

NODA PANTOMIMES

PRESENT

Cinderella

An original story of a poor girl
made good!

By

Rob Fearn & Leo Appleton

©2016

This script is published by

NODA LTD
15 The Metro Centre
Peterborough PE2 7UH
Telephone: 01733 374790
Fax: 01733 237286
Email: info@noda.org.uk
www.noda.org.uk

To whom all enquiries regarding purchase of further scripts and current royalty rates should be addressed.

CONDITIONS

1. A Licence, obtainable only from NODA Ltd, must be acquired for every public or private performance of a NODA script and the appropriate royalty paid : if extra performances are arranged after a Licence has already been issued, it is essential that NODA Ltd be informed immediately and the appropriate royalty paid, whereupon an amended Licence will be issued.
2. The availability of this script does not imply that it is automatically available for private or public performance, and NODA Ltd reserve the right to refuse to issue a Licence to Perform, for whatever reason. Therefore a Licence should always be obtained before any rehearsals start.
3. All NODA scripts are fully protected by copyright acts. Under no circumstances may they be reproduced by photocopying or any other means, either in whole or in part, without the written permission of the publishers
4. The Licence referred to above only relates to live performances of this script. A separate Licence is required for videotaping or sound recording of a NODA script, which will be issued on receipt of the appropriate fee.
5. NODA works must be played in accordance with the script and no alterations, additions or cuts should be made without the prior consent from NODA Ltd. This restriction does not apply to minor changes in dialogue, strictly local or topical gags and, where permitted in the script, musical and dancing numbers.
6. The name of the author shall be stated on all publicity, programmes etc. The programme credits shall state 'Script provided by NODA Ltd, Peterborough PE2 7UH'

NODA LIMITED is the trading arm of the NATIONAL OPERATIC & DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION, a registered charity devoted to the encouragement of amateur theatre.

This script is licensed for amateur theatre by NODA Ltd to whom all enquiries should be made. www.noda.org.uk E-mail: info@noda.org.uk

Welcome to Robleo Productions!

Welcome to our first pantomime written by us, Rob Fearn and Leo Appleton. Although this is our first foray into writing, on this scale anyway, we both have many years' experience of treading the boards at an amateur level so hopefully understand what amateur groups are looking for.

After working in and on a number of pantos we both decided that it would be good to see if we could come up with a fairly original slant on the story of Cinderella. This we hope we have done whilst retaining the humour and zest that this story usually provides.

All the original characters are there with opportunities to style your production as you wish. It can be grand and lavish with a fantastic set and all the magic tricks you need to create a splendid transformation scene or done on a parish hall stage with limited funds and space. This script should suit both and is scalable either way.

We had great fun writing it and there will be more so if you like this one watch out for others coming shortly. In the meantime I hope you enjoy it.

Thanks

Rob & Leo

Characters in order of appearance

Fairy Godmother (F)

A female part, should be able to sing but is not necessary as the song is optional. A Fairy Godmother with a soft heart, what else!

Vanelia (M / F)

One of the Ugly Sisters. Traditionally a male part but could be played by a woman. She is supposed to be the elder of the two. Played as a 'Dame' and is required to sing and dance.

Enormia (M / F)

The other part of the Ugly Sister duo. As above, a male part but again could be played by a female.

Cinderella (F)

Not your normal Cinderella as she has a bit of spirit and some funny lines. Should be able to sing and dance.

Stepmother (F)

The traditional 'baddy' of the piece. Although not a huge part has enough scenes and lines to make the audience boo and hiss.

Buttons (M)

His character should be bright and bouncy. He has a soft spot for Cinders and this comes out in the show. Should be able to sing and build rapport with the audience.

Queen (F)

Appears mainly with the King and has a duo so should be able to sing or at least put a song across. She is prone to 'spoonerisms'.

King (M)

Works mainly with the Queen and many of his lines bounce off her. He is prone to forgetfulness although is clearly not ailing.

Lord Chamberlain (M)

He should be quite pompous and comic as well as his lines support this

Dandini (M) or (F)

Works mainly with the Prince and has a love interest, Lady Rachel. A bit of a fop, prone to burst into poetry at a moments notice much to the displeasure of the Prince.

Prince (M) or (F)

Would work well as either male or female. A strong character with lines that bounce off Lord Chamberlain and Dandini. Should be able to sing and move.

Princess Ethelreda (M)

As their looks are slighted we wrote this and the following two other Princesses with males in mind and would be good small parts for males to play and have some fun with as well as doing something else, perhaps in the chorus.

Princess Ermintrude (M)

As Princess Ethelreda

Princess Ethereal (M)

As Princess Ethelreda

Lady Isabel (F)

Small female part could be combined with chorus

Bouncer 1 - Don (M)

Small comedy male part – could be combined with Chorus

Bouncer 2 - Ron (M)

As Bouncer 1

Lady Jane (F)

As for Lady Isabel

Sally, Betty, Winnie (F)

Small female parts – almost cameos! Could be combination of Ladies Isabel and Jane and Chorus work – but these are three distinct parts

Lady Rachel (F)

A small female role who eventually ends up with Dandini. Is seen in other scenes (Ball, Court) but only speaks in the last scene with Dandini. Should be able to sing and move

Cat (M or F)

Appears in kitchen scenes with Cinderella and should be able to move 'cat like'.

Baron Hardup (M or F)

This is the foil for Buttons and the source of the main audience involvement and worked well in the local production. He can be anybody even a stagehand as he only ever moves across the stage and off. This character was deliberately left unseen and unspoken as it also provides the reason for Cinders situation.

Chorus

Where would we be without them? Integral to the whole show and supports the main characters from which you will draw the minor characters (unless you are blessed with bodies!).

Props

Ball of wool for cat

Puppet Mice / plus Mouse a torium (*a small puppet theatre (or some such thing) where the mice can come out and interact with Cat and dance to songs*)

Wood basket / Wood for basket.

Sweeping brooms (*about three*).

Wand for Fairy Godmother.

Letter Box on string.

Enormous corset.

Cups / saucers / Teapot.

Feather duster / duster.

Gloves / Hat for Step Mother.

Biscuits

Massive hanky for Lord Chamberlain

Sword / Daggers for Prince / Dandini and Lord Chamberlain

Hanky for Prince

Hack hat / microphone for Buttons

Bag for Baron Hardup

Invitations for chorus and three for Stepmother and Ugly Sisters plus invitations to tear up

Spinning wheel / basket of wool to spin

Dressing table / table plus jewellery / make up

Laundry basket of washing

Pumpkin

Glass slipper / sparkly shoes

Two Thrones

Table for food / pretend food or otherwise

Cushion or plinth for glass slipper

Bucket for Baron Hardup

A wrapped up brush for present

Basket / box to put Cinders in

PRODUCTION NOTES

Transformation scene

The transformation scene, coach and Cinderella's dress is written so it can either be done on stage or off, in a simple way or complex depending on the availability of the necessary stage or props.

Scenery

Again, this can be scaled as appropriate for the stage involved. When it was first performed there were two painted scenes: Cinderella's kitchen and the Ballroom. All other scenes took place in front of black tabs or the main front curtains.

Song sheet

As appropriate

Characters

They are all indicated on previous pages and noted whether they are male or female. When the show was first performed the 'Princesses' roles were taken by women. However, for best effect these should be men or at least the last princess to come on should be a man.

Puppets

The mice were small stuffed toy mice attached to the end of a tripod made of coat hangers and these were pushed through a black curtain (*In what we called the Mouse a torium*) and danced at the end of this tripod (*the flex in the metal from the coat hangers made them bounce and jiggle*) in their small theatre much to the amusement of the young children (and adults) in the audience.

Sound Effects

The use of sound effects is not necessary but does add to the whole show for the magical elements and particularly the clock striking twelve. Many sounds can legitimately be lifted from the internet such as the sound of the clock striking and perhaps the magical tinkle and even the sound of carriages arriving at the ball.

ACT 1

Scene 1

(Scene opens on a kitchen scene with Cinders cleaning up sweeping and generally tidying up. Possibly singing an opening song. Should be reasonably upbeat if sung. Light is not fully up. Cinders' cat is on stage and generally doing cat things, perhaps chasing a ball or playing with some wool etc. There is a table with some crockery on it and a number of chairs or a bench. Also a wood basket. There should be some brooms propped up. To the other side of the stage is a little theatre with mouse holes where the mice appear throughout the show. After a short time Fairy Godmother appears on stage at the front and lit by a follow spot).

Fairy Godmother *(Wanders onto the stage. Cinders can't see her). Hello boys and girls, and welcome to our lovely kingdom, the beautiful and happy Kingdom of Hedonia – well I say happy, but not everyone is happy (turns to look at Cinderella – encourages an aaah from the audience). This is where our story starts. This is Cinderella. She's the one with the brush. Poor Cinderella, she lives in the household of her father and stepmother and her ugly (catches herself) - I mean her stepsisters. Cinderella has lived here since her mother died. Her wicked Stepmother kindly allows her to sleep on the kitchen floor and gets her to do all the cleaning, washing, ironing, and the cooking. Her father, Baron Hardup, hardly seems to notice the situation as he is rarely seen around the house anymore, devoting more and more time to the fruitless errands of the wicked Stepmother. But, Cinderella does have some good friends, there is Cat, who is devoted to her, and the mice of course, who keep her company in the kitchen. Also, the ever faithful Buttons who you will meet later. Then there is me (turns to walk off stage then returns realising she has forgotten something) sorry I forgot to say, I am Cinderella's Fairy Godmother. (She waves her wand and the lights brighten to show the whole scene behind as the Fairy Godmother exits).*

(Cinders picks up wood basket and exits. Shouts from off stage as Ugly Sisters enter looking for Cinders).

Vanelia Where is Cinderella, that dreadful girl, I need my toe hairs curling?

Enormia *(On stage) Cinderella, come here quickly! I need a hanky I'm going to sneeze. Ahh Choooo!. (wiping hands on dress). Oh too late. (Laughs to herself).*

(Cinders enters with basket of wood for fire)

Vanelia *(Enters wearing a letter box around her neck) Oh there you are Cinderella, you are so lazy, have you not done the fire yet?*

Cinders *(Rushing around in response to their commands) Erm...*

Enormia Where is my breakfast?

Vanelia Have you washed my slimming corset? (*Holds up an enormous corset*).

(*Stepmother enters*).

Stepmother (*Kissing the sisters on the cheeks*). And how are my beautiful daughters this morning? (*To Cinderella dismissively*). Make me a cup of tea Cinderella. (*Shoo cat out of the way*). Ten and a half sugars and make sure the milk is skimmed I'm looking after my figure. Enormia dear, why are you wearing a letter box around your neck?

Enormia Well, Mother, I am expecting a letter and I need to go out later on, so I don't want to miss the postman.

(*Stepmother and Vanelia nod their approval, Cinderella shakes her head. They turn their attention back to Cinderella critiquing her cleaning. Cinderella is dusting the kitchen. Cat is following her round*).

Vanelia (*Pointing to the ceiling*). You've missed a bit Cinderella, I can see a speck of dust over there.

Stepmother Cinderella we do have standards you know and if you ever want to be as beautiful and popular as your stepsisters, then you do need to make more of an effort.

(*To the audience whilst Cinders and the Ugly Sisters are busying themselves making work for her*).

Don't you think my girls are absolute darlings and that Cinderella is such a (*thought*) plain child? Oh yes, my girls are going up in the world. Ever since I tricked Baron Hardup into marrying me our prospects have taken a turn for the better and look (*indicating Cinders*), I inherited a cleaner. (*She laughs*) Perfect (*audience reacts here*). Of course keeping Baron Hardup out of the way has been so easy. The fool falls over himself to please me. Yesterday, I sent him for a left handed hammer and a long stand. He was gone for hours! (*More audience reaction*).

(*To Cinders*) Now, you silly girl, what have you done with my gloves?

(*Buttons enters unnoticed except by Cat who moves towards him*).

Enormia (*Pointing to the floor*). There's some dirt on the floor as well Cinderella.

Vanelia (*Continuing the tirade, pointing to a corner*). And a cobweb in the corner.

Stepmother Get my hat, Cinderella, I will not tell you again. (*Cat jumps up and gets it and gives it to Cinders*).

Enormia (*Drops a biscuit*). Oh look I've dropped my biscuit. Clean it up Cinderella, there's a love.

