA: [*in a trance*] Yes. You must... excuse me. I must... be going. Bye now. [*ELLA exits*].

FAIRY: Good! [*to audience*] Well now that I've set things in motion, I can introduce myself properly. So hello boys and girls [**audience: Hello (but feebly)**] Oh come now, I know you can do better than that, I heard you before. Hello boys and girls. [**audience: Hello**] That's better. Now, I'm Ella's Fairy Godmother. Some people call us guardian angels, but you all have one....or at least you do when your born. And Ella is one of those people who is good and kind-hearted enough to mean that I'm still around when she needs some help. But unfortunately not everyone remains good and well behaved and their Fairies fade away with every bad thing they do until.... well their Fairies simply disappear. I'm sure that's what's happened to some [*indicating the teachers*] of you grown ups.... and then when you need our help, well... we can't, can we?... and what's more, it doesn't leave many of us to go 'round, I can tell you. Most of the time I'm simply rushed off my feet. No rest. No peace.... But enough of my troubles. Someone's coming so I'd better make myself scarce, for now. Good bye Boys and girls. Be good.

[*FAIRY exits in a puff of smoke. GEOFFREY enters.*]

GEOFF: Oh hello, boys and girls. [**audience: Hello Geoffrey**] Have you seen Miss Ella ? [**audience: Yes**] Have you ? [**audience: Yes**] Really! Then which way did she go? [**audience: answers**] That way. [*goes to look*] I can't see her. Are you sure ? [**audience: Yes**] Well, I'll tell you what. Will you tell me if you see her again ? [**audience: Yes**] Will you? [**audience: Yes**] And you won't forget now, will you ? [**audience: No**] That's good ! [*Behind you routine. ELLA enters. audience: shout*] What ? Is she there? [**audience: Yes**] Over there ?.... [*ELLA exits*] There's no one here. Are you sure she was here? [*ELLA enters. audience: shout*] What over there ? Oh! Come on ! I've just been over there. Are you sure? [*ELLA exits*] See! There's no one here. [*ELLA enters & stops behind him. audience: shout*] What behind me ? [*they walk in a circle with their backs to each other*] I can't see anyone. [*ELLA exits. audience: shout*] What this way? [*GEOFF bumps into DANDINI as he enters with the PRINCE*] Aaa! Ooo! Eee! Your highness. [*Bows very low*]

PRINCE: Keep your voice down, man, or we'll be inundated with Palace servants. [*Walks away*]

GEOFF: Ever so sorry your highness. Are you ... [*looks left & right/3stooges with DANDINI*] are you in hiding?

DANDINI: I think it would be best if you left....don't you ?

GEOFF: Oh! Yes. Yes. And mums the word.

DANDINI: Now !

[*GEOFFREY exits bowing profusely*]

PRINCE: Ah! Peace at last.... You know Dandini, being a Prince is such a bore. I can't move without a trumpet blaring in my ear or a crowd of at least fifty servants bowing and scraping at my feet. Why does there always have to be such a fuss ?

DANDINI: Well you are the Prince.

PRINCE: Huh!

DANDINI: Em! Forgive me for asking but... why are we here?

PRINCE: Oh, well I just needed some peace and quiet. Somewhere to escape from my busy schedule at the Palace, you know.....and somewhere to hide from my dotting parents.

DANDINI: The King and Queen?

PRINCE: I don't believe I have any other parents?

DANDINI: No!..What I mean is, why ? All they ever try to do is make you happy.

PRINCE: And get me married.

DANDINI: Oh! ... that too.

PRINCE: Yes. And have you heard the latest ? The King has only decided to hold a three day festival and a ball.

DANDINI: Well, that should be fun.

PRINCE: Oh! It would be if he hadn't decided to invite every eligible maiden in the kingdom. It's just another scheme to get me married. Who ever heard of such a thing ? A Bride finding Ball? I refuse to take part in such a degrading cattle market and I've told them so.... but as usual they ignore what I say and go ahead anyway.

DANDINI: But I don't get it. You have beautiful women throwing themselves at you. Why don't you just choose one, get married and be done with it ?

PRINCE: Ah! But then Dandini, I wouldn't be in love, would I ?

DANDINI: How do you know ? I'm in love with every pretty girl that comes my way.

[ELLA enters, still in a trance and bumps into DANDINI who bumps into the PRINCE.]

ELLA: *[The Fairy's spell is broken]* Oh! Oooo! *[She curtsies and keeps her eyes down.]* I'm sorry. Please forgive me.

PRINCE: *[Walking away without looking at ELLA]* Yes. Yes. Be on your way.

ELLA: *[ELLA looks up at DANDINI. Who likes the look of ELLA.]* Sorry! *[She exits confused]*

PRINCE: *[sigh]* Life is so simple for you Dandini. Why can't I be ordinary like you ?

DANDINI: Thank you very much.

PRINCE: All I want is a life of my own... And to marry the girl of my dreams, of course.

[Song:-PRINCE-I'll Know(Guys&Dolls): DANDINI-Some Enchanted Evening(South Pacific).]

DANDINI: Well, you might find the girl of your dreams at this Ball. I can see it now...

Some enchanted evening, [PRINCE: Some enchanted evening ?]

You will see a stranger [PRINCE: I will see a stranger]

You will see a stranger across a crowded room

And somehow you'll know as strange as it seems

That this is the girl that you've met in your dreams

PRINCE: Yes! I'll know when my love comes along. I'll know then and there
I'll know at the sight of her face
How I care. How I care. How I care
And I'll stop and I'll stare at that face in the throng
Yes I'll know when my love comes along.

