

Belle and the Beast

No. 1 “Overture”

Scene One. The castle garden.

A rose in full bloom is revealed on a withered vine. Through a large wrought iron gate we see GARDENER, facing upstage. He kneels to snatch something from the ground, then places it in his leather satchel. Sensing he is not alone, he turns slowly, and moves downstage.

GARDENER: What do you want? Why do you stop here and look through my gate? Oh, you’re here to see the Beast. That could be a problem. Nobody sees the Beast.

No. 2 “As Long As You’re Here”

GARDENER: *(cont.)* But ... as long as you’re here, let me tell you a story. Once upon a time! No, that’s too long ago. I couldn’t possibly remember that far back. How about once upon last month? Yes ...

No. 3 “Once Upon Last Month”

GARDENER: *(cont.)* Once upon last month there lived a wealthy merchant ...

GARDENER waves his right hand and lights reveal MERCHANT, in a freeze.

GARDENER: *(cont.)* ...who raised his three daughters ...

GARDENER waves his left hand and lights reveal BELLE, ATTILA and MARAUDER in a freeze.

GARDENER: *(cont.)* ... in the lap of luxury. But then the merchant lost his fortune...

Lights fade on MERCHANT, BELLE, ATTILA and MARAUDER.

GARDENER: *(cont.)* ...and they could no longer afford to live in a great house, and had to move into a crowded tenement. Come, let us bring the three daughters of the used-to-be- rich-but-now-is-very-poor merchant to life!

No. 4 “To Life!”

GARDENER waves his hand, and lights up on tenement.

Scene Two. A tenement flat.

A small table and two chairs. An interior door, upstage. Downstage, BELLE, the youngest daughter, is tending flowers in a windowbox planter. ATTILA and MARAUDER burst through the door.

ATTILA: *(running to window)* Quickly! Quickly! Out of my way, Belle.

MARAUDER: *(likewise)* Is that his carriage?

ATTILA: Yes, that's him!

MARAUDER: The Chevalier d'Anjou!

ATTILA: Right beneath our window!

MARAUDER: Perhaps these will catch his eye.

No. 5 “Pulling Flowers”

MARAUDER plucks a flower.

BELLE: Marauder, don't.

MARAUDER: *(putting the flower in her hair)* They're only flowers.

ATTILA plucks a flower.

BELLE: Attila!

MARAUDER: Flowers to catch the eye of a chevalier!

BELLE: *(adamant)* Flowers to brighten the house.

ATTILA: This hovel is not a house.

MARAUDER: *(looking out window, pulling flowers)* Is that Mademoiselle Claudinet?

ATTILA: *(primping)* Our chalet in the country was a house.

MARAUDER: *(waving for attention)* Mademoiselle!

ATTILA: Our chateau in Versailles was a house.

MARAUDER: Yoo-hoo! Up here!

ATTILA: This flea-infested-hole is *not* a house.

BELLE: This is our home now, Attila.

MARAUDER: Oh, the chevalier is waving!

ATTILA: *(rushing to window)* What! Where?

No. 6 “A Garden”

MARAUDER: He's waving at me!

ATTILA: *(grabbing at flowers in Marauder's hair)* Give me those flowers.

MARAUDER: *(resisting)* He's waving at me, Attila!

ATTILA: Give me those flowers and get out of my way!

MARAUDER: You're pulling my hair!

ATTILA: You're blocking my view!

ATTILA and MARAUDER: *(having been noticed, waving below, all sweetness and light)* Bonjour, chevalier!

BELLE: I HAVE TO LEAVE THE
MADNESS OF THIS HOUSE.

MARAUDER: Move your fat head!

ATTILA: Move *your* fat head!

SISTERS FIGHTING OVER EVERYTHING
BIG OR SMALL.

ATTILA: So help me, Marauder, I will throw you out this window.

ATTILA and MARAUDER freeze as light focuses on BELLE.

BELLE: THEY'RE EVEN MORE INSANE
WITH FATHER GONE.
IT DOESN'T MATTER
WHO IS RIGHT OR WRONG.
FROM EVERYDAY'S BEGINNING,
RIGHT THROUGH ALL DAY LONG.

Lights restore.

ATTILA: (*with great disdain*) Look at Mademoiselle Artois fawning. Horrible.

MARAUDER: Despicable.

ATTILA and MARAUDER: I must say hello to her.

ATTILA and MARAUDER exit.

BELLE: I FEEL MY HEAD IS SPINNING
I MUST FIGHT TO KEEP MY SENSES ON.
THERE MUST BE SOMEWHERE
I JUST NEED SOMEWHERE

A PLACE I FIND I'M FREE
A SPACE DESIGNED FOR ME

WHERE I CAN FINALLY
JUST BE.

BELLE tends to flowers, as music continues.

A PLACE. ANY PLACE. A GARDEN.
WHERE I CAN HEAR THE SILENCE
AND THE SOUND OF A BUTTERFLY.
A PLACE. ANY PLACE. A GARDEN!
WHERE I CAN PLANT MY FLOWERS,
WATCH THEM REACHING FOR THE SKY!
WATCH THEM GROW FROM SEED.
A LITTLE PIECE OF GROUND TO PLANT
IS ALL I NEED.