(Cinderella is running around trying to complete all the tasks. She gives Stepmother her hat and Stepmother exits).

Buttons (*Quite irate*). What do you two think you are playing at? Can't you see Cinderella has enough to get on with without you two lazy oafs making more work for her?

Enormia (*Both exit with a huff, affronted*). Well I never, we'll see you later *(pause)* Cinderella!

Vanelia (*As she exits to the audience*). Did you see the way that Buttons looked at me? He fancies me, he does!

Buttons I am sorry, Cinders, perhaps I shouldn't have said anything but you shouldn't let them treat you like that. What would your father Baron Hardup say? I am sure he would do something if he knew they treated you this way. Where is he anyway?

(All the while Cat is wandering round the stage doing 'cat' things).

Cinders He's just popped down to the village to get Stepmother's wart cream!! He would probably do whatever Stepmother wanted him to but that's him all over, never around! Oh I don't mind the work Buttons, I'm just so grateful that they've taken us in and we are warm and well-fed, well maybe not well-fed but, well, fed.

Buttons (*Now being stern*). Cinderella, you must stand up for yourself if they are mean to you and you must not let them talk to you in that way.

(Cinders gets upset and begins to sob then runs off stage. Cat follows Cinders off).

Buttons (*Moves forward to the front of the stage and starts to talk to the audience*). Oh dear, I think I was a bit harsh with Cinders. I didn't want to upset her, it's just that I get so angry at the way her Stepmother and those wicked stepsisters treat her. Cinders is beautiful and kind and I really do love her, I do. I would like to tell her how I feel but I don't seem to have the courage. I know, maybe I could buy her a present to cheer her up. I wonder what I could get her? Maybe some sweets, oh that would be nice, but no, her sisters would only steal them. What about a new dress? No, her evil stepmother would never let her wear it. Have you got any suggestions? *(Audience are then encouraged to help Buttons)* Yes, well, some of those are very helpful, if a bit odd, especially from you *(points to person in audience)*. I know, I will have to think of something that will really cheer her up. I'm going to have to go now but I need your help with something. I have been trying to talk to Baron Hardup to tell him how awfully they are treating Cinders. It's just that he seems so busy at the moment running around doing goodness knows what. So, when you see him *(Baron Hardup walks on behind Buttons, places a parcel on the*

table or some other such business) you'll know him, he is wearing (at this point a description to fit costume of Baron Hardup). If you see him I want you to shout "Buttons the Baron". (Audience hopefully will then shout and Baron Hardup disappears off stage as Buttons looks round). We haven't started yet! Right let's have a practice.

(Baron Hardup comes back on, audience react, probably "he's behind you").

That's great that is. You can stop now. No he's not there. Look this is just a practice. What is he really there? *(Baron Hardup disappears once more. Buttons looks off).* Gosh, you're right, I better get after him. Don't forget to shout if you see him.

(He exits). (Blackout).

(End of scene).

Scene 2

(The scene opens on the palace court. The entire chorus are present. A big chorus number ensues. The King and Queen enter with Lord Chamberlain. At the end of the song the chorus exit leaving the King, Queen and Lord Chamberlain on stage to discuss the fate of the Prince).

Queen Oh, I do love how the courtiers just seem to burst into song sometimes for no apparent reason, it's like being in a musical.

King *(His thoughts are elsewhere).* Mmm, yes, fascinating *(looking off stage as the courtiers leave bemused by it all).* *(Surprised when he sees the Queen).* Ah, my Queen. *(Like seeing her for the first time that day).* How beautiful you look this very fine day.

Queen Yes I do rather. Are you beeling fetter?

King Beeling fetter? Oh feeling better, yes my love. It must have been the kippers this morning I think one of them was still flapping!! Now then where is that son of mine, Raymond?

Queen Richard!

King Yes, that's what I said, Roger

Lord Chamberlain My liege, *(bows).* Your son Richard is out hunting yet again with his valet! If only he devoted as much time to finding a bride then your kingdom would be secured.

King Yes, well it's good that he lets of a bit of steam I suppose.

Queen Steam!! He is positively boiling over. Oh, it's just that he is cho soosy when it comes to girls.

Lord Chamberlain Cho soosy, ah yes, so choosy. Perhaps we can push him in the right direction. It's not that there aren't Princesses available Your Majesty, indeed I have a list here of some of the most eligible. If only we could get him to meet them in the right surroundings I am sure that he would lose his heart to one of them.

King Let me see the list. Number one, Ethelreda mmmmm! Number two, Ermintrude. Number three, Ethereal, that's a lot of E numbers. So long as these are the best my Lord Chamberlain then we must send out invitations for them to come and visit. Let's hope at least one of them captures his interest if not his heart eh? eh? Make it so.

Lord Chamberlain Yes, Your Majesty.

(Lord Chamberlain exits and King and Queen move forward to in front of tabs).

Queen For the sake of the crown, his King and country he needs to make his mind up one way or the other or we must make up the beer doys mind for him.

King Beer doy! What or who are you talking about?

Queen Your son Richard and him getting married, remember?

King Ah yes, Rupert, I remember. Do you recall where we first met?

Queen Yes. *(Looking far off wistfully)*

King Good, where was it? *(Forgotten again!)*

Queen *(Irritably)*. It was at your father's estate. A warm summer breeze was blowing and we were all lancing on the dawn, I mean dancing on the lawn. Such fun! Then I was introduced to you. From there it all went downhill!

King *(Completely not sure at all)*. It's not all been bad though has it? We have had some fun times haven't we?

Queen Oh yes.

King Oh thank goodness! *(Still not quite sure but glad she remembers)*. I do remember the day we were married though, Blue skies, lots of pretty girls *(Queen harrumphs)*, b- b- but of course none prettier than you my love.

Queen Yes, it was a beautiful wedding. I suppose we do complement each other.

King No, no I complement you, you just correct me. (*After a short thought*). But I think I like it that way. (*Audience ahhhhh moment*).

(*Possible song for the King and Queen*).

(*End of song*) (*Blackout*)

(*End of scene*).

Scene 3

(*Later on in the Palace Court, full stage. Dandini and the Prince enter together*).

Dandini You have heard, my lord, about your parent's plans to find you a bride?

Prince Oh, my loyal friend, I do not want to marry for convenience or to secure our wealth, I want to marry for love and unfortunately my parents are determined to marry me off at the earliest opportunity to the first pouting princess who walks through the castle gates.

Dandini (*Wistfully*). Ah, yes my lord love!

Prince (*Questioningly*). Dandini?

Dandini (*Returning back to reality*) Yes, my lord?

Prince Are you feeling alright?

Dandini Yes, my lord, of course, why do you ask?

Prince Because when I mentioned love you went off into a little dream world.

Dandini (*In a daze again*). Ah yes, my lord love!

Prince You're doing it again.

Dandini Was I? I hadn't noticed.

Prince Dandini, this is just a wild stab in the dark, but have you met anyone, perhaps a young lady who may have turned your thoughts to love?

Dandini (*Enthusiastically*). Oh my lord how did you guess? You are so clever. (*Dandini then goes off into his own world and spouts poetry*).

For there is one, she's my heart's desire.

Her beauty and gentleness are all I require.

She walks like an angel and sings like a Queen.

She has her own teeth but they could do with a clean.

Prince Have you been writing love poems by any chance Dandini?

Dandini Oh, my lord, you are right again. How do you know these things?

Prince I have my ways. So what is stopping you and this young lady from being together? She is a lady isn't she?

Dandini My lord, of course she is a lady. *(Off again!)*

Oh were it so simple

I could hold her forever

In the rain or the sun or the snow

(Falteringly knowing that there is no other real rhyme here).

Or ... in fact in any other ... sorts of er.. er.. weather.

Prince Ok Dandini, enough of the poems. What is stopping you from marrying this girl?

Dandini She is a lady of the court and I am not permitted to marry her unless I have a title, which as you know, my prince, is not the case.

Prince This is quite a problem my friend, but sometimes we must let fate take its course.

(Possible song for Prince and Dandini after which the Prince and Dandini are interrupted by the Lord Chamberlain and Buttons who enter).

Lord Chamberlain *(Big bow)*. Your Highness, I crave your indulgence. As you are aware the king and the queen are rather keen that you take a bride before you are much older. To that end I have invited a number of eligible maidens, nay princesses from our neighbouring kingdoms for your consideration. They are waiting without.

Prince *(Begins to interrupt petulantly)*. Then I shall jolly well wait within. I thought I made it perfectly clear to anyone who would listen that I will only marry for love!

Lord Chamberlain Sire that may well be the case. But in order for that to happen two things have to take place. Firstly, you need to talk to a person of the female persuasion and secondly you have to let love take its course. So, please Your Highness, please give these fair maidens a chance.

Dandini He has a point, my lord! Can it hurt to see what the other kingdoms have to offer? After all, you've not had a great deal of luck with your own!

Prince Very well. If I have to go through with this I might as well get it over with. (*With a bit more thought, an aside to the audience*). I suppose I might be fortunate, who knows? Alright my dear Lord Chamberlain bring in the first victim.

Lord Chamberlain Buttons go and fetch the first vict'... er er princess (*in a stagewhisper*) but dim the lights.

Buttons Dim the lights? Why? (*Looks of stage at the princesses*) Oh yes dim the lights! (*The lights can go down a bit*).

(*Buttons goes off and brings on the first princess. Princess Ethelreda appears very sleepy and tired and on occasions nods off with the odd bouts of snoring*).

Lord Chamberlain Your Highness may I present Princess Ethelreda of Prestonia (*or some other local place with 'onia' on the end*).

Prince My lady (*catches sight of the Princess who has now turned fully at the audience she is not an attractive sight*) Your er er er beauty takes my, er, breath away (*to Lord Chamberlain in an aside*). In fact if you have any oxygen I need it now!

Princess Ethelreda My Lord you are indeed a flattererrrrrr (*She falls asleep*).
Zzzzzzzzzzz.

(*Lord Chamberlain nudges the Princess*).

Princess Ethelreda (*Wakes up with a start and shouts out as if waking from a dream*). Where's the cream cakes?

Prince Madam! (*Taken aback*). Am I boring you already?

Princess Ethel No its just I am so sleepy. (*Big yawn*).

Button (*To Dandini with his thumbs up*) This is going well!

(*Dandini stares at him incredulous*).

Prince Have you travelled far from your kingdom? Surely you have rested on the way?

Princess Ethelreda No. Generally (*Yawn and stretch*), I need at least 14 hours... (*Trails off and falls asleep again*).

Prince (*In a hushed tone and a look to all on stage*) Sssshhhh. Then let me disturb you no longer.

Lord Chamberlain (*Takes the arm of the Princess and escorts her off*). Come my dear, the cream cakes are this way.

Prince Well, Dandini, what did you make of that?

Dandini It could have been worse Sire, though I am not sure how!

(Buttons has gone off and is bringing in the next princess and handing over to Lord Chamberlain).

Lord Chamberlain Your Highness may I introduce Princess Ermintrude of Fairovia. (*Another local place name with 'ovia' on the end*).

Princess Ermintrude Ah Ah Ah Ah Choooo (*big sneeze and blow of the nose on a massive hanky*). Thank you for inviting me to your lovely pa, pa, ah ah choooo!! (*Another blow of the nose*).

Prince (*Looking round at others, not quite sure what to make of all this*). My dear, you seem unwell?

Princess Ermintrude No, it is my allergy I just can't stop sneezing. Ah ah ah choooo! (*Big blow of nose, again*). I have had it since I was a little girl Your Highness, ah chooo (*Straight into the face of the Prince*).

(Dandini produces a big hanky for the Prince).

Prince (*Takes hanky from Dandini to mop his face*). Thank you I must insist that our physicians see you before you leave.

Princess Ermintrude (*Very spoilt*) Leave! But I've only just arrived.

Prince Nevertheless, leave you must.

(Buttons takes Princess Ermintrude's arm at a distance and with protestations leads her off as though she might give him something very catching. She sneezes for effect as she goes off).

Lord Chamberlain (*Indicating off stage*). Well Your Highness, this is the last we have to offer, but I fear the worst!

Prince Worst! Good heavens is this possible? (*Incredulous*).

(A commotion from the wings as Buttons brings in Princess Ethereal who is very grumpy indeed).