DANDINI: Yes, but **That-same enchanted evening**, [PRINCE: That same enchanted evening ?]
You may see her smiling [PRINCE: I may see her smiling.]
You may see her smiling across that crowded room
She's-the girl of your dreams so fly to her side
And before midnight strikes you can make her your bride.
Once you have found her never let her go
BOTH: **Once you/I have found her never let her go.**

MESS1: [off] Your highness. Your highness.

PRINCE: Oh, no! A messenger from the Palace. My mother will have sent him out to find me. Stall him, Dandini, there's a good chap.

[PRINCE exits. MESSENGER1 enters.]

MESS1: Ah! Dandini. Have you seen the Prince by any chance?

DANDINI: Well, yes. I see him most days.

MESS1: No, I mean recently. I have a message for him from the Queen.

DANDINI: Oh!..... Yes.

MESS1: [pause] Well..em!.... which way did he go?

DANDINI: Oh.... I believe he went.... that way. [points in the wrong direction]

MESS1: That way ? Are you sure? Oh, well. [MESSENGER1 exits.] Your highness! Your highness!

Scene 3 **The Woods**

[ELLA enters a little lost and again bumps into DANDINI.]

ELLA: Oh! [She curtsies]

DANDINI: Hello again.

ELLA: I'm sorry, please forgive me. I don't know what's wrong with me today.

DANDINI: Nothing that I can see. [ELLA starts to go] No! Please! Don't go.

ELLA: [Shyly] Oh! Alright!

DANDINI: Good! For it would seem that we are destined to keep bumping into each other.

ELLA: Yes. It would seem so.

DANDINI: Do you come here often ?... because I don't think I've seen you in the woods before.

ELLA: Quite often. I've been visiting my mother's grave.

DANDINI: Oh! I'm sorry.....

ELLA: And you ? Why are you here ?

DANDINI: Oh, well I just needed some peace and quiet. Somewhere to escape from my busy schedule at the Palace, you know ?

ELLA: You live in the Palace? Are you... the Prince ?*[She curtsies]*

DANDINI: No.No...*[has an idea. pretends to be Prince]* You never know who might be listening !
[She averts her gaze] No, you mustn't. Someone as beautiful as you, should never hide their face. *[lifts her face and looks into her eyes]* You have such beautiful eyes.

ELLA: You're too kind. *[They look into each other's eyes.]*

[song: I'd be surprisingly good for you/Evita]

DANDINI: Not at all. I don't always rush in like this
Twenty seconds after saying hello
Telling strangers I'm too good to miss
If I'm wrong I hope you'll tell me so
But you really should know I'd be good for you
I'd be surprisingly good for you
I won't go on if I'm boring you
But do you understand my point of view ?
Do you like what you hear, what you see and would you be good for me too.

ELLA: I'm afraid I'll have to make a move.
Though it was lovely meeting you today
My family never ever would approve
If I was found alone with you this way
Though I'm sure that your right you'd be good for me
You'd be surprisingly good for me.

DANDINI: Please go on you enthrall me so
Just tell me once before you go

ELLA: Yes I like what I hear, what I see and knowing me I would be good for you too.
I must go.

DANDINI: Stay.

ELLA: No, I'm sorry. I can't... I must go. *[ELLA exits]*

DANDINI: Ah well! See you soon, perhaps. *[to audience]* There's always a next time *[wink]*.

[DANDINI exits opposite side. Whistling/Humming "Some Enchanted Evening"]

Scene 4 **Hardiman Hall** **Outside**

[*GEOFFREY & MESSENGER2 cross. They are delivering invitations. They give a few out to the girls in the audience. Then GEOFFREY stops & talks to the audience. MESSENGER2 exits*]

GEOFF: Hello boys and girls. [*audience: Hello Geoffrey*] I've got a new job. Yes and I've gone up in the world, too. I work for the Palace now. I'm delivering all these invitations for the Prince's Ball. I can see you're impressed. And look where we are ? You know... I never thought I'd be back here at Baron Hardiman's house so soon. Don't tell anyone but getting sacked from Hardiman Hall was the best thing that could have happened to me. [*ELLA enters*] Well hello, there, Miss Ella, I hoped I might see you.

ELLA: Oh, Geoffrey. It's you.

BOTH: [*together*] How are you? [*giggle*]

GEOFF: Oh, I'm fine. In fact I'm better than fine. I've got a new job. I'm working for the Palace delivering invitations for the Prince's Ball.

ELLA: Well, that's wonderful.....

GEOFF: What about you?

ELLA: Oh, I'm fine. In fact I'm better than fine, too. I feel wonderful. You see, I think I'm in love, Geoffrey. [*GEOFFREY looks hopeful*] It happened all of a sudden. I was out in the woods and there he was. He didn't see me... at first. But then he was so nice and charming. [*GEOFFREY is dumbfounded*] And when he said he was the Prince, well how could I not fall head over heels in love with him....No one else knows. So you won't tell on me will you?

GEOFF: [*disappointed*] Oh!.... No. No.

MESS2: [*reenters*] Have you rung the bell yet, Geoffrey ?

GEOFF: Well..eh... no... but....

MESS2: Tut! [*rings the bell*]

STEPM: [*off*] Cinderella ! Cinderella ?

GEOF&EL: [*Together*] Oh no! It's the baroness/my stepmother. Hide!

STEPM: [*off*] Where is that girl ?