Lightning, thunder. BELLE mimes closing shutters against the storm as lights fade.

Scene Three. The castle garden.

No. 7 “The Storm”

A poor, frightened man, MERCHANT, is running against the wind and driving rain. He approaches the garden gate. HE calls out for help.

MERCHANT: Help! Help. Is anybody there? *(we hear the howling of wolves)* Oh, my Goodness. Now wolves, too? Please. Please. May I come in?

The GARDENER appears, unseen by MERCHANT. With a wave of his hand, the storm suddenly ceases.

MERCHANT: *(surprised)* Oh. How peculiar.

GARDENER, with a wave of his hand, opens the gate.

MERCHANT: *(surprised)* Peculiar, indeed. *(entering garden)* Hello? Is anybody here? What a strange place. This must have been a garden at one time.

No. 8 “Rose Quivers”

GARDENER waves hand and rose quivers on vine, catching MERCHANT’S eye.

MERCHANT: *(cont.)* What’s this? A rose in such a barren place. *(HE bends to smell the blossom.)* What a lovely fragrance.

MERCHANT picks the rose.

No. 9 “Merchant Picks The Rose”

BEAST: *(entering)* No!

MERCHANT falls to his knees as BEAST, a figure shrouded in shadows, enters. GARDNER freezes action with a wave of his hand.

GARDENER: Well, well, well. Look who showed up. Don’t let his shouting scare you. That’s the way beasts talk.

No. 10 “The Way Beasts Talk”

GARDENER waves his hand, and action resumes.

MERCHANT: Oh, my lord! I am sorry!

BEAST: What have you done?

MERCHANT *(placing the rose at foot of BEAST)* Please, please. I meant no harm!

GARDENER freezes action with a wave of his hand.

GARDENER: But harm he did. Because as long as the rose lives, so does the Beast. But now the rose has been picked, which is unfortunate for the beast. And for the rose.

No. 11 “And For The Rose”

GARDENER waves his hand, and action resumes.

BEAST: *(moves toward MERCHANT, threateningly)* You will pay for this with your life!

MERCHANT: Please! I am but a poor merchant. I have three daughters who need me. For their sake, let me live!

BEAST: *(grieving)* The rose has been picked.

MERCHANT: There must be something I can do.

BEAST: I will have your life ...

GARDENER: But for one hope.

GARDENER places a mirror in the open hand of BEAST.

BEAST ...but for one hope.

MERCHANT: Tell me!

BEAST: *(handing mirror to MERCHANT)* You must find the one powerful soul who can see their reflection in this mirror.

MERCHANT: Reflection in a mirror? Why anyone could ...

No. 12 “Merchant Looks Into Mirror”

MERCHANT looks into the mirror.

MERCHANT: *(cont.)* I am not there!

BEAST: You must send to me the one powerful soul before the rose withers and dies, or you and your daughters will suffer my vengeance.

MERCHANT: I will find this one powerful soul.

BEAST: Entice him with palaces, jewels, anything his heart desires!

MERCHANT: Anything he desires ... yes, yes!

BEAST: (*urgently*) Now, hurry. The rose withers as we stay.

MERCHANT: (*a solemn promise*) I will go now, and I will not fail you.

BEAST: Get you gone, merchant. Quickly!

No. 13 “Beast Withdraws” into “Scene Change—To Tenement”

MERCHANT runs off as BEAST withdraws. Lights shift to GARDENER.

GARDENER: How long before a rose that has been picked withers and dies? Not long. Fly, merchant. Fly and find the one powerful soul. If you can.

Scene Four. The tenement.

MERCHANT is busily preparing for his quest, assisted by BELLE. ATTILA and MARAUDER sit at table, impatiently.

BELLE: A garden?

MERCHANT: Immense, Belle. Its size matched only by that of the castle itself.

MARAUDER: The recompense, Father?

ATTILA: Yes! The reward!

BELLE: Was it a rose garden?

MERCHANT: Once, perhaps. But alas, save for one rose, nothing grew there.

BELLE: How sad. Awful.

ATTILA: (*dismissively*) Yes, awful. Sad. Now, to the reward, Father!

MARAUDER: Yes! What did the Beast promise?

MERCHANT: He told me he who sees his reflection (*revealing the mirror*) in this mirror, will be rewarded with palaces, jewels, anything his heart desires!

ATTILA: (*standing*) Well then, I best get packing.

MARAUDER: (*standing, simultaneously*) Then I’m off.

MERCHANT: Girls, only a great enchanter will see his reflection in the mirror.

ATTILA: (*grabbing mirror*) Oh, Father, who’s more enchanting than I—

No. 14 “Atilla Looks Into Mirror”

ATTILA looks into the mirror, and does not see her own reflection.

ATTILA: (*cont.*) Oh!

MERCHANT: What, Attila?

ATTILA: I see nothing.

MARAUDER: (*reaching for mirror*) Me next!