Lord Chamberlain Your Highness, may I introduce Princess Ethereal from the Principality of Martonopia. (*Or another local place with 'opia' on the end*).

Princess Ethereal About time! I have been sitting waiting to be introduced for ages with nobody for company other than Sleepy and Sneezzy.

Prince And of course this would make you Grumpy!

Dandini (*To whoever will listen as he thinks he is very witty*). We only need another four like this lot and we could do a whole new panto.

Buttons You mean another three.

Dandini Why?

Buttons (*Indicating audience*). 'Cause all this lot out there are Dopey!
OooOOOOOooooo!!

Prince (*Getting back to the matter in hand*). Was your journey to our country pleasant?

Princess Ethereal The road was dusty, the carriage uncomfortable and the people along the way not very polite.

Prince I am sorry you found it so. Surely, we have the best roads in all of Christendom?

Princess Ethereal As we say in our country the best road in Hedonia is the one that leads to Martonopia.

Dandini / Buttons (*To audience*) oooooOOOOooooo!!!

Prince But, my lady, if that was the case why would you make such a journey?

Princess Ethereal My father said I had to marry but I only want to marry for love and I am sorry, I could never marry anyone as plain as you.

(The Princess sweeps off the stage. Lord Chamberlain looks at the others and he goes off after the Princess placating her).

Prince Plain? (*Getting louder*) Plain? She called me plain. (*Clearly annoyed*).
Dandini, how would you describe me, quickly!

Dandini (*Quickly*). Handsome, bright, interesting.

Buttons (*As quick*). Dashing, daring, cuddly? Cuddly! (*To Audience*). Did I really just say that?

(Looks from Prince and Dandini and they then carry on).

Prince The whole thing is just impossible. All this for what? Leave me now. (*Dandini and Buttons exit. The Prince is suddenly inspired*). I don't care what my mother and father say I will find the one I love if it takes forever!

(*Possible song for the Prince*).

(*Blackout, tabs in*).

(*End scene*).

Scene 4

(*Button enters in front of tabs*).

Buttons That didn't go very well did it? (*Pause*). No, no, not the singing I meant the princesses. I do wonder if the prince is too demanding. I mean they didn't look that bad to me, nothing a good shave and a bit of wax wouldn't put right. But I guess it's better to marry for love than for money? Don't you agree? (*Points at a man*) Well I can tell that you agree, you definitely married for love (*points at the woman*) money for you. OK, Hands up who married for love? That's a fair few hands, but who married for money? What? No one, when we did this in (*an affluent local part of the country or local area*) they all put their hands up! I will be marrying for love, (*looking forlorn*) if I could only build up the courage to tell her that is. I've heard that the king and queen summoned the prince after he turned down the three (*stresses*) beautiful princesses. They're not happy that he didn't choose any of them. (*Putting on a reporters hack hat and producing a microphone and speaking in his best BBC reporters voice*). But we are expecting an announcement from the palace at any moment.

(*The curtains open on the palace court. Chorus are chattering excitedly. A fanfare is heard and then the royal party enter. The Lord Chamberlain addresses the crowd*).

Lord Chamberlain Citizens of Hedonia, pray silence for your king and queen.

King Friends, subjects, Hedonians lend me your ears. (*Turns to Queen*). Who wrote this?

Queen Never mind, just get on with it, this is the pun fart.

King (*Stage whisper to Queen*). Fun part, not pun fart. (*Stutteringly to the crowd and trying to put a positive spin on things*). My dear son Reginald, er, Roger, er, Richard, yes Richard, your prince, our son, (*pointing at Prince*) him, has decided after lengthy discussions with the king and queen, mummy and daddy, me and her (*Queen coughs*), that he is unfortunately not able to take up the kind offers of marriage from the three brides of Frankinste.... (*pauses and looks uncomfortable and speaks slower*) brides of frankly disappointing appearance, yes that's it (*looks*

relieved). However, after some meaningful discussions, arguments, er, rows, it is hoped that that my son, our son R...r...r... (*looks to Queen*).

Queen (*Queen stage whispers name*). Richard!

King Yes, Richard, your prince, will be able to find himself a bride.

Buttons (*Wearing a hack hat and holding a microphone*). Breaking news! The king and queen have announced that they have had an argument with the prince. You heard it here first on Button News.

King (*Looking at Buttons quizzically*). Does he think we can't hear him? (*Coughs*). We the Royal Family, that is our son, my wife and I, king, queen and prince, all together have decided.

Queen (*Pushing him aside excitedly*). There will be a boyal rall and all the legible ladies of the kingdom will be invited in the hope that our son can bind himself a hide.

(*Stunned silence and confusion*)

Buttons The queen, wearing a (*describes her dress*) dress which accentuates her shoulders and bathes her skin in a warm glow, looks delightful, but I haven't a clue what she just said.

King (*Raises his voice, but not shouting, slightly in the direction of Buttons*) A royal ball will be held to find the prince a bride.

Queen (*To King*) That's what I said.

King Yes dear. (*Indicates with his head to the Queen*). But I was just telling Malteasers. Now can we get out of here I need to go to the er..

Queen Have you forgotten again?

King No, I haven't forgotten I need to go to the er, er. (*Motions with his head to the exit*).

Queen To the where dear?

King To the royal throne.

Queen The what?

King The little Prince's room.

Queen Why would you want to go to Richards's bedroom?

King (*The crowd go silent and look at the King*). To the toilet woman!

Queen (*Accusingly as they turn to leave*). Who is this toilet woman you're going to see? (*The King looks exasperated*).

(*The crowd curtsy and bow as the King and Queen leave. They then begin to chatter excitedly again talking about how they will dress up, who is eligible and who is not as the chorus begin to exit amongst the excitement*).

Buttons (*Dispensing with the hat and mic speaks to the audience*). That is news isn't it? A royal ball and all the eligible ladies of the kingdom invited in the hope that the prince will fall in love with one of them. (*Some members of the chorus are still on stage chatting excitedly and Buttons speaks to a female member of the chorus*). Excuse me madam are you an eligible lady?

Lady Isabel (*She comically slaps Buttons*) How rude! (*Exits*).

(*The last of the Chorus exit still excited*)

Buttons (*Rubbing his face*). Oh dear, the whole kingdom is going to be in uproar until the prince makes his mind up.

(*Buttons exits the curtains close*).

(*Fairy Godmother enters in front of Tabs*).

Fairy Godmother (*Speaking to the audience*). How strange this kingdom is. A prince who wants love, a valet who wants love, Buttons who wants love. And then we have Cinderella always working away with no thoughts of love, only of doing the chores for her terrible sisters and stepmother. Her father is no use at all. He's always rushing here and there. Never standing still for a moment to see what is right in front of his face, (*pause*) his poor neglected daughter (*audience should react*). Only Buttons can see what is happening, but no one is listening to him. So, what can I do to help Cinderella? I must come up with something.

(*Fairy Godmother exits*) (*Blackout*).

(*End Scene*).

Scene 5

(*Still in front of tabs, lights come up*).

(*Baron Hardup has just walked across the stage and exits off the other side carrying a bag. No doubt the audience are all shouting for Buttons. Buttons enters out of breath*).

Buttons (*Shouting as he runs on*). I'm coming, I'm coming. What! Have I missed him? Oh that's no good. Was he here just now? Well, I suppose I need to visit

Cinders and see if he's there. He really needs to know how Cinders' stepmother and sisters are treating her, it really is unfair! Anyway what about this ball then? This should be exciting. I do love a good ball. *(Goes off into a world of his own)*. All the dresses and dancing and beautiful girls and Cinders will be invited, and all the other blokes will be dancing with her *(realising that Cinders might get snapped up)* and I think I better get round there sharpish!

(Buttons exits). (Blackout).

(End scene).

Scene 6

(Curtains open on Cinderella's Kitchen, laid out as in the opening scene with the addition of a spinning wheel and wool. There is perhaps a song from Cinders).

Cinders *(Talking to the cat who is on stage and cleaning its ears and doing cat stuff)*. I think today is going to be very busy. It's twelve o'clock and my sisters are up and about already! *(Big commotion is heard off stage with much shouting)*. They're actually running around up there. I wonder if there is some exciting news in the household. I'm sure somebody will be down soon to tell me all about it.

(Sure enough Vanelia and Enormia Burst in excited and speaking at the same time).

Vanelia / Enormia I shall wear my blue dress with the pink spots and purple frill / I shall wear that dress too but with my big yellow hat.

Vanelia & Enormia *(Still talking at the same time)*. You can't wear it if I am wearing it you very strange person.

Cinders *(Interrupting before it goes much further)*. Vanelia, Enormia, you seem very excited this morning. The last time I saw you like this you'd found a squashed Mars Bar under the sofa!

Vanelia Oh yes! I remember that as if it was yesterday.

Enormia It was yesterday and you still have the remains of it round your mouth! *(Enormia starts to wipe off the excess using a hanky and spit as a mother would with a child)*. We do have some exciting news. Well, at least it's exciting for us.

Cinders What do you mean? *(Having a joke at their expense)*. Have you discovered some new beauty cream *(pause)* that will actually work?

Enormia Ooo! That's very cruel, and most unlike you Cinderella.

Vanelia Yes it is. You know I've been using that new axle grease for months now and I am convinced it's working. *(Preening her face in front of Enormia)*.

Enormia So am I. It's lubricating your mouth 'cause I can't hear your teeth grinding anymore.

Cinders (*Laughing to herself at all of this*). Yes, yes, but what of the news? (*Cat stops walking around to look and listen to what they have to say. The mice could peep out of their hidey hole*).

Vanelia Any more laughing from you and we shan't tell you, shall we, Enormia?

Enormia Yes we shall shan't we?

Vanelia Y'mean yes we shan't shall we?

Enormia Does that mean we're telling her or not?

Vanelia Yes I think we are.

Enormia Good! Carry on.

Vanelia You have of course heard of the prince's efforts to find a bride and his lack of success. Well, they have announced a ball is to be held in honour of the prince at which he is to choose a bride and all of the eligible females of the realm are to be invited.

Vanelia / Enormia (*Together*) And these are our invites Oooohhh (*swoon!*)! (*Both say the following together at the same time*). I am sure he will choose me, no he won't you're not pretty enough, yes I am, no you're not, stop speaking at the same time as me!

Cinders Well, if it's for all the eligible females where's my invitation?

Vanelia I don't know? (*Hesitantly*). You might have. But even if you have what will you wear?

Enormia She could wear one of your old things I suppose.

Vanelia Well, she couldn't wear one of yours that's for sure you do know why you're called Enormia, don't you?

Stepmother (*Slithering on*). Desist with the squabbling. I can hear you all over the house! Cinderella will not need a dress! She is a housemaid and as such will be required in the kitchen to prepare our meal before we go and then to ready the house for our return. I also have a number of special tasks she needs to complete before the morning. (*Begins the list*) Trap all the mice in the house (*mice on stage shout "eek" and disappear. Cat goes to investigate*), spin all that wool (*indicating a spinning wheel and pile of wool*) and lastly the hardest task of all, clean Enormia and

Vanelia's bedrooms, a two day task in itself. So, as you can see my dear, you will not be going to the ball!

Cinders Stepmother, do I not have an invitation? I'm sure the prince would want to know if I haven't been invited. I should also tell my father as I am sure he would be most upset if he knew I wasn't going.

Stepmother (*Slimily*). My dear, I am sure your father would be most upset. (*Aside to the audience*) But he is far too busy at the moment with my errands particularly with the tartan paint and bucket of steam. (*Back to Cinders*). As for the prince, why would he need to know? As a scullery maid it seems you didn't warrant one. (*At this point Stepmother has turned her back on Cinders and in full view of the audience she tears up Cinder's invitation. She then turns back to her in mock sympathy*). Oh dear! (*Evil little laugh*).

(*Blackout*).

(*End scene*).

Scene 7

(*Cinder's kitchen, the day of the ball. Perhaps a sign could be shown to indicate the passage of time. Cinders and Buttons are sitting at the table still covered with pots. Cinders is talking with Buttons about the previous day and Buttons is trying to work up courage to tell Cinders how he feels about her. All the while a rumpus from off stage tells you that the 'Sisters' are trying to ready themselves for the Ball. This should continue at varying levels throughout this scene. Cat is on stage moving around doing cat stuff*).