[*ELLA, GEOFF & MESS2 run around in a panic ending back where they started. STEPMOTHER enters through the door knocking MESSENGER2 flying*]

STEPM: Cinderella ! [*GEOFFREY melodramatically steps in front of ELLA to protect her*]

ELLA: Yes, Stepmother.

STEPM: Where... [*sees GEOFFREY*] Oh, it's you. What do you want ?

GEOFF: We've brought you four invitations to the Prince's Ball. [*MESSENGER2 holds out the invitations*]

STEPM: Fine. You've done your bit. Now get lost..... [*GEOFFREY goes to say something*] Now! [*GEOFFREY leaves. To MESSENGER2*] Four invitations ? Why four ?

MESS2: Well, that's what we have you down for ? There's one for the Baroness Hardiman.

STEPM: That's me! [*takes invitation*]

MESS2: One for Grizelda Miggins and one for Deirdre Miggins

STEPM: Those are my girls. [*takes invitations*]

MESS2: And there's one for Ella Hardiman.

ELLA: That's me. [*MESSENGER2 goes to hand one to ELLA*]

STEPM: I'll take that. [*takes invitation*] I mean I'll keep it with the others for safekeeping, you wouldn't want it covered in soot and cinders, would you, Ella ?

ELLA: No, stepmother.

STEPM: You've delivered your invitations, now go. [*MESSENGER2 leaves*] Now young lady, just where do you think you've been ?

ELLA: I've been taking flowers to my mother's grave.

STEPM: Really! Flowers stolen from my garden, no doubt. This is how you repay my kindness...

ELLA: No... I picked wild flowers in the woods.

STEPM: A likely tale. But if you've time to pick flowers then I obviously don't give you enough work to do. That will have to change.

ELLA: Yes, stepmother.

STEPM: Humph! [*shouts*] Deirdre! Grizelda!

GRIZ&DEIR: [*off*] Yes mama.

STEPM: Come here girls. Mummy has wonderful news. [*GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE enter. Slapstick.*]

GRIZ&DEIR: Get out of my way. Me first. Me first.

STEPM: Girls! Girls!

GRIZ&DEIR: Sorry mama.

STEPM: We have all been invited to a Ball at the Palace.

GRIZEL: A Ball ? Our first Ball. At the Palace ?

DEIRDRE: Oh! I can't wait... But what shall we wear ?

GRIZEL: All the handsomest young men in the kingdom are bound to be there. We've got to look our best!

DEIRDRE: I think I shall wear my red brocade dress with the lace edging.... Although the lace will need mending..... See that's its done, Cinderella.

ELLA: Yes. Deirdre.

GRIZEL: I shall wear my pink satin dress and my gold cape.

STEPM: No. No. No. You, my dears, shall have brand new dresses for the ball. I can't have you appearing at the Palace in those old things. You must look irresistible if you are going to catch the Prince's eye. You will be *la crème de la crème*, my darlings.

GRIZ&DEIR: Oh, wonderful. New dresses!

STEPM: There is only one small difficulty.... Money! I'm afraid the Baron wasn't... I mean isn't as rich as he first appeared, so I'm afraid Cinderella will have to make your dresses.

GRIZ&DEIR: Her ? Oh, no! Mama.

ELLA: But.. I've never ...

STEPM: You will make them. Is that clear? And make sure your hands are clean when you do.

ELLA: Yes. Stepmother. And what shall I wear, Stepmother ? Could I make myself a new dress for the Ball, too.

STEPM: [*howls with laughter*] You... go to the Ball ... don't be ridiculous, Cinderella.

GRIZEL: You're far too dirty.

DEIRDRE: Besides you can't even dance.

ELLA: I must go. I must meet the Prince.

STEPM: No, no! You can't go and that's final. You would only put us to shame. Know your place, Cinderella, and that place is here, not at a Palace.

ELLA: But I have an invitation.

STEPM: Do you ? [*Tears fourth invitation into 4 or more pieces*] Oh dear. It appears that you no longer have an invitation.

[*They exit laughing. ELLA exits downhearted*]

[*ELLA enters with the dresses she has been making. They are awful*]

ELLA: [*sigh*] I can't stop thinking about the Prince. He was so handsome and charming. But if I don't go to the Ball he's bound to meet someone else and then.. then I'll never see him again..... except in my dreams, that is.

[**song: On My Own/Les Miserables**]

**I close my eyes, and dream that he's beside me.
Hand in hand we walk down moonlit byways.
He gently puts his arms around me
And there I want to stay till break of day comes by to wake me.**

**But I know it's only in my mind;
I won't see my Prince tonight; not at the Ball.
And although resigned to stay behind,
Still I wish I could go after all.**

**So I'll dream, and wish my life was diff'rent.
One day soon I know I'll have my moment.
Until then I'll wish for what I haven't
A way to get me to the Ball where happiness awaits.
I'm wishing, I'm hoping, it happens before it gets too late.**

[*sigh*] And I still haven't finished these dresses. Just look at them. They're awful. Oh! What am I going to do ? [*there's a knock at the door*] Who could that be ? [*When she answers it, there's no-one there. The FAIRY enters in a puff of smoke*] Oh! It's you.

FAIRY: Yes, me.....Sorry to arrive unannounced...again !

ELLA: Oh no, it's fine.... Can I get you something ? A cup of tea perhaps ? I haven't much but you're welcome to share what I have.

FAIRY: No, thank you.... but... thank you for the thought. I'm here because things haven't gone quite to plan, have they ? So we have to get it back on track, so to speak... lend a helping hand... whatever's needed.

ELLA: You wouldn't be any good at sewing would you? I was supposed to make these three dresses, you see, but....well...look at them.