ATTILA: Something is wrong with this mirror. It's defective and stupid.

MARAUDER: You're defective and stupid. (*taking mirror*) I'm sure I will see a perfectly ravishing—

No. 15 “Marauder Looks Into Mirror”

MARAUDER looks into the mirror, and does not see her own reflection.

MARAUDER: (*cont.*) Oh!

MERCHANT: What, Marauder?

MARAUDER: I see nothing.

ATTILA: Stupid mirror.

MARAUDER: This is a stupid mirror.

ATTILA and MARAUDER: Stupid, stupid, stupid.

MERCHANT: (*taking mirror*) Girls, please. Now, I must leave at once to fulfill this quest. The rose withers each passing hour.

BELLE: A rose that has been picked will fade within a week, Father!

MERCHANT: Yes, time is running short.

BELLE: Should the rose wither, and you have not yet fulfilled your promise, what then?

MERCHANT: The Beast will seek me out and take his revenge on us.

MARAUDER and ATTILA: Us?

MARAUDER: What do you mean “us”?

ATTILA: I didn't pick the stupid rose.

MARAUDER: You mean *you*, Father. He will come for *you*!

BELLE: May I, Father?

MERCHANT hands mirror to BELLE.

ATTILA: Stupid rose.

MARAUDER: Stupid mirror.

MERCHANT: What do you see, Belle?

BELLE: *(simply)* I see myself.

ATTILA and MARAUDER: What?

MERCHANT: Truly?

BELLE: Quite well.

ATTILA and MARAUDER: *(moving behind her to see)* Nonsense. Let me see!

ATTILA: *(seeing BELLE in mirror)* You!

MARAUDER: Belle?

MERCHANT: Is it possible?

ATTILA: Belle goes to the Beast?

MARAUDER: Belle gets everything?

MERCHANT: It cannot be.

ATTILA: She saw her reflection.

MARAUDER: She gets the reward.

ATTILA and MARAUDER: We are rich again!

ATTILA: And just think, Belle. There's a garden.

MARAUDER: A dead garden.

ATTILA and MARAUDER cackle with delight.

BELLE: I should leave at once, Father.

MERCHANT: Oh, my dear Belle. You have brought us great fortune! Come, I will show you the way.

MERCHANT exits.

MARAUDER: *(grabbing a heavy cloak, throwing it onto BELLE)* Well, off she goes.

ATTILA: *(thrusting mirror toward BELLE)* Don't forget your mirror.

MARAUDER: *(handing BELLE the hand spade)* And your shovel. And your *(handing BELLE the hand rake)* this thing.

ATTILA: Bye-bye, Belle-Belle!

MARAUDER: Belle-Belle, bye-bye!

ATTILA and MARAUDER push BELLE out, then slam the door.

ATTILA and MARAUDER: And good riddance.

MARAUDER: Such a phony.

ATTILA: I do feel sorry, though.

ATTILA and MARAUDER: For the Beast!

No. 16 “Scene Change—To Forest” into “I Stand Alone Here”

ATTILA and MARAUDER cackle with delight as lights cross to GARDENER.

Scene Five. A forest

GARDENER: Consider ... a young girl. A magic mirror. An enchanted forest. A cursed creature desperate for rescue. Lives intertwined in the time it takes for a rose to wither and die.

BELLE: I STAND ALONE HERE IN THE WOOD
 NOTHING TO HIDE ME
 NO ONE TO GUIDE ME
 STANDING ON THE EDGE OF A WORLD
 I NEVER KNEW.

A WORLD THAT'S WIDE WITH TWISTS AND TURNS
WHAT WILL I SEE THERE?
WHO WILL I BE THERE?
QUESTIONS I HAVE NO ANSWERS TO
I HAVEN'T THOUGHT THIS THROUGH

SHE looks in the mirror.

MIRROR, MIRROR I LOOK TO YOU
SHOW ME, SHOW ME SHOW ME WHAT IS TRUE
WHAT LIES BEYOND THE TREES?

MIRROR, TELL ME PLEASE.

A MAN, I SEE,
FRANTIC, SAD, AND LONELY
A SHADOW IN THE DARK
REACHING OUT TO ME
HOWLING IN THE NIGHT
SCREECHING, REACHING
HIDING FROM THE LIGHT.

The light grows more intense as if the mirror were answering. The wind increases and wolves are heard in the distance. BELLE takes a deep breath.

MIRROR, MIRROR
THE TRUTH I SEE
THESE TREES, THIS PATH
A NEW WORLD AND ME.

BELLE walks bravely into the unknown, toward the castle of the BEAST. The sound of the wolves and the wind grows darker and more insistent.

No. 17 “ Scene Change—To Castle”

Scene Six. The castle of the Beast.

A great hall. A grand TABLE with silver serving tray and cover at center. Two chairs, one of which is CHAIR, on either side. Upstage, there are columns and arches, and huge doors leading out to the garden. The doors open, revealing BELLE.

BELLE: Hello? (*stepping forward, timidly*) May I come in?

No. 18 “Have a Seat, Part 1”

CHAIR appears, unseen to BELLE.