Buttons I don't care what she said yesterday, you should have had an invitation for tonight's ball! You're probably one of the most eligible females I know.

Cinders (*Teasingly*). How many eligible females do you actually know then?

Buttons Er, er, you and and er, your sisters. But they don't really count!

Cinders (*Gently*). Well then, there you are. (*Accepting her fate*) Besides, I am just a scullery maid and since my mother died I've accepted that I am here to ensure the health of my father and to take care of my sisters. It is only right as my stepmother has been good enough to take us in.

Buttons (*An aside to the audience*). She's taken her in alright! (*Back to Cinders*). Oh Cinders, what you need is somebody to whisk you away from all this. If you'll just let me take y.....(*Buttons gets down onto one knee as if to propose. At this point a commotion breaks out off stage the sisters are arguing over which dress and a shoe gets thrown on stage which should be timed as Buttons goes down on*

his knee, just missing him. Cinders hasn't noticed Buttons on one knee as she is looking the other way).

Cinders (*Laughing to herself*). Those sisters of mine. (*She turns to see Buttons on one knee and is surprised*). Why Buttons, what are you doing down there?

Buttons (*He looks to the audience suddenly losing his confidence*). Oh, oh, nothing er, just (*he has an idea*) er, tying my shoelace, that's right, er, my shoe lace is undone. (*Cinders doesn't notice and he gets up and sits*).

Cinders (*Busying herself now*). Well, these pots are not going to wash themselves and that wool I know isn't going to spin itself. (*Little shake of her head but then perhaps a magical sound effect here, just to remind the audience*). And I suppose I need to do something about the mice. (*Mice appear in their hidey hole and they start to shake. Cinders turns to them kindly*). It's alright, I was just thinking about feeding you some cheese that's all. (*Mousey squeals of delight*). So, I do need to get on with my work. (*More hubbub from sisters*). And I suppose I better go and help my sisters or goodness knows what they will end up looking like. (*Little laugh to herself*). Buttons, thank you for coming to see me you always cheer me up. You really are lovely you know. (*Cinders gives Buttons a quick peck on the cheek. More noise off stage from sisters*). (*Cinders looks off stage*). Goodness me Enormia what do you look like? Here, let me help you. (*She exits*).

Buttons (*Looking off stage at all the commotion and in a daze. He turns to the audience*). Did you see that? She kissed me. Perhaps she cares for me after all. But what have I got to offer her, me a lowly servant. I suppose my sense of humour (*look to the audience for support*), my staggering good looks (*another look to audience for more support as music starts*). Well, perhaps in a half light. My incredible bank balance? Not even with the lights off. (*Turns out pockets of trousers to reveal they are empty*).

(A song here from Buttons of unrequited love).

(Cat moves round to the side of Buttons staring at him and doing cat stuff. Mice appear from their hidey holes and perhaps start swaying with the music).

(End of song. Baron Hardup enters behind Buttons and goes across the stage from one side to the other fairly quickly. The audience should pick up on this and start telling Buttons).

Buttons (*Snapping out of it*). What's that? Baron Hardup? Where did he come from? I had better go and try to speak to him. See if we can sort out this mess! Baron Hardup, hang on, no don't run. Please waaaait. (*Buttons exits as if running after the elusive Baron*).

(Tabs in) (Blackout)

(End scene).

Scene 8

(The Ugly Sisters Boudoir in front of tabs. Vanelia and Enormia are on stage sitting behind a dressing table in their underwear getting themselves ready for the ball. They have their wigs on and are pretending to finish their makeup. They still have some jewellery and their dresses to put on which Cinders is sorting out for them on hangers. There is a laundry basket with clothes in).

Vanelia Enormia, pass me the mirror I want to check on my make-up.

Enormia I would love to but you've broken them all.

Vanelia How did I do that?

Enormia *(As a joke)*. By looking into them, ha ha ha.

Vanelia Oh that's very funny!

Enormia *(Now serious)*. No, no really you have! There's not one left!

Vanelia Well, that's not a problem I have great memory for faces *(Puts on lipstick which goes all around her mouth)*. How's that then?

Enormia Perfect. You look like you've just eaten half a tub of raspberries.

Vanelia Good! That was the look I was going for!

Cinders *(Passing the dresses to the sisters to put on)*. Here are your dresses you need to get them on or Stepmother will be cross.

(Vanelia and Enormia take dresses and start putting them on. They realise they are the wrong dresses then swap and start again. The 'stripper music' could begin to play as they get undressed again).

Vanelia *(Whilst getting dressed)*. Mother's always cross. I can't understand why when she has two beautiful daughters like us! I mean look. *(They both bring their faces together for Cinders to look at)*. Mother says we're the most perfect thing she's ever seen. *(Both smile a dreadful smile)*.

Cinders *(A gentle tease from Cinders)*. Yes, sisters, you are but don't do that when there are horses about. You don't want to frighten them!

Enormia Oooohhh Cinderella. *(Sarcastically)*. Never mind, we shall have the last laugh as we are going to the ball and you are being left here to finish all your chores.

With any luck you might do it by the time we get back tomorrow morning, in time for breakfast and I want six eggs with my bacon!

Vanelia (*Dismissing Cinders*). Anyway, I don't want to look at you anymore you can return to your smelly kitchen and get on with mother's chores and with our washing. (*Indicating a laundry basket full of washing*). And mind you give my socks an extra wash. I took them off last night and they put themselves in the wash basket!

(*Cinders exits with basket looking quite forlorn*).

Enormia I am so looking forward to tonight. (*In a reverie*). I am sure it will be just marvellous, the moon, the stars, the prince and of course, me.

Vanelia (*Double take*). You mean me of course, don't you, sister? After all I am the elder and slightly better looking.

Enormia But of course, sister I forgot. I think we should agree that when we are there it is every 'man for himself'. (*Aside to the audience*). Which in her case is not that far from the truth!

Vanelia (*To audience as well*). Well, as sisters, I think that is one thing on which we can both agree!

(*Song from the Ugly Sisters*).

(*Stepmother enters to hurry the girls along just as the song is reaching its finish*).

Stepmother Girls, are we going to make a song and dance of this all night or are we going to bag ourselves a prince! (*With a swish she is off*)

Vanelia and Enormia (*With a look to the audience they chase after Stepmother*). Coming mother!

(*Exit*). (*Blackout*).

(*End scene*).

Scene 9

(*Curtains open onto Cinderella's Kitchen a little later on. Cinders is on the stage feeling very sorry for herself. She is with Cat and the mice*).

Cinders (*To Cat*). I suppose it's just you and me (*pause*) again. (*Mice squeak*). Yes and you as well. (*Still to the mice*). I don't suppose you're any good at spinning yarn are you? (*Mice squeak again*) No, I didn't think so. (*Knock at the door*). Whoever can this be at this time of the night? (*Opens door and FG enters dressed as beggar woman*). Please come in and take shelter from the night.

Fairy Godmother Thank you. You're so kind. (*Aside to audience*). Then again I always knew she was. (*Back to Cinderella*). Are you by yourself?

Cinderella Yes I am, well, except for my little friends.

Fairy Godmother Little friends? (*Quick look round the room. Mice squeak and Cat comes up to Fairy Godmother*). Ahh yes! (*Pats Cat on head and moves into room and perhaps has a little dramatic swoon and then a look to the audience*).

Cinderella (*She takes her by the arm and guides her to a chair*). Old mother, please sit by the fire, you are weary. Can I offer you some food?

Fairy Godmother No my dear, you are more than kind inviting me in. Why is it you are here by yourself?

Cinderella My stepmother and sisters have gone to the prince's ball but as I am a lowly scullery maid I have not been invited.

Fairy Godmother But I heard that the ball was for all eligible females of the realm.

Cinderella That may be the case but I didn't have an invitation.

Fairy Godmother Are you sure? (*Magic sound effect and the Cat approaches Cinderella with an invite in its mouth*) (*Almost an aside to the audience but quite over the top in mock surprise*). Why, what is that in Cat's mouth?

Cinderella It's my royal invitation! (*To Fairy Godmother*). Did you do that? (*Deflated again as she realises it's hopeless*). Oh what does it matter, I don't have anything to wear or a carriage to travel in.

Fairy Godmother (*Softly*). Cinderella, all is not lost. (*The big reveal. She removes her cloak to reveal a beautiful dress and wand in hand*). I am your Fairy Godmother and have watched over you all these years. Did you ever wonder how you managed to finish all your chores on time? The mice were not that good at cleaning (*Squeak from mice*). And Cat really could not peel potatoes. (*Surprised look from Cat*)! Now, we have no time to lose.

(The transformation scene can be done in a number of ways and will largely depend on the size of stage and therefore the ability to house a stage coach of one size or another. 'YouTube' here is a superb source to gain inspiration for the various ways that this can be done. The following though is for the smaller stage but can be adapted as required).

Fairy Godmother First, we need a royal coach. (*Cinderella looks concerned*). Cinderella place the pumpkin by the back door. Don't be concerned, trust me!

(Cinders exits with pumpkin and then her double could return, her face shrouded by the cloak. But equally she could stay off stage to change into her ball gown).

Fear not Cinderella for that Pumpkin will do,

With a wave of my wand it will be

A carriage to take a Princess to a ball,

(To audience) Close your eyes everyone and count three.

(To audience one, two, three. Magic. A magical tinkle from sound effects or orchestra / band).

Fairy Godmother Now, where have those mice gone? I'm sure they will help us.

Come now, my friends,

Be more than mice

Help Cinderella, in a trice

(Some more magic and sound effects! Mice return as horses and perhaps footman / men).

Fairy Godmother Now Cat, would you like to drive the coach?

Cat Mee 'ow?

Fairy Godmother You'll be fine, go and stand next to the carriage.

(Cat can exit here).

Don't be afraid my furry young friend you can help too, if you wish

Just drive to the ball and all will be well

And when you get home you'll have fish!

(Cat / Coachdriver re appears on stage).

Fairy Godmother *(Out to the ether).* Now Cinderella, to transform you into a suitably attired princess.

Come, magic powers, and weave me a spell into a wondrous dress.

Make it shimmer and shine and glow like the moon, fit for a royal princess.

(More magic and Cinders is transformed! She either comes back on stage at this point or all this happens on stage).

Cinders Fairy Godmother this is incredible! The dress is so beautiful and the carriage. They will truly believe that I am a princess. How can I ever thank you?

Fairy Godmother By remembering that by the stroke of midnight my magic ceases. After which all that has changed will return to what it was before. Do you understand?

Cinders I do Fairy Godmother.

Fairy Godmother Cinderella, haven't you forgotten something?

Cinders Forgotten, mmm. *(Counting them off on her fingers)*. Dress, invitation, carriage, no, I don't think so.

Fairy Godmother Your feet child! You can't go to a ball in those.

Cinders More magic Fairy Godmother?

Fairy Godmother Not that you've seen. *(Removing a beautiful pair of 'glass' slippers from their hiding place. Or these can be brought in by Cat on a cushion)* Now, place these on your feet and be on your way.

Cinders *(Hugging Fairy Godmother)*. Oh thank you so much!

Fairy Godmother *(Waving off Cinderella)* Good! Now, hurry along dear and have a lovely time but,

Cinderella my darling you must keep in mind, at the ball we want everything right,

You cannot remain for my magic will wane, so you must leave by the stroke of midnight.

(Big magical wave of her wand, the music tinkles and the Curtain closes).

(Blackout).

(End scene).

Scene 10

(This is the grand ball and commences in front of the main tabs initially. Music plays as the chorus begin to enter down the aisle (or on stage) excitedly. Tickets are checked by two bouncers on either side of the steps / entrance. All the guests will walk on to music past the two bouncers showing their invitations and then either pass through the curtains or off the other side of the stage ready for the curtains to open. Prince, Dandini, King, Queen and Lord Chamberlain are already set on stage behind the curtains).

Bouncer 1 Quiet night, Ron.

Bouncer 2 Yes, Don, it is quiet or it was until you spoke

Bouncer 1 *(With attitude)*. Oh sorry Ron, pardon me for breavin'.

Bouncer 2 Don't start all that again Don. *(Pause)*. But you're right Don, it is quiet!

Bouncer 1 Well, it was until you started this, quiet night nonsense.

Bouncer 2 Stop Don! I'm loosin' the will to live

Bouncer 1: Sorry Ron!