FAIRY: Yes... and I'm afraid.... they don't even look much like dresses.

ELLA: No. I knew it would be a disaster.... and I'm going to get into so much trouble. [*crys*]

FAIRY: Now. Now. It's not as bad as all that.... I'm sure we can do something with them.

ELLA: Oh! could you? I would be really grateful if you could.

FAIRY: Of course, it's difficult to see what's what... perhaps you could get your stepsisters to try them on and then we can see what needs to be done.

ELLA: Oh! Alright! [*ELLA takes the dresses out*] Grizelda! Deirdre!

FAIRY: [*waves her magic wand*] Do you know, boys and girls... I can do magic... but only for other people. I can't use it to do anything for myself..... And if I try, it always turns out wrong. For instance I can make Grizelda and Deirdre look simply stunning...

[GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE enter looking stunning. They can't see the FAIRY. GRIZELDA is carrying a cup of coffee which has confetti in it]

DEIRDRE: Not bad Cinderella. Not the height of fashion but it will do.... I suppose.

ELLA: [to FAIRY] How did you do that ?

FAIRY: That's a trade secret, my dear.

GRIZEL: Yes, I suppose they'll do. Although my dress is more stunning than yours, Deirdre. The Prince will never look at you, with me in the room.

DEIRDRE: Well, you better hope your stunning dress stops him looking at your face or you'll scare him away....straight into my arms.

GRIZEL: Well, you best wait outside, since you'll be lucky to get through the door in that dress.

DEIRDRE: Ooooh! Are you saying this dress makes me look fat ?

GRIZEL: [sips her coffee thoughtfully] No... it's you're fat that makes you look fat.

DEIRDRE: Oooooh! Well we'll just have to see, won't we? [they face up to each other]

FAIRY: Well, at least the dresses are stunning... Even I have my limitations. Mmmm! But suppose I should try to magic something for myself. It doesn't have to be much...let's say.. that I might like a nice cup of tea ? [She waves her wand. GRIZELDA sneezes into the cup of tea and tips confetti over FAIRY] See what I mean. Ah, well !

GRIZEL: Straighten this hem, Cinderella. [FAIRY hands ELLA a mirror]

DEIRDRE: Fetch a mirror, Cinderella and do hurry up you lazy creature.[FAIRY hands ELLA powder]

GRIZEL: Powder my wig, Cinderella.[FAIRY hands ELLA a comb]

DEIRDRE: What about my hair ? Comb my hair, Cinderella.[FAIRY hands ELLA a broom]

GRIZEL: And make sure you clear up this mess, Cinderella. Are you ready, Deirdre? We mustn't keep the Prince waiting, must we?

DEIRDRE: No! We mustn't, Grizelda. But don't be jealous if the Prince asks me to dance first.....

GRIZELDA: Fat chance [GRIZELDA sweeps out and DEIRDRE storms after her]

ELLA: Have a nice time.

FAIRY: Well, I'm glad they've gone, aren't you ? [ELLA nods] And while they're at that Ball we can have a nice cosy little chat by the fire.... I must say these royal occasions aren't really my cup of tea..... You're not too disappointed at not going, are you ?

ELLA: [very disappointed] No! Why would I want to go to the Ball ? I'd much rather just sit here by the fire.

FAIRY: True. Although [sigh].... Well, if you do want to go to the Ball, you won't get there by

sitting around feeling sorry for yourself, will you ?

ELLA: [*sighs*] Even if I wanted to go... I've no way of getting there now.

FAIRY: Mmmm! Well, let me see. [*thinks*] Yes! But we'll need a little help from the boys and girls. [*to audience*] What we need are two smart, young, volunteers who are sitting up straight. Could you choose them please, Ella ? [*Choose two volunteers from the audience. Bring them up on stage*] Now what are your names? [*get names and repeat them for the audience*] Good! Now, I want you to help me to get Ella to the Ball. Alright ? [*to one volunteer*] So could you go and find me the large pumpkin I've seen growing in the hall? [*to other one*] And could you find me a mouse trap with two white mice in it ? I think it might be over there. [*to audience*] Everyone else can cheer them on and tell them if they're getting hot or cold. Hurry. [*they bring them back*] Good! Well done. [*Volunteers put them on the floor*] Now we can't leave them here because once I've turned them into a coach and horses, we'll never get them out of the door, will we ? So could you put them outside please, Ella ? [*ELLA puts them outside the door. FAIRY waves her magic wand. Puff of smoke*] There! The pumpkin is now the coach that will take you to the ball and those mice are now two beautiful white horses to pull it. [*to volunteers*] Now could you find me a watering can in which two lizards are hiding. You will find it over there. And finally could you find me a large black rat from over there. [*they bring them back. FAIRY waves her wand and turns the lizards into the two FOOTMEN and the rat into the COACHMAN.*] Now go and wait in the coach? [*They exit*] Well you both did very well, so here's a little something for each of you, to thank you for all your help. [*Give lollipops and send them back to their seats*] Give them a big round of applause. Now Ella can go to the Ball. [*to ELLA*] Aren't you pleased?

ELLA: [*half pleased*] Oh, yes... of course... it's just that... I can't dance [*picks up a ragged dress*]... and this is the best dress I have. How can I go to a Ball in these old rags?

FAIRY: What we need is a dancing spell ! [*FAIRY waves her wand. Music begins to play.*]

ELLA: [*she begins to dance*] I can dance. [*She dances off.*]

FAIRY: And let's give you something to wear, shall we ? [*FAIRY waves her wand again and ELLA returns dancing with a beautiful ball gown.*] Oh, it's so beautiful.

[song: Tonight/West Side Story]

FAIRY: **Tonight, tonight, your wish comes true tonight
Tonight love's going to answer your call
Tonight, tonight, you'll meet your Prince tonight
When tonight you're the belle of the Ball**

ELLA: **Today my life seemed oh so pointless
My plight seemed oh so endless, but then you brought the light.**

BOTH: **O stars shine bright and let their/our blessed love come alight.
Tonight.**

FAIRY: Now get ready and off you go. But be warned my magic is limited. All this will start to fade, until on the last stroke of midnight everything will return to what it was before. So it's very important that you return here before the last stroke of midnight.

ELLA: I will, Fairy Godmother [*ELLA exits*]

FAIRY: Now boys and girls, there's something you can do for me. Will you remind Ella to be back by midnight? [*audience:Yes*] I can't hear you. Will you remind her boys and girls? [*audience:Yes*]. Good. And you won't forget will you ? [*audience:No*] Thank you. Oh

dear! I forgot to tell her that the Prince she met in the woods wasn't really the Prince but his servant Dandini. Oh well! I'm sure it'll all sort itself out. Good bye boys and girls.
[exits]

Scene 6 Palace terrace outside the Ballroom

[The Ball is in full swing inside. The PRINCE enters. He is outside trying to avoid everyone particularly GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE. He looks around nervously]

PRINCE: Good! I think I've given them the slip *[He starts to relax]*

[GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE enter]

GRIZEL: Cooee!

DEIRDRE: There you are, your Princeliness.

GRIZEL: We thought we'd lost you.

PRINCE: No such luck!

[GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE each grab an arm and snuggle up close, making the PRINCE feel very uncomfortable. They both try to look alluring]

GRIZEL: Now, Princey-poo, you haven't danced with either of us yet, and you promised faithfully you would.

PRINCE: Yes, I did, didn't I?...It's just that there are so many young women to get 'round to. *[tries to extricate himself]* I was just trying to get a breath of fresh air....

DEIRDRE: You don't need fresh air, your highness, just breath in my loveliness...*[PRINCE chokes as DEIRDRE grabs him around the neck]*

GRIZEL: *[pushes DEIRDRE]* Get off Deirdre! Oh! I can see by your eyes that you're entranced by my beauty. *[DEIRDRE digs her in the ribs]* Ouch!

PRINCE: Actually, I was hoping to have a few moments alone...

DEIRDRE: We can be alone. *[PRINCE shakes his head in horror]* I knew all along in was me you fancied.

GRIZEL: Don't be nauseous, Deirdre. Can't you see the Prince wants to be alone with me. Princess Grizelda has a certain ring to it, don't you think ?

DEIRDRE: Will you leave him alone. He's mine !

GRIZEL: GO AWAY, Deirdre !

[There is a tug of war with the PRINCE. STEPMOTHER enters]

BOTH: Mine! Mine! Mine!

STEMP: Oh! There you are your highness. Now girls, one at a time. One at a time. We don't want to knock the Prince about too much before he marries you, do we ?

[GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE let go of PRINCE. ELLA arrives.]

PRINCE: Ah! A new guest. I'm afraid you'll have to excuse me. [Goes to ELLA] May I please have this dance?

ELLA: Actually, I was hoping I might dance with the Prince. We met once before...a few days ago, in the woods.

PRINCE: Really? And you're sure it was the Prince?

ELLA: Well, yes...he told me so. Well.. not in so many words... but I'm sure it was him. He was so charming.

PRINCE: [to audience] Dandini! The nerve of the man.... Well, unfortunately, Dand... "The Prince", [to audience] or should I say the servant formally known as... [to ELLA] isn't here, tonight.

ELLA: Oh! But I thought the Ball was for him.

PRINCE: Well, yes but he's very shy, and probably won't be seen outside the Palace for some time... perhaps even years...[to audience] if I have my way, that is.

ELLA: Oh dear. Then perhaps I should leave.

PRINCE: Oh, no. Don't do that... I mean... Now that you're here you should at least have one dance.

ELLA: Oh, alright. Perhaps just one. [she goes to go inside]

PRINCE: No. Let's not go inside. It's quieter out here.

ELLA: Alright. [they start to dance]

STEMM: Wait a minute! My poor babies didn't have their chance to sweep you off your feet yet.

PRINCE: I'm terribly sorry. But I'm afraid, I'm dancing with this lady, now. [looks into ELLA's eyes] I'm dancing with this Princess.

GRIZELDA: Argh! She's a Princess ?

DEIRDRE: Typical! I was in there. He would have chosen me for sure, if you hadn't got in the way. Now he's dancing with ...with ...her... Whoever she is. Anyway, she's not that good looking. She doesn't have my fragile beauty.

GRIZELDA: Yes, your face always did remind me of a traffic accident. And she certainly can't dance like me. [starts to dance]

DEIRDRE: The only person I've ever seen dance like you, turned out to be on fire.

STEMM: Wait a minute, there's something about her. I'm sure I've seen her before somewhere, but I can't quite remember where it was.

PRINCE: Do you know them ?

ELLA: Them? Actually I'd almost forgotten there was anyone else here.

STEPM: What are you waiting for. Cut in!

GRIZELDA: Excuse me, your highness.

DEIRDRE: Your highness, may I...? [*the PRINCE ignores them*] He can't take his eyes off her

GRIZELDA: We've no chance. We might as well go home. [*GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE exit*]

STEPM: I wish I could remember who she reminds me of. Wait a minute, girls. [*to audience*] Don't worry I'll be back. [*STEPMOTHER exits*]

ELLA: Why did they call you.... "your highness" ?