Bouncer 2 *(Pause then he spots people coming in)*. Anyway, spoke too soon Don, 'ere they come!

Bouncer 1 You're right, Ron, I did speak too soon. *(Shouting)*. Invitations please.

(Bouncers straighten jackets etc. and get ready for the onslaught as the chorus and cast approach. As the chorus pass they hand over their tickets and there is general hubbub).

Bouncer 2 *(Stops a member of the chorus who is obviously over eighteen)*. What's your date of birth, madam?

Lady Jane I'm fifty three

Bouncer 2 Have you got any ID, madam?

Lady Jane No I'm fifty three. I don't ever get asked for ID.

Bouncer 2 Well, alright then you can go in. But, I'm watching you. *(Makes a motion from his eyes and points at her. They frisk another elderly member of the chorus.*

(As the Ugly Sisters and Stepmother approach the bouncers they are stopped).

Bouncer 1 *(To Vanelia indicating Enormia)* Excuse me madam, is this gentleman wiv you?

Vanelia *(With a knowing look to the audience)* I'll have you know, sir, that this is no gentleman!

(Stepmother and Ugly Sisters proceed to stage).

(Once they have all gone through the curtains or got on stage, the music changes to a big fanfare and the curtains open onto a full stage of courtiers dancing and

laughing and generally enjoying themselves. The chorus are quite animated, looking at the prince and making the point of how they hope the prince will pick them etc. etc. The prince is surrounded by a gaggle of young maidens with Vanelia and Enormia trying to catch his eye. Stepmother is hanging back watching).

(Perhaps a song here from the chorus).

(End of song, chorus remain chatty and excited. Buttons moves forward to speak to King and Queen).

Buttons *(To King and Queen).* Well, Your Majesties, everyone seems to be enjoying themselves.

King Yes, my dear Cadbury.

Buttons That will be Buttons, sire.

King *(Absently).* Yes I do love them! But look my son stands in the corner with his valet making no effort at all. *(The king turns to talk to the queen).*

Buttons *(To the audience).* What a wonderful ball. Everyone is here, I think. Well, everyone except Cinders. Poor Cinders at home, all by herself cleaning and tidying for those bullying sisters. I do wish she was here. *(He then mills around the stage).*

Dandini My prince, I'm so excited.

Prince So am I, my faithful friend, for tonight I hope to meet the girl who will become my bride.

Dandini That is very important but it is not the reason I am excited.

Prince Not the reason! Well pray tell, what is it, Dandini?

Dandini My lord, the Lady Rachel shall be at the ball and I have just this very day completed my fifty seven page ode to her. It is called, The Long and Winding Ode. *(Pause for audience reaction).* I hope to read it to her tonight so she will understand the depth of my love and then I can win her heart forever. Would you like to hear it sire?

Prince Well er, er, fifty six pages you say?

Dandini Fifty seven sire *(proudly).* *(Coughs before he begins)*

**Oh how I love thee my beautiful Rachel
I love you, I love you, I love you so well
Your dark lifeless hair that you hide with your wigs
Your natural odour, the essence of**

(He is interrupted by the prince who is exclaiming).

Prince Pigs!

Dandini *(Affronted)* Sorry my lord?

Prince Pigs, Dandini *(points at the Ugly Sisters who are eating ravenously stage sandwiches or some such thing)*. Those two over there, stuffing their faces.

Dandini *(Deflated)*. Oh I see. *(Speaking to the audience as he turns away)*. It wasn't pigs actually it was figs.

Prince *(Queen beckons Prince)*. Excuse me for a moment, Dandini, my mother is summoning me.

Queen So, Richard, have you seen any guests who make your heart skip a beat? *(She waves towards the Ugly Sisters)*. What about one of those two?

Prince Not so much skip a beat mother as putting me into cardiac arrest. *(The Ugly Sisters notice the prince talking about them and wave at him giggling to themselves.)*

Enormia Mother he's looking at me. *(Fanning herself with a sandwich or some other such piece of food)*. The prince, he's looking right at me.

Vanelia No he's not, Enormia, he's looking at me, we have made a connection.

Stepmother Be quiet, you two, and listen to me. This is our big chance to make our fortune and for me to be rid of that dreadful Baron Hardup and his hideous daughter once and for all. *(Boooo!)* Now you need to approach the prince. *(They both set off at once and she drags them back emphasising)*. One at a time!

Enormia I'm the best looking so I'll go first.

Vanelia Best of breed maybe.

Stepmother Stop bickering the pair of you. Now, the fairest way to decide who goes first is a question. Whoever gets it right shall be first to approach the prince. *(Music plays from 'Who wants to be a millionaire' or some other recognisable quiz show. The spot lights are on the Ugly Sisters and Stepmother)*. Alright, here is the question.

(Whilst this is happening Cinders begins to make her entrance either through the theatre or stairs on stage). If I had a headache where would I be hurting? Would it be my hand, my toe, my head, or my leg?

(Enormia stamps on Vanelia's foot).

Vanelia Ow my toe!

Stepmother Sorry, Vanelia, toe is the wrong answer.

Vanelia But she stood on my foot. (*Enormia trying to look innocent*).

Enormia Who little me?

Stepmother Now, Enormia, do you know the answer?

Enormia I'm not sure mother. Can I have a clue?

Stepmother You could ask the audience dear. (*Enormia asks the audience and repeats the question and answers. Hopefully they mislead but if not then she encourages them and gives the wrong answer*).

Enormia Errr, is it leg? No. Shoulder? No. Hand? Oh I give up! Thinking hurts my head.

Stepmother Correct! (*But too late Cinders has appeared. All three stop and stare*).

(Cinders is making her entrance either through the auditorium or down steps onto the stage. Everything stops, music, people, all in mid flow including the prince who is absolutely smitten. Cinders gazes in amazement at the scene before her as the bouncers move to intercept her entrance. The prince holds the bouncers back and moves past his mother and father to take Cinder's hand as the music starts again for their dance and duet).

(Dance & Duet by Prince and Cinders).

(All the while the sound of clock ticking indicates time advancing towards twelve o'clock. As the clock approaches twelve the prince takes Cinders hand and caresses it with his lips. The clock starts striking and Cinders gasps in horror as she remembers her Fairy Godmother's warning).

Cinders Ohhhhhh!

Prince What is it? Have I offended you?

Cinders No, but I must leave now. (*Cinders tears herself from his grasp in tears and runs from the stage but leaves behind the glass shoe. Music swells into a climax*).

Prince Please wait! I don't know your name, who are you? (*Cinders exits*).

(Prince sees Cinder's shoe and picks it up for all to see. Curtains close on Prince and company looking out to where Cinders has exited).

(Blackout).

(Curtain).

(End of Act 1).

ACT TWO

Scene 1

(Fairy Godmother enters in front of tabs and perhaps sings an opening song).

Fairy Godmother Well the ball got a bit fraught didn't it? Poor Cinderella! I did tell her though didn't I, remember twelve midnight. And what a to-do at the palace since, everybody running around trying to find the mysterious princess. I must admit it wasn't quite what I'd intended, still it does make for a good second half! Well we had all better keep our eye on things and see how it turns out. Let's return now to the Hardup household and see what happens next.

(Tabs open onto Cinders' kitchen set as per previous scenes with Stepmother, Enormia, and Vanelia on stage all sat round the kitchen table. They are having an animated conversation about the previous night's events at the palace).

Enormia If it wasn't for that hussy muscling her way in like that I am sure the Prince would have asked me to marry him. He was that close to it *(indicating with her fingers how close he was)*, he was, really!

Vanelia To be honest, you were nearer before you started. He actually really fancied me. Did you not see how he couldn't take his eyes off me with his mouth hanging open like this *(opens mouth and pulls horrendous comedy face)*. He just couldn't believe what he was seeing.

Stepmother *(She has a hangover and has an ice bag on her head)*. Stop arguing the pair of you. I'm thinking.

Vanelia *(In a stage whisper to audience)*. I was wondering what that sound was! *(The sisters laugh)*.

Stepmother *(Evil look at the sisters)*. What I was thinking about was where that dreadful Princess came from. *(Cinders comes in carrying firewood / clothing etc.)* If all the most eligible females of the realm had been invited then who was it? *(She looks at Cinders as though she may suspect something)*. Cinderella, girl, come here! *(Cinders, looks quite nervous with the sisters taking an interest in what is happening. Stepmother moves to Cinders and takes her by the chin and pulls her to one side as if bringing her into the light for a proper look)*. Now let me see. Mmmmmm. *(Turns her face one way then the other thinking aloud)*. Coooould be? No, not even in this light, very plain! *(Turns her back on Cinders. Cinders relieved, returns to her work)*.

Cinders *(Innocently)* What was it Stepmother?

Stepmother Nothing, girl. *(Still puzzling)*. Not that it would concern you anyway. Now, I am glad you are here. Have you completed your tasks?

Cinders Er yes I think so. (*Magical tinkle. Stepmothers eyes are opened*).

Stepmother The wool? You have! (*The Wheel is standing there. Stepmother picks up the basket and tips it over. It is now empty*). And the mice all seem to have gone (*Mice disappear into their holes before Stepmother sees them. Then they come back out as her back is turned*).

Mice Na, na, na, na, na!

Enormia And our bedrooms!

Vanelia They were so tidy we couldn't find anything. She had tidied away my floordrobe completely.

Stepmother It seems Cinderella, that as you completed these tasks so easily in future we will have to find you even more work. (*Evil laugh*). Now girls, come! We have plans to make. (*Stepmother gives Cinders a long look and swings off the stage. Each sister in turn looks at Cinders sticks 'her' nose in the air and follows like Stepmother off stage*).

Vanelia (*To Enormia*). We have plans to make!

Enormia (*Turning to thin air*) We have plans t..... (*realises there is no one there and sweeps off stage*).

(*Cinders runs to where her stepmother and sisters have just exited. She checks that they have gone then returns centre stage laughing*).

Cinders (*Mice reappear and Cat comes back on stage. Cinders sees them and talks to them*). Oh my goodness! I thought Stepmother had seen through my disguise as the princess for sure (*indicating the mice*) and your disguise as well! (*Spoken out to the ether*). Fairy Godmother, thank you, oh thank you I had such a wonderful night (*re living it all*). The clothes, my hair, my shoes (*pulls her glass slipper from her pocket or takes it from a hiding place, looking round to check no one is there, dancing around the stage remembering it all from last night*) and the prince, he was sooo handsome (*not quite a swoon*). The music was wonderful too. I have never heard such music. (*Mice squeak*) Yes I know, you can sing as well, dear friends, but if you had heard the music last night (*Lets the phrase hang as the music plays*).

(*Song from Cinders*).

(*End song*). (*Blackout*).

(*End scene*).

Scene 2

(Full stage. Back in the palace again. The prince, Dandini, Lord Chamberlain, King and Queen are discussing the missing princess).

Lord Chamberlain Good morning my Lord, I trust you slept well.

Prince Thank you Lord Chamberlain but I am afraid to tell you that I did not! Mother, Father, have you any news about the princess?

King Do not worry my son, the royal guards are at this very moment scouring the Kingdom looking for your elusive love. It is only a matter of time before they find her.

Queen Scouring the bars more like. I am sure I saw three of them coming out of *(a local night club or well-known bar)* this morning singing something about girls and Inverness.

Prince Father, the guards cannot be trusted with this matter. We need to think of another way to find her.

Lord Chamberlain Do you know her name sire? That would be a good starting point.

Prince Sadly, she did not give me her name. I know the colour of her eyes, the beauty of her smile, the hue of her skin and the warmth of her breath but not her name.

King *(Hopefully)* So, would you recognise her again if you saw her?

Prince *(Comic pause)* No!

Dandini Perhaps my lord, we could offer a reward for the person who finds her.

Queen Sniffer dogs!!

Dandini *(To the Queen)* That is not much of reward Your Highness.

Queen No, Dandini, to find the princess.

Dandini I'm sorry ma'am but the court sniffer dog has had an accident.

Queen What do you mean?

Dandini I am afraid the dog has lost its nose!

Queen But Dandini how does it smell???

Dandini (*Turning to the audience for their re action*) Awful!! (*bum bum!!*)

(*Prince walks over to plinth or cushion and examines the glass slipper*).

King Hmm, Hmm, maybe we could hold another ball? She would be sure to turn up again son.

Dandini (*Interjects*). When Lady Rachel lost her kitten she put an advert in the (*name of a local paper*).

Queen And was the kitten found Dandini?

Dandini Unfortunately not Your Majesty. There was a mix-up at the printers, but she'll never be short of mittens.

Prince Those are all good ideas but they require that I wait here, doing nothing, in the hope that she will return. I must be able to do something.

Lord Chamberlain Perhaps Your Majesty, if I may be permitted to make a suggestion.

Prince Certainly Lord Chamberlain. What is it?

Lord Chamberlain We know that the princess ran away, so she may not be keen to be found and we have no way of being sure who she is even if we do find her.

Prince Thank you for stating the blindingly obvious but what is your suggestion?

Lord Chamberlain Well, we have a shoe but we are minus one princess and the only way to be sure of who the princess is to match the shoe with the foot.

Dandini Ah, I get it Lord Chamberlain. But wait a minute. I see a flaw in this plan. Surely there will be many young maidens who will be the same size as this shoe.

King (*As if seeing Dandini for the first time*). By George, whoever this fellow is, I think he has a point.

Prince (*Examining shoe almost despondent*). Dandini, you do have a point, and this time it's a good one (*magical tinkle*). But wait! What's this? (*Mystical sign has appeared in shoe*). Look inside the shoe.

Lord Chamberlain To fit the size of the one you love! (*Sagely*) Indeed, sire, this is a magical slipper and will only fit one person. Your missing princess!

Prince If that is so, I will travel to the ends of the kingdom to find my beloved.

Queen All this will be folly and if nothing else it will get you out in the fresh air. I think you have been looking a bit peaky of late! What say you, my king?

King Yes, yes, capital idea.

Queen Lord Chamberlain we need to make a proclamation. (*Lord Chamberlain turns to the Queen and bows*). Summon the Courtiers!

(Lord Chamberlain exits).

(Big Fanfare).

(Chorus and Lord Chamberlain make their way back onto stage. Lord Chamberlain comes centre stage with King and Queen. All three put their heads together on the pretence of having a discussion whilst the chorus buzz with excitement. Lord Chamberlain then removes himself from the 'huddle' and holding his arms up for quiet he readies himself for the proclamation).

Lord Chamberlain Their Highnesses the King and Queen of Hedonia intend to search the whole of their kingdom for the mysterious princess who appeared and disappeared at the royal ball. (*Chorus react to this Oooohhh Aaaah etc. etc.*). Prince Richard himself will travel throughout the kingdom and will expect every eligible maiden to try on the glass slipper that fell from the princess's foot. Whomsoever the slipper fits will marry the prince.

(Excited chatter from the chorus over which the music comes in).

(Potential chorus song).

(End of song).

(Close tabs).

(End scene).

(Lights change to reflect the following scene change).

Scene 3

(Front of tabs. Travelling through the kingdom to try on the glass slipper. There is the prince, Dandini, Lord Chamberlain, Buttons and the two bouncers plus an assortment of villagers and ladies who are to try on the slipper. The bouncers enter first clearing the way for the rest of the prince's entourage. The bouncers can be saying things such as "Move along now please / clear the way". A gaggle of females then run on excited to try on the slipper as if the prince is a movie star).

Lord Chamberlain *(Walks in carrying the glass slipper on a cushion).* This way, Your Highness. *(Indicating the ladies pushing and shoving to get a better view).* We have a number of eligible females who wish to try on the glass slipper.

Prince How many more Lord Chamberlain? Surely she must be here somewhere? *(He surveys the waiting gaggle of women waiting to try on the slipper. All the while the chorus on stage are gawking and gossiping).* Do any of these look more promising?

Lord Chamberlain The only thing I can promise you Your Highness is that at least *(a number)* have their own teeth and there are no false legs this time! *(Look of relief on the prince's face all the while the chorus react).*

Dandini Your Highness this could be it! Who knows, the very one you are seeking may be among them. Oh that would be so romantic. You know, I can feel a poem coming on. *(Retrieves a pen and some paper to start writing).*

Prince Dandini, spare me your rhyming sentiment until we have found her. *(Dandini looks put out and moves away).* *(An aside to the Lord Chamberlain).* Lord Chamberlain you have my permission to clap Dandini in irons if he so much as rhymes a request for lunch until this is over.

Lord Chamberlain Gladly, Your Highness

Prince *(To the stage).* Shall we get on with it?

Lord Chamberlain Buttons bring the ladies forward. *(Buttons places a stool or some other such item centre stage and goes over to bring in the women. They preferably should be all shapes and sizes and dressed to comic effect).*

(The ladies are gathered looking over each other's shoulders to get a glimpse of the prince, preening themselves to make the best of what they have got. There should be more than three ladies, they just won't have any lines and they will be dismissed fairly quickly when trying on the shoe. Chorus react to the ladies perhaps some comments "ooh I think its 'er /she's the one/, come on girl get it on yer foot"/ or some such comments. Bouncers meanwhile are keeping control of the 'crowd'. The following lines should come as these ladies try on the shoes).

Sally Betty, look at him he's quite handsome, not half as ugly as his father and a bit taller than I thought he'd be.

Betty Yes, Sally, but that's because you have only ever seen him on a stamp.

Winnie Which one is he then?

Sally That one there in the *(describes the prince).*

Winnie Oooohhh, he's quite dishy. (*Swooning*) It's like meeting a prince out of one of those fairy stories!

Betty Winnie, you're getting soft in the head!

(*Ladies all start to push forward to get a better glimpse and be first to try on the shoe*).

Buttons (*To audience*) Now I know what it feels like to be at the sales at Marks and Sparks. Steady on, ladies, you'll all get a chance!

Lord Chamberlain Buttons, the first one please.

Buttons (*A surge in the 'crowd'*) Calm down, calm down it's only a pantomime. Yes, you please (*To a lady in the crowd*). Sit there. Thank you. (*Bouncers bring ladies forward to try on shoe*).

(*There can be iterations of these members of chorus trying the shoe on until Sally comes forward*).

Prince How many more? I don't think I can bear to look at another foot today.

Dandini Don't worry Your Highness, only a few more. (*Looks at the attending ladies*). But I wouldn't get your hopes up!

(*Sally is shoved forward by one of the bouncers*).

Sally About time! (*She plonks herself on the stool and ready's her foot for the shoe*).

Lord Chamberlain (*To prince*) Do any of these look familiar?

Prince (*Distractedly*). When you have seen one foot you have seen them all!

Lord Chamberlain (*Exasperation*). No, not the feet, the maidens. Do they look familiar?

Prince I can't say they do, but you never know. (*Tries the shoe on Sally*). I'm sorry madam it doesn't seem to fit.

Sally It does! It does! (*Shoe half hanging off and cheers from chorus*).

Prince It doesn't, it doesn't! (*Jeers from chorus*).

Buttons (*Being very official taking Sally by the arm and leading her to the exit. Chorus can again make appropriate comments. "Ee never mind love, it was only one shoe anyway!" or something like that*) Come on now, madam, let's not make a scene (*Sally reluctantly gets up and can be sobbing slightly as she leaves*).

Lord Chamberlain *(He indicates for Betty to come and try on the shoe. The prince helps her and the shoe goes on! Chorus react amazed).* Madam how does that feel?

Betty It's all right but do you have it in a bigger size? *(Chorus can laugh and prince looking amazed removes the shoe and Buttons takes her by the arm).* I wouldn't mind but I get better service at *(name of a big well-known local department store).* And anyway you only had one shoe!

Lord Chamberlain Your Highness this is the last eligible maiden from this area. *(Indicates Winnie).*

Prince Let's get it over with then.

Lord Chamberlain *(Motions for Winnie to sit down on the chair / stool).* Madam, please be seated. My lord, may I introduce Winnie.

(Chorus again can be getting into the spirit of all of this with some shouts of encouragement – "Come on Winnie love – best foot forward"!)

Winnie You're so kind. *(Prince kneels at her feet to try on the shoe but alas it doesn't fit).*

Prince Madam, er, Winnie, I am afraid your foot is too large *(or small)* – *(now quite deflated by the whole process. Chorus react)* The shoe does not fit you, therefore you are not my princess. *(Ahhhs from chorus).*

Winnie Well that's not very nice is it? I come out 'ere to try on the shoe and I am told my foot is too large *(small)*. *(Chorus react 'you tell him Winnie etc')*. Well, it was the right size when I got up this morning. Perhaps I could try it later on? *(Getting quite desperate)*. I am sure it would be the right size then! *(Chorus laugh).*

Lord Chamberlain *(To Buttons).* Escort the, er, maiden away, we are done here. *(Chorus begin to drift off the excitement is over) (Lord Chamberlain turning to the prince).* Never mind Your Highness. Just one more village and then we will have seen everybody. She must turn up soon. *(Chorus drift off commiserating with the ladies and the entourage turn and start to walk off. Dandini is last to exit).*

Dandini *(Out to the wing where the prince has just exited).* Sire, perhaps I could cheer you up. I have just thought of a wonderful poem!

Prince *(From off stage)* Dandini!

(Blackout). (Curtains).

(End of scene).

Scene 4

(Curtains open on full palace scene. The king and queen are on stage. The king has no shoes on and is searching. There should be chair and a cloak and perhaps other items under which he could search).

King Where has everyone gone? I came out of the closet this morning and could not find another living soul.

Queen *(Stares out towards the audience then continues).* Don't you remember? They have all gone with Richard and Dandini to hunt for the girl with the sloach and kipper.

King *(Looking for his shoes).* Oh yes, the girl, coach and slipper, *(sceptically)* his true love. *(Still searching).*

Queen When you have found the right one then you know it.

King *(Finding a shoe he holds it up. It is the left shoe).* But I can't find the right one.

Queen *(Not really noticing his searching).* My husband, how can you say such a thing? Is the right one not directly in front of you?

King *(Puzzled holding the shoe up whilst looking round).* No, in fact I am not even sure I have seen the right one anywhere in this castle.

Queen You are so cruel and after you promised me on our wedding day that you would pleasure and tease me forever.

King I really hope you mean treasure and please.

Queen I mow what I kean.

King *(Still holding his shoe and looking).* Fine! But none of this is helping me find the right one.

Queen And why should I help you find miss right?

King Miss right, miss right? What are you talking about? I'm looking for my right shoe.

Queen *(Finally turns towards him).* Oh my darling, do forgive me. How foolish of me.

King *(Exasperated).* What's come over you woman? *(Starts to put his one shoe on).*

Queen It's just all this talk of Richard and his loo truv. It makes me nervous and excited like the first time I met you. You were so nervous that you spilt your drink.

King Well, it's only to be expected. If I remember correctly, I fell right into a trap set by you and your friends.

Queen You are so funny. Whatever can you mean?

King Most people would think I meant your friends found an excuse to leave us alone, but in this case you had actually dug a hole in the ground and covered it with branches. As I recall you kept me in there for three days until I agreed to marry you.

Queen Darling, your memory does play awful tricks on you.

King Regardless, you know I wouldn't change it or you for the world. Aha! The right one. *(He thinks he has found it under a cloak but it turns out to be something else. He puts his arm around the Queen whilst standing up on his shoe).*

Queen Shall we go and see if we can find Richard and share in the excitement?

King Yes lets. *(Slight pause as he exits).* Perhaps he has my other shoe?

(They exit together with the king limping off on one shoe).

(Curtains close as they exit).

(End scene).

Scene 5

(In front of tabs).

Fairy Godmother *(Looking tired, yawning etc.)* Hello again. I am so exhausted. It's tiring work you know making pumpkins into carriages and turning mice into horses and rags into beautiful gowns, not to mention making those glass slippers. That was shattering. *(Pause).* The easy part was turning Cinderella into a beautiful princess, I mean she is already beautiful isn't she *(audience response)* and she has the manners and goodness of a real princess. I've been watching over her for so many years and I have seen her grow into a kind, caring young lady, I'm so proud to call her, well what do I call her? She's not my daughter, she's not my niece, I guess she is my fairy God child, but no she is not the fairy, I am. We'll have to think of something else.

The prince and his companions have now travelled all over the kingdom searching everywhere looking for Cinderella, but of course he doesn't know that's her name, all

he has is a glass slipper and a determination to find the one he loves. It's so romantic.