PRINCE: Ah, yes! Well... actually, that's because.... I'm the Prince.

ELLA: You're... the Prince? [*PRINCE nods*] Oh my! How embarrassing. Oh, your highness, please forgive me.. I...

PRINCE: No. No. Please. You've done nothing to apologise for. [*the dancing spell starts to wear off and she steps on his toes*] Ouch!

ELLA: Oh! I'm so sorry. I..I'm not really a very good dancer, at least not before tonight. [*to audience*] The dancing spell must have started to wear off, already.

PRINCE: [*she steps on his toes again*] Ouch! [*they stop*]

ELLA: Oh, dear, I'm so sorry. Perhaps we better stop.

PRINCE: Perhaps your right. But really, I should be apologising to you, for not saying something earlier... about being the Prince. I believe you have been most woefully misled by my servant..... Dandini. I think it was he who you met in the woods. For I could never have forgotten someone as beautiful as you. You have such beautiful eyes.

ELLA: That's just what he said....

PRINCE: And he's right..... I hope you'll let me see you again after tonight. In fact, I would really like to meet your family.

ELLA: Believe me you don't want to meet my family. Does he boys and girls? [**audience:No**]

PRINCE: Oh yes I do.

ELLA: [*with audience*] Oh no you don't.

PRINCE: Oh yes I do.

ELLA: [*with audience*] Oh no you don't.

PRINCE: Oh yes I do.

ELLA: [*with audience*] Oh no you don't. They didn't even want me to come here tonight.

PRINCE: Well I'm glad you did. Although, to tell you the truth, I almost didn't come here myself.

[DANDINI enters with a message]

ELLA: But how can the Prince not come to his own Ball.

DANDINI: Your highness ?

PRINCE: Ah! The very culprit. Please excuse me for just one moment. Don't go away. [ELLA smiles]

ELLA: [the clock begins to chime for midnight] Oh no! It's Twelve o'clock. I've stayed too long. I must go.

PRINCE: Wait! Where are you going?

ELLA: I..I can't stay. I must go. [ELLA exits]

PRINCE: Come back. I don't even know your name. Stop. Come back. Where can I reach you ? [He goes to follow her] She's gone. We must find her, Dandini. I need to ask her if she'll marry me, for I could never love anyone else now that I've met her. Dandini !

DANDINI: Yes, your highness. I'll sent out the Palace Guard to find her at once.

PRINCE: Search everywhere. Leave no stone unturned. I must find her.

DANDINI: Yes, your highness.

[DANDINI exits. **song: This Nearly was Mine/South Pacific**]

PRINCE: **One dream in my heart. One love to be living for.
One love to be living for. This nearly was mine.
One girl for my dreams, one partner in paradise.
This promise of paradise, this nearly was mine.**

[DANDINI re-enters with the slipper and gives it to the PRINCE]

**Close to my heart she came, only to fly away.
Only to fly as day flies from moonlight.
Now, now I'm alone, still dreaming of paradise,
Still saying that paradise
Once nearly was mine.**

You're the girl of my dreams. But who are you ? Who are you ?

[they exit]

Scene 7 **Mrs. Bridges Pie & Sausage Shoppe**

GEOFF: [*entering*] Hello boys and girls. [**audience: Hello Geoffrey**] Oh! Come on you can do better than that. Hello boys and girls. [**audience: Hello Geoffrey**]. That's better. Now, do you remember I said that Miss Ella's stepmother used to run a Pie shop.... well this is it. But now it's run by Mrs. Bridges, who used to be the cook at Hardiman Hall. And her pies are so delicious that everyone comes here. Everyone! She's doing really well. In fact all the old servants from Hardiman Hall are doing well for themselves, Mr. Hudson, Lily and Rose have all got positions up at the Palace.

BRIDGES: [*entering*] Oh, hello Geoffrey. What brings you here ?

GEOFF: Hello Mrs. Bridges. Well, I was just telling the boys and girls how delicious your pies and sausages are. In fact I'm here because the King, himself, wants some.

BRIDGES: The King you say. Oh Lor help us. [*starts to panic & rush around tidying*] Oh just look at the place, it's in such a state. I can't have the King coming here with it lookin' like this.

GEOFF: Calm down, Mrs. Bridges, calm down. He's not coming himself, he send me to collect them.

BRIDGES: Oh, Geoffrey, you gave me a right turn... But suppose he did come, what would I do ?

GEOFF: I'm sure you would be absolutely fine. He's a really nice old gentleman is the King. But if it'll put your mind at ease. We could pretend I'm the King coming to your shop, and you can have a practice, eh!

BRIDGES: Would you Geoffrey?

[song: Master of the House/Les Mis]

GEOFF: Of course. Right then...**Here comes the King. Comin' here now.
You gotta look smart and make sure you bow.
Look at those pies. Don't they smell great ?**

BRIDGES: **Only just baked and straight to your plate.
The crust melts in your mouth, juicy and well cor!
No sooner have you ate one then you'll want one more.
Master of my art, I can make you pies
Any fillin' that you want before your eyes.
Here's the one for you, Venison 'n' plum,
Or maybe something new, like apple stewed in rum.
Pies to make you all a tremble.
Pies to make a grown man weep.
But if you want the best
I'm sorry, but you'll find it don't come cheap.
Pies beyond compare. Pies beyond belief.
Our sausages are nice as an aperitif.
Try a little slice. Try a little taste.**

GEOFF: **The Royal tongue has never been so highly graced.
Wrap me up a pound of sausage.
Send along a dozen pies.
Well done Mrs. Bridges, you deserve the Royal pie franchise.**

BRIDGES: Oh! That was lovely, Geoffrey. Oh! More customers. [*Enter Mr.HUDSON, LILY and ROSE.*] Hello everyone!