The prince has just one last place to check before his search is at an end and that is the Hardup cottage. I'm sure that those sisters and their scheming mother will do everything they can to stop the prince from finding Cinderella. So, shall we take a look and see what happens? I'm so excited.

(She goes to exit but turns back). God daughter! That's what I should call her *(proudly)* yes, my God daughter.

(Exits).

(Baron Hardup enters with bucket (for steam) making his way across stage. Audience by now should be shouting for Buttons).

(Buttons enters from opposite side. Baron Hardup has already left the stage).

Buttons What? Have I missed him? Oooohhh not again!

I chase him here I chase him there I chase him flippin' everywhere

Is he at home or is he just out? Either way give us a shout!

(Exit).

(End of scene).

(Blackout).

Scene 6

(Curtains open onto Cinder's kitchen as set previously also with a number of brushes leaning against the back. Cinders is already on stage working away. Buttons is sitting at the kitchen table. He has a present wrapped up for Cinders and is hoping to woo her again. He has not yet told Cinders about the trying on of the slipper).

Buttons So, have you been busy then? *(Nonchalantly)*. Not heard much news from around the kingdom?

Cinders No, it's been very quiet. Just me, the mice *(mice squeak)* and Cat *(Cat mews and moves to Buttons)*.

Buttons Oh good! *(To audience. Cinders is oblivious)*. No, I didn't mean that. I did really. Well, I really like her and if I stand any chance at all it's now or never. Even if the shoe doesn't fit her when she tries it on, the prince will fancy her for sure when he claps eyes on her. Then I won't get a look in. *(Back to Cinders)*. I've bought

you a present. Something that could make your life a bit easier. *(Gets a wrapped present from side of stage and it clearly looks like a brush).*

Cinders *(Teasingly).* Buttons, whatever can it be?

Buttons *(Very pleased with himself).* It's a Bru *(realises she already knows),* ...sh!

Cinders Buttons, it's lovely thank you, just what I needed. *(Puts it with the three or four other brushes already on stage).*

(Song Buttons / Cinders duet).

(End of song).

Buttons I'm glad you liked it because I've something I want to ask you. *(Cinders all the while has her back to him while he is rambling, doing some tidying).* You know how I'm always here and spend so much time looking into your eyes?

Cinders *(Distracted by her work and going through the motions of answering not really listening).* Mmm, yes.

Buttons *(Now down on one knee).* I wonder if you would be willing to...*(at this point the Ugly Sisters come rushing in all very excited and flatten Buttons).* Heeeeelp!

Cinders *(Turns quickly to Buttons at the noise).* Willing to help you with what? *(Sees Buttons almost prostrate on the floor).* Buttons, why are you down there?

Buttons Just having problems with my laces again. *(Looks to audience).*

Cinders You and your laces. *(Laughs an affectionate laugh)!* Now, sisters, why all the excitement?

Vanelia Haven't you heard ? Well, of course, you wouldn't have would you, being a scullery maid. *(Vanelia and Enormia laugh at this).* But the prince and his entourage, *(to audience)* that's a big word isn't it *(pause)* 'his', are coming here to try on the famous glass slipper left by the mysterious princess at the ball. He says *(in a proclamation type voice)* whomsoever the slipper fitteth will become his brideth!

Enormia *(Singing)* "***I'm so excited I just can't hide it I'm about to lose control and I think I like it!***"

Vanelia Oooohhh, Enormia, I didn't know you could sing?

Buttons / Cinders *(Together in an aside to the audience).* She can't!! *(Both laugh)*

Vanelia Now we need to get ourselves ready because the prince will be here any minute. Have you got clean socks on?

Enormia Yes, I put them on last week! They were quite fresh then and how dirty can they be, I've not had them off my feet since.

Vanelia Good!

Stepmother (*Enters and speaks in hushed tones to the sisters*). Hurry girls, the Prince is here. Quick, we must get Cinderella out of the way.

Cinders Stepmother, sisters, why are you....' (*The sisters and stepmother get Cinders with little resistance and put her into a basket / ottoman / box. Stepmother for comic effect can 'knock her out' with sponge rolling pin – she collapses into the basket and the sisters sit on it*).

Buttons (*Buttons begins to protest*). What are you doing? You can't do this. Just wait until I see the Prince!

Stepmother (*With menace*). You had better be quiet or you will never see your beloved Cinderella again. You think this is our only kitchen? Well, there is a deeper, darker, danker cellar within this house where her only friends would be the spiders, her pets would be cockroaches, and her only sunlight the glow of a single candle where she would remain forever, alone, is that what you want? (*Buttons shakes his head and goes quiet*). Good!

(*Lord Chamberlain enters to make a proclamation*).

Lord Chamberlain Make way for his Royal Highness Prince Richard of Hedonia (*The prince and Dandini enter. Dandini is carrying the slipper on a cushion*).

(*Stepmother is now all light and goodness and she curtseys, Buttons bows and the daughters stay seated on the basket*).

Dandini (*To Stepmother*). Madam do these young er, er ladies not have manners to curtsey to the prince?

Stepmother My apologies sire. These are my daughters and are but simple girls. Vanelia, Enormia, where are your manners?

(*Each sister in turn gets up and curtseys to the prince in comic fashion and then sits down straight away drawing strange looks from everyone except Buttons who looks as though he is dying to say something*).

Lord Chamberlain (*Aside to the Prince*). My lord, shall we get on with it.

Prince If we must Lord Chamberlain. Dandini, hand me the glass slipper. (*Dandini takes the Slipper off the cushion and hands it to the Prince*). Who is to be first?

Stepmother (*Oily*). May I suggest my eldest daughter, Vanelia. (*Indicating Vanelia with due deference*).

Vanelia (*The prince kneels at her foot and Vanelia 'hoiks' her dress up and waves her foot in his face*). Here's my foot. (*The prince can hold his nose as he takes her foot and places the shoe on it. She immediately stands and lowers her body so that the dress is just skimming the top of the shoe and faces forward. To all intents and purposes it looks as though the shoe fits*). Mama, look! It fits!

(*All look aghast or surprised or both*).

Enormia (*To stepmother almost innocently*). How can it?

Stepmother (*Stage whisper to Enormia*). Be quiet!

Enormia (*Catching on*). Oh yes. (*Over exaggerated to all who will listen*) Yes, look, it's a marvellous fit. The most amazing fitting shoe I have ever seen!

Vanelia (*To the prince*). Oh, this is just like a dream, when shall we name the day? (*Arms out moving to kiss him*).

Prince (*Steps back out of her reach. As he does so she steps out of the shoe and straight into the outstretched hand of the prince. He sees she is out of the shoe*). Madam never! That shoe does not fit you.

Vanelia (*Slumping back onto the basket*). Oh well. I don't really fancy him anyway Mother. (*Stage whisper*). He's a bit plain!

Prince (*To Dandini*). There it is again, somebody calling me plain! The next one that says that is going into the royal dungeon!

Dandini Sire, take no notice we have more pressing things to attend to.

Prince Yes, of course, you're right. (*Back to the task in hand. To Enormia*). Madam, I believe it is your turn.

Enormia This is going to be, easy peasy shoes on squeezy! (*Puts shoe on foot*). There!

Prince (*To Lord Chamberlain*). I can't bear to look. This is your job!

Lord Chamberlain Very well Your Highness. (*Peering at the foot*). Sire it appears to be on. (*Prince looks aghast*). I think we have found your girl, as they say.

Prince (*To Lord Chamberlain, almost pleading*). Check again, please!

Lord Chamberlain If you insist sire. (*Indicating she should put her foot up for inspection*). Madam your foot.

Enormia (To Vanelia, misunderstanding). He's very good isn't he, it is my foot!

(Vanelia is not impressed).

Vanelia Show him your stupid foot.

Enormia My foot's not stupid.

Vanelia No, but you are, he wants to look at your foot.

Enormia *(She shows him the other one without the shoe)* Ohhh! How about this one? I think this is my best foot.

Lord Chamberlain *(Hand outstretched to Dandini)*. Dandini, your sword. If she doesn't show it me this time I am going to cut it off!

Enormia *(Quickly)*. This will be the foot you want to look at then. *(Thrusting forward the foot with the slipper on)*.

Lord Chamberlain Thank you! Now let me see. *(Examines foot gingerly with fingertips, could even snap on a pair of latex gloves for effect)*. Madam, this slipper does not fit at all! *(Group on stage react)*. It is way too *(large / small)*. *(Removes slipper from Enormia's foot)*. Sire, this is no good I fear the princess you seek is either in another kingdom or has simply vanished into thin air!

(Enormia is back sitting on the basket / box).

Prince *(To Stepmother)*. Baroness Hardup! Do you have any other eligible maidens within your household?

Stepmother No, Your Highness. *(Indicating the sisters)*. These are the only girls in the household. *(Basket / box lid starts banging and sisters start jumping every time the lid bangs)*.

Prince Your daughters are behaving strangely. *(Dismisses them as barmy)*. Dandini, Lord Chamberlain may I have a word? *(All three come together and appear to be having a quiet discussion amongst themselves. The sisters meantime are jumping every time Cinders 'kicks' the lid of the basket / box from inside. Stepmother is looking agitated)*.

Buttons *(To audience)*. It's no good, I should say something but if I do I will lose Cinders for good.

Lord Chamberlain Well, that's it Your Highness. We must go and make further plans though what we can do now I don't know.

Buttons *(To audience)*. I'm all mixed up and don't know what to do. What shall I do, tell the prince? *(Hopefully the audience will react)*.

Dandini (To Buttons). Buttons, you look troubled can I help? (*Prince and Lord Chancellor are again in a conversation of their own*).

Buttons Dandini, I have a problem and if I don't tell someone I am going to burst. (*Stepmother and sisters are looking at Buttons and are getting quite animated re his talking to Dandini. All the while Cinders is trying to get out of the basket / box and the lid is bumping up and down as are the sisters*).

Dandini Well, come with us, I know an excellent physician!

Buttons It's not that kind of problem. You see it's about this girl.

Dandini I see. I have that problem also. Have you tried writing her a poem?

Buttons No! Not any girl. (*With more meaning and indicating the basket with his head*). Another girl!

Dandini (*Looks at jumping basket the penny drops*). Ohhh! Buttons leave this to me. (*Turns to the Prince*). Sire, it appears that the baroness has been less than truthful with us.

Prince How so?

Dandini (*Sisters are still bouncing every time the lid is kicked*). Note how the basket is moving.

Prince Well, wouldn't you move if you had those two great lumps bouncing on you?

Lord Chamberlain Dandini is right Your Highness, note the lid.

Prince Ahhhhhh. Madam, remove your daughters from the basket.

Stepmother (*Obsequiously*). I would gladly Your Highness, but they are very attached to the basket and it would greatly upset them to leave it

Prince You odd people! Remove them now or I will separate them from one of their extremities to which I assume they are equally attached!

Vanelia (*To audience*). Ooh yes, I like my extremities!

Stepmother My lord you are, er, very persuasive. Girls come to me.

(*Sisters are very nervous and move over to the stepmother and hide behind her for protection*).

(The basket / box lid is flung open and Cinders appears a little dishevelled but none the worse for her ordeal, but equally unaware of what has been going on whilst she was in there).

Cinders Stepmother! Vanelia, Enormia I don't understand what is going on *(Sees prince and others)*. Oh! *(Stage whisper and very confused as she gets out of the box / basket and moves to Buttons)*. Buttons why are they all here?

(The king and queen enter. The king is still without his other shoe. Everyone on stage bows or curtseys to them. They acknowledge them).

Prince Mother, Father, why are you here?

Queen Just come to see how you are getting on

King I don't know why I'm here. I still can't find my blessed shoe.

(Buttons sees that they are getting away from the plot and brings them back).

Buttons Your Highnesses. May I introduce the *(emphasis)* maiden Cinderella. She is Baroness Hardup's stepdaughter, though you would hardly know it as she is kept as a virtual prisoner within this household to be their slave!

(The Prince hears this and turns to Stepmother).

Prince *(To Stepmother)*. Is this true? That you treat people, your own relations in this way?

Stepmother *(Begins to protest)*. Your Highness, in my defence I took in this worthless and ungratefu

Lord Chamberlain Be silent! *(Stepmother and daughters look very sullen)*. Your Majesty, there is an injustice here that needs to be righted but first the matter of the shoe?

Stepmother *(Starts again)*. My lord, I must protest!