HUDSON: Hello Mrs.Bridges. Hello Geoffrey.

LILY: [*flirting*] Oh, hello Geoffrey. I was hoping you might be here.

GEOFF: Hello Lily. I saw you serving up at the Palace last night.

ROSE: Yes, we was all there and there was such a commotion at the end.

LILY: Yes. Apparently the Prince had been dancing with this beautiful Princess but nobody knew who she was or where she came from.

ROSE: But it was obvious that the Prince had fallen for her.

LILY: And just before midnight she disappeared, and they had everyone searching the Palace for half the night, and all they found was one of her golden slippers.

ROSE: And that was on the steps leading out of the Palace.

HUDSON: And now this morning the Prince has proclaimed that every girl who was invited to the Ball has to try on the golden slipper so that he can marry which ever one it fits.

LILY: Oh, it's so romantic, don't you think so, Rose ?

ROSE: Oh, yes.

LILY: [*looking at GEOFFREY*] What I wouldn't give for someone to come and sweep me off my feet.

BRIDGES: Have you someone in mind, Lily?

LILY: [*shyly*] Might have.

BRIDGES: So! What was it you came for Geoffrey ?

GEOFF: The King would like a pound of your best venison and cranberry sausages, Mrs. Bridges.

BRIDGES: Right! Well, I'll just make you up a fresh batch. [*Mrs.BRIDGES exits*]

GEOFF: Thank you Mrs. Bridges.

ROSE:: Mmm! Lovely sizzling sausages. It makes me hungry just thinkin' about them.

GEOFF: And we know a song about sausages don't we boys and girls? [*audience:groans/Yes*]

ALL: [*(except GEOFF) to the tune of the Addams Family*]
We're meaty and we're greasy
We're also very cheeky. The sausage family.

GEOFF: No! No! Not that one. I mean the Sausage song.

ALL: Oh! Yes!
**I've got a sausage. A bonnie, bonnie sausage.
And I put it in the oven for my tea
I went down to the kitchen where sausage was a sizzlin'
And sausage ran after me.**

GEOFF: Now, boys and girls. Why don't you all join in with us this time ?

LILY: Will they know the words ?

HUDSON: Well, it just so happens that Mrs.Bridges has the words right here.

[HUDSON turns over the blackboard to reveal SAUSAGE SONG words.]

ALL: *[with audience. one person pointing to words]*
**I've got a sausage. A bonnie, bonnie sausage.
And I put it in the oven for my tea
I went down to the kitchen where sausage was a sizzlin'
And sausage ran after me.**

ROSE: We could have a competition ? Boys against girls ? The girls can sing with me and Lily, then the boys can sing with Hudson and Geoffrey.

GEOFF: Ok then, girls first. Are you ready girls ? After 3. 1...2...3... *[Sausage song with girls, ending with a cheer]*

LILY: Super. Now the boys. After 3. 1...2...3... *[Sausage song with boys ending with a cheer]*

GEOFF: Well, you were all very, very good. Weren't they ?

ALL: Yes !

GEOFF: So, give yourselves a big round of applause.**[audience:applaud]** Now, I'm afraid I must be on my way. *[calls off]* Have you got the King's sausages, Mrs.Bridges ?

BRIDGES: *[off]* Yes. Here you are Geoffrey.

[GEOFFREY collects sausages from offstage]

LILY: I'll walk back to the Palace with you, if you like Geoffrey ?

GEOFF: That'd be very nice, Lily.

HUDSON: Rose and I must be off too. *[shouts]* Bye Mrs.Bridges

BRIDGES: *[off]* Bye.

GEOFF: Bye Boys and Girls.

[All exit]

Scene 8 Hardiman Hall The Parlour

[*song: Reviewing the Situation/Oliver*].

STEPM: The Prince was in the bag, wasn't he ?
 'Til we hit a snag, thwarting me.
 When that Princess turned up, just like magic, casting her spell.
 But I've a nose for things fishy, and this one's starting to smell.
 So I'm reviewing the situation, for I know I've seen this princess girl before.
 But remember in what location? No! Can't remember, was it France or Equador?
 I hear the Prince will soon be 'round
 To bring the slipper that he's found.
 My girls can still secure the prize
 If when they try it on for size
 That slipper's made for larger feet.
 Although she did look quite petite
 So we must find a way to cheat
 If we don't want to face defeat.
 I think I better think it out again. [*The door bell rings.*]

That'll be the Prince, now. Grizelda! Deirdre! [*She opens the door and bows very low*]

PRINCE: [*entering*] I'm here to.... [*GRIZELDA and DEIRDRE enter*]

DEIRDRE: Out of my way. He's mine.

GRIZEL: Don't be ridiculous. I'm older than you. He's mine. [*pushes the PRINCE*] Out of my way.

STEPM: Girls. Girls. The Prince

GRIZ&DEIR: [*curtsying*] Oh! Your highness.

PRINCE: Quite! I never thought I would have the pleasure of meeting you and you're two
 ...charming daughters again so soon, Baroness. But since you had invitations to the Ball
 I am duty bound to ask you all to try on the slipper.