Prince *(A look silences Stepmother)*. Lord Chamberlain as ever you are correct. *(To Cinders)*. Madam, may I be permitted to place this slipper upon your foot.

Cinders As Your Highness wishes. *(She holds out her foot)*.

Prince *(Exclaiming)* It fits! Dandini, Lord Chamberlain look it fits!

(The king and queen react).

Queen Golly Jud! *(She hugs the prince)*.

(King goes to hug the Lord Chamberlain but stops himself just in time and shakes his hand instead).

Buttons *(In mock excitement).* Woo Woo it fits!

Stepmother *(Now angry).* This cannot be true! She has bewitched you. There is no other answer. She cannot be the princess. I made sure that she could not attend the ball. I tore up her invitation. She had no dress and no way of getting there! *(Realises what she has just said).*

Cinders I wouldn't be too sure about that! *(Cinders expects to produce the glass slipper and to her horror the other shoe for the king comes out first who accepts it from her. The Stepmother begins to look smug).*

King *(As he puts the shoe on).* I say how clever.

Stepmother Ha! As I thought an imposter!

(Cinders looks a bit flustered and has another root round and finally takes out the glass slipper. Stepmother and the sisters gasp in amazement / horror).

(Fairy Godmother has appeared on stage and waves her wand, a magical tinkle and the wool falls from everyone's eyes and she smiles at the audience and exits).

Prince *(Goes down on one knee).* Cinderella, would you do me the honour of becoming my wife.

Cinders Oh yes my prince!

(The prince gets up and looks directly into Cinders eyes and they embrace).

King This is indeed a great day for our kingdom. Prince Robert ..

Queen It's Richard dear.

King Oh, right. Prince Richard dear, *(Queen rolls her eyes but lets it go)* has found his bride *(aside to audience)* at last.

(Stepmother and daughters are beginning to sidle off the stage when ...).

Lord Chamberlain Dandini! Stop those three. *(Dandini draws his sword and waves them back to the centre of the stage).* We still have the thorny issue of what to do with them.

Prince There is only one thing to do. This dreadful woman and her daughters must be banished from our Kingdom for the rest of their lives!

(Shocked gasps from all three – "please no, Cinders save us etc.").

Cinders My lord, may I ask for mercy for my sisters and stepmother? After all she is married to my father, who is still unaware of my plight I am afraid and although my lot has been hard, she has given me a roof over my head.

(Prince looks to the king and queen who nod their assent).

Prince You are indeed lucky that your stepdaughter does not care to treat you as you have treated her but *(looks to the king and queen)* Mother, Father I cannot let their injustices go unpunished. You two *(indicating Vanelia and Enormia)* will work as Cinderella's maids for the rest of your lives *(Vanelia & Enormia hold each other sobbing)*. As for you, *(indicating the stepmother)* you will spend the rest of your days as the lowliest of servants in the palace taking care of the needs of all the other servants in the household.

(Sisters are excited at the thought of bossing their mother about).

Enormia Oooohhh does that mean we get to boss her about then!

Lord Chamberlain Don't push your luck!

Prince Come, Cinderella, and let me take you to my palace and give you and your father the life you truly deserve!

(Song Prince and Cinders).

(End of song).

(Blackout). (Close curtains).

(End of Scene).

Scene 7

(In front of tabs. From off stage sounding like they are giving orders rather than repeating them).

Vanelia Clean up that floor!

Enormia Clean up the kitchen!

(Ugly sisters enter dressed in cleaning attire and carrying dusters and some spray cleaning fluid).

Vanelia That's all we hear these days.

Enormia I've never worked so hard in all my life.

Vanelia You've never worked in all your life!

Enormia And you have, have you?

Vanelia Actually, I have been known to get up before midday on a Sunday to clean the bath.

Enormia Vanelia my dear, soaking yourself for two hours in rose scented water is not cleaning the bath, it is contaminating it.

Vanelia (*Petulant*). Anyway it's not rose water. It's Victoria Beckham's latest perfume called, toilet (*terrible French accent*) au – der.

Enormia Oh is it? Funnily enough I've just released my own perfume.

Vanelia (*Surprised walking towards Enormia*). Have you?

(*Vanelia staggers back like she has walked into a wall giving a 'look' to audience*).

Vanelia (*Wafting her duster*) Enormia, you are disgusting.

Enormia It's got to be better than the smell of this cleaning fluid he's given us.

Vanelia Quick, here he comes, pretend you're working.

Enormia How do we do that?

Vanelia Rub something.

(*Vanelia bends down to pretend she is cleaning something and Enormia begins polishing her sister's bottom*).

Vanelia Oi! Not that!

(*Buttons enters*).

Buttons What have you two been nattering about? I'm surprised you have time to talk at all given the amount of work you have to do.

Enormia (*Walking towards Buttons, fawning and stroking his clothing*). Oh wonderful Buttons, you are so handsome and clever and funny and I always had a thing for you. Can I have a break please?

Vanelia (*Approaching Buttons*). Oh yes Buttons, you've always been my favourite. Can we please have just a few hours to restore our strength?

Buttons But you haven't done any work yet. No, you can get on with it and I want everything as shiny as a new pin.

Vanelia (*Looks at a man in the audience*). Typical man! He thinks all we're good for is cleaning.

Buttons: Have you two thought for one second about how badly you treated Cinderella?

Enormia *(To audience)*. Yes we have.

Vanelia & Enormia *(Again to audience very pleased with themselves)*. And we were really good at it too!

Enormia *(Back to Buttons now apologetic)*. No, no, we really are sorry Buttons. We didn't mean to treat Cinderella so badly.

Vanelia No, we didn't, we wanted to be nice sisters. It was our mother. She made us do it. I wanted to help Cinderella and.....

Buttons *(Interrupts)*. Enough of this begging and pleading! Get on with your work. You two have behaved in a terrible way and you have to pay the price.

Enormia But surely there is something else we can do to make it up to all the mums and dads and boys and girls, *(looking at the audience)* for our terrible behaviour.

Buttons *(Thinking)*. Perhaps there is. Oh no it wouldn't work, it would be more like punishment for everyone else than for you.

Vanelia Please Buttons tell us what it is? We'll do anything you ask, just not all this cleaning. These are not the hands of *(knowing look to the audience)* a scrubber *(pause)*.

Enormia *(To audience)*. Well, I beg to differ.

Buttons OK I'll give it one try. What are you two like at singing?

Vanelia & Enormia *(Take a breath and say together out to the audience horrified)*. Singing!

Vanelia *(Starts cleaning immediately)* I would rather clean the toilets in the *(Some local infamous place. Gets immediately tired)*.

Enormia *(Falls to her knees and begs)*. No, anything but singing! Please Buttons. I couldn't stand it. There are whole areas of deforestation caused by her voice. *(Points at Vanelia)*. She once sang to a whole flock of Dodos *(pause)* and then there was those Lemmings *(pause, counting on fingers)*, the dinosaurs, are you getting the picture?

Vanelia *(Vanelia collapses on the floor from the exhaustion of one minutes cleaning)*. Hey you're no *(well-known singer of the time)* *(she gets up)* yourself, (a

chart hit from the singer or from a relevant popular tune starts to play and both sing and dance where they are in a coordinated manner).

Buttons *(Deliberately and slowly).* Yes, you're right maybe not singing.

Vanelia & Enormia *(Interrupting, fawningly).* Oh thank you Buttons, thank you so much.

Buttons Let me finish. Maybe not singing alone, but singing with the mums and dads and the boys and girls.

Vanelia & Enormia *(Out to the audience holding each other).* Noooooooooooooo!

Buttons Yes, that's decided, that is what we will do. Right you two go and get the words and then you can hold them up so that everyone can see them.

(Ad lib into Song Sheet.)

(After song sheet, exit).

(End scene).

(Blackout).

Scene 8

(In front of main tabs. Dandini and Prince enter. Lights up).

Dandini Sire, it is wonderful that you and Cinderella are so happy. She will make a splendid queen, but how is my fate looking?

Prince Fate? Ahh yes, Dandini, I know I mentioned this a while ago, but now I am to marry I will need you more than ever to help with my duties.

Dandini The lack of a 'Sir' at the beginning of my name means I shall never be able to marry the Lady Rachel. I am in love and require your help to ensure my happiness.

Prince But your courtly duties are going to increase and this is going to place a greater burden on you, one where love must not be a distraction. *(The Prince is laughing behind his hand. This is all a big joke, which is on Dandini).*

Dandini My lord, whilst my love for the Lady Rachel goes unresolved I am afraid you may not have my full attention.

Prince Yes, regarding this, I have been meaning to have a word with you about your poetry. When in court and I am speaking with the king or queen it is not

fitting for you to burst forth with 'my love is like a tweeting sparrow, flitting from bough to bough' or some such thing. (*Turns from Dandini laughing to himself*).

Dandini (*Now extremely forlorn*). I am sorry sire. But when the mood is upon me it is very difficult and I just have to let it out.

Prince (*With mock seriousness*). Then we must put an end to your moods mustn't we?

Dandini Yes, of course er, my lord, I er, fully understand your position. (*Dandini drops his eyes from the prince and is now every inch the servant. When he does this the prince waves to the wings for Cinders to come on*). I will keep my feelings to myself from now on.

Cinders (*She enters. Dandini is still very subdued and not quite looking at Cinders. An aside with the prince*). Richard, I see you are having a word with Dandini. How is it going?

Prince (*Hardly able to contain himself*). Oh, very well! (*Laughing splutter!*).

Cinders (*In a stage whisper*). My love, I believe you are enjoying this way too much and we need to put him out of his misery or I think he may do something drastic like burst into song, or just burst!

Prince Cinderella, you are right! (*Sternly*). Dandini, come here. Kneel! (*He indicates to the floor in front of him and draws his sword*).

Dandini (*Head bowed and kneeling*). Sire no more. I can't stand it!

Prince Dandini, you are a twit! (*Dandini looks up shocked. The prince is now very sincere*). But you are my greatest and best friend. How can I ignore your happiness when I now have so much. (*Touching both shoulders with his sword*). I knight you in the name of king and country. Arise Sir Dandini.

Sir Dandini Sire does this mean....?

Prince That you can marry your Lady Rachel? Of course! (*Cinders brings on Lady Rachel*).

Lady Rachel (*She curtseys to Dandini*). Sir Dandini, that title has a lovely (*knowingly*) ring to it.

(*Prince and Cinders creep off in silence*).

Sir Dandini My Lady, it certainly does. (*Goes down on one knee and produces a ring from his pocket*). Will you be my wife?

Lady Rachel (*Putting on the ring*). How can I refuse?

(*Song – Duet for Dandini and Rachel*).

(*End of song they exit*).

(*Curtains open for finale and walk down. During the walk down Baron Hardup walks across the front at an appropriate time makes as if to walk off and takes a bow*).

(*End of walk down possible reprise of Prince and Cinders Duet. All cast then line up to say their lines with 'gusto' to the audience*).

Lord Chamberlain

It is with great joy, I can stand and announce, that good sense has won on this day.

Fairy Godmother

The Prince has his bride and the Kingdom is happy, Cinderella's our princess hooray.

Vanelia

Now I've got to scrub

Enormia

And I've got to clean

Vanelia

And my nails are all broken and split

Enormia

I've a splinter and blister

Vanelia

Oh yes you have sister, and they're all in the place where you sit!

Dandini

I have a small poem, I've penned for this day, if you permit me I'd like to recite.

Rachel

Well, if I may interrupt you, just for a moment, we haven't got all flippin' night.

Stepmother

The servants they treat me as bad as can be, and my daughters have failed me again,

Their manners are awful, their dress sense appalling, if only those two girls were men!

(Slight pause for Vanelia & Enormia to exchange a look here for added effect, especially if they are men).

King

The good queen and I, have secured the throne, And Reginald is living his dream.

Queen

His name is Richard you silly old thing, And Cinderella his cutiful been.

Prince

My sweetheart I found, after all of my travels, and my life is now nothing but bliss.

Cinderella

And I have my Prince, he is handsome and kind, now all I desire is his kiss.

(They kiss)

Buttons

Well I didn't get Cinders, I lost out to the prince, and I don't fancy the look of those two, but before we depart, we would all like to say,

All

A Merry Christmas to each one of you.

(Final company number, if there is to be one).

(Curtain). (The End).