GRIZEL: Me first. [*snatches the slipper and tries it on*]

STEPM: [*to GRIZELDA*] Make it fit [*distracting the PRINCE*] It's so good of you to visit us your
 highness. I'm sure you'll find the girl to fit the slipper in my house.

GRIZEL: Look! It fits!

DIERDRE: Rubbish, her heel's sticking out.

STEPM: Deirdre! Never mind, we could always cut it off. [*GRIZELDA is horrified*] After all when
 you're queen you won't have to walk anywhere, will you ?

DEIRDRE: Let me try it on. [*snatches the slipper and tries it on.*]

GRIZEL: Mother! How could you suggest such a thing. Don't you love me anymore mama?

STEPM: Don't you want to marry the Prince, anymore?

DEIRDRE: There it fits like a glove.

GRIZELDA: Well, it certainly doesn't fit like a slipper, does it ? Your toes are bent double.

STEPM: I can soon fix that. [*takes out a knife. GRIZ&DEIR scream*]

PRINCE: No, madam. The purpose of this is to find the girl I danced with at the Ball last night.

GRIZ&DEIR: It was me. It was me. Me. Me. Me. Me.....

PRINCE: No! It was not. I remember you all most distinctly. Now if you will return the slipper to me, I shall be on my way.[*PRINCE exits. GRIZELDA & DEIRDRE start to wail.*]

ELLA: [*ELLA enters*] What's the matter ?

STEPM: Nothing that need concern you.

ELLA: Oh! It's just that I thought I heard the Prince's voice...

STEPM: And how would you know the Prince's voice, may I ask ?

ELLA: Well... em...

[*STEPMOTHER starts to stalk ELLA around the room. Just in time PRINCE re-enters*]

PRINCE: According to my list four invitations were delivered here. So there should be another [*sees ELLA*]... young lady... to try the slipper on....

STEPM: No, no. This is just Cinderella. She's a servant.

PRINCE: I must insist that every girl who received an invitation try on the slipper.

ELLA: I had an invitation. Your highness. [*She curtsies*]

PRINCE: [*lifts her face and looks into her eyes and sees the woman he loves*] You have the most beautiful eyes. It is you ?... [*ELLA nods*] Will you try the slipper on ? [*ELLA takes the slipper and puts it on*]

GRIZELDA: That slipper can't possibly fit her.

DEIRDRE: How can it ? She didn't even go to the Ball.

STEPM: But I knew I recognised that girl !

DEIRDRE: [*gasps in amazement*] It does !

STEPM: No! No! No! What will happen to us now ?

PRINCE: You could always go back to selling pies Mrs. Miggins, although it might be best for all concerned if you were to leave here and never return.

GRIZ&DEIR: Oh, mama. [*start to wail. GRIZELDA exits*]

STEPM: Quiet! [*starts to go*]

ELLA: Wait! In my happiness I forgive you for everything you've done.

STEPM: Argh! [*DEIRDRE drags STEPM off kicking & screaming*]. How dare she forgive me!

[*The PRINCE stares into ELLA's eyes. Song. Out of my dreams/Oklahoma!*]

PRINCE: Out of my dreams and into my arms. This time please stay.
I have searched both far and wide to find your hideaway.
Out of my dreams and into my arms, and now I've found you,
Promise you will stay and never run away,
So girl of my dreams I'll stay always in love with you.

ELLA: Out of my dreams and into your arms. My wish came true.
Hold me close and take me far away from here with you.
Out of my life and into your dream that's full of laughter.
When this day is done, the only place I'll run
Is into my dreams with you. Into my dreams with you.

FAIRY: [*entering.*] Hello again boys and girls. [*audience: Hello*] Well, it looks like everything turned out all right in the end, didn't it ?..... Oh, I nearly forgot, there's one other match I need to give a little helping hand to. No rest. No peace. [*She waves her wand. GEOFFREY and LILY enter.*]

LILY: Oh! Miss Ella. Wouldn't you just know it. Geoffrey's just gone and asked me to marry him.

ALL: Congratulations.

GEOFF: This calls for a celebration. Let's sing a song.

ALL: Yes! [*Song: One step closer/S-Club Juniors*]
Comin' at you baby, it's comin' at you baby,
It's comin' at you baby, it's been too long.
Comin' at you baby, it's comin' at you baby,
It's comin' at you baby, it's been too long.
I've been waiting such a long time just tryin' to get through.
And it's taken all my strength to keep me here away from you
It doesn't matter just how long it takes, nothing changes when we're apart.
It's just a little bit longer, we got this far
One step closer to heaven baby, means one step closer to you.
They'll be no more living without you, baby
I'm counting each minute till I'm back to you.
One step closer to heaven baby, hold on, hold on, hold on to my lovin'

Comin' at you baby, it's comin' at you baby,
It's comin' at you baby, it's been too long.
Comin' at you baby, it's comin' at you baby,
It's comin' at you baby, it's been too long.
It doesn't matter just how long it takes, nothing changes when we're apart.
It's just a little bit longer, we got this far
One step closer to heaven baby, means one step closer to you.
They'll be no more living without you, baby
I'm counting each minute till I'm back to you.

**One step closer to heaven baby, means one step closer to you.
They'll be no more living without you, baby
I'm counting each minute till I'm back to you.
One step closer to heaven baby, hold on, hold on, hold on to my lovin'**

[All exit except FAIRY who takes out a hanky to wipe her eyes]

FAIRY: Oh, dear! I suppose I'll better be on my way. *[Blows her nose]* Don't mind me, I always cry at happy endings. Bye, bye boys and girls. Bye, bye.

Bows: LILY, GEOFFREY, ELLA, PRINCE, FAIRY