

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

by
Bren Dubay

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DEDICATION

For the H.D.

Special thanks to the Trustees of the Lillian Kaiser Lewis Foundation and to G. Rush Lynch, M.D.

ORIGINAL PERFORMANCE

The world premiere of BEAUTY AND THE BEAST opened February 2, 1989 at Stages Repertory Theatre, Houston, Texas. Ted Swindley was Artistic Director, with the following cast and crew:

JOHN RAINER - Steve Chizmadia
GUINEVERE RAINER - Brenda Dubay
SAMUEL RAINER - Sebastian White
PATRICIA: RAINER - Donna Whitmore
CAPTAIN RAINER - Patrick Mitchell
BEAST/PRINCESS HELEN - Mary Hooper

Barbara Sims – Director
Karen Bull -- Stage Manager
Keith Belli -- Scenic Designer
Patrick Collins -- Costumes
Tenna Matthews – Lighting
John Toia -- Sound

STORY OF THE PLAY

This timeless fairy tale has a unique twist: Beauty is a male and the Beast is a female. The Ranier family has a host of problems, but an act of love begins to transform their adversity. John saves his father from certain death by taking his place in a Beast's castle, a castle with an aura of magic and mystery as shrouded figures move about attending lost and lonely travelers. John, or Beauty as the Beast names him, is conflicted between fulfilling his father's promise to the Beast and his own longing to be with his family. Although he honors the promise and truly cares for the well-being of the Beast, he declines to marry her because he does not love her.

John is allowed to return home when his father becomes ill, but the young man stays longer than he promised. Time is fluid and unpredictable in this story. While watching a star fall to earth, he realizes that the Beast is dying. Another act of love occurs when John returns knowing he loves the Beast because of the beauty within her. The Beast is transformed and becomes, before our eyes, Princess Helen.

About 50 minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 3 w, extras)

CAPTAIN RAINER: The father. He is a gentleman.

JOHN RAINER: The first born. He is a worker and has never learned to play. He is beautiful, but rarely smiles. (Lest you be a mortal who does not understand these things, there is nothing weak about this boy/man, who is beautiful; he is strong and quite capable.)

SAMUEL RAINER: The second son. He is vain and very fond of hand mirrors.

GUINEVERE RAINER: The third sibling. If she is not eating, she is teasing someone.

PATRICIA RAINER: The youngest child. She has a fondness for tormenting cats.

BEAST/PRINCES HELEN: As the Beast she is terrifyingly ugly. As the princess her beauty is arresting. She is a poet and magician whether a Beast or princess.

SHADOWS: Shrouded/hooded figures discovered in the Beast's castle. The Captain, Samuel, Guinevere, and Patricia may double as the Shadows, or additional cast members may portray the roles.

SETTING

Exterior of the Rainer country.

Interior of the Beast's castle - a place of magic.

Exterior of the Beast's castle - a place full of roses.

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(AT RISE: It is afternoon. Three of the Rainer children are occupying their time in front of their country home. SAMUEL is sitting in a tree swing examining the exquisite beauty of his hands, GUINEVERE is eating finger sandwiches and JOHN is repairing the broken arm of a doll. He can always find something to repair. SFX: A cat HOWLS offstage.)

JOHN: Patricia, please stop teasing the cat. I've repaired your doll. Come here, please.

GUINEVERE: John makes better sandwiches than you do, Samuel.

SAMUEL: How do you know? I've never prepared a sandwich a day in my life and I never intend to. If Father is so stupid that he doesn't bring the servants with us to the country, then let John take their place.

GUINEVERE: John, dear, would you make me another sandwich?

JOHN: Don't you believe it is time you learned to make your own sandwiches?

GUINEVERE: No.

JOHN: I will go in and get you a sandwich as soon as I finish this stool. I want it to be as good as new when Father gets home.

GUINEVERE: Then you should never have let Samuel sit on it.

SAMUEL: What are you saying? Are you saying I'm fat, Guinevere?

GUINEVERE: You're fat. The fattest thing I've ever seen. About this fat. *(Gestures with her hands.)*

SAMUEL: *(He goes for his sister.)* You—

(JOHN steps between THEM and holds Samuel back.)

JOHN: No, Samuel. Wait. She's only teasing you.

GUINEVERE: You come any closer and I'll rub this apple pie in your face.

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SAMUEL: *(To JOHN.)* You have wrinkled my shirt. And dirt! You have gotten dirt on my white shirt...

(SAMUEL'S howling is only surpassed by that of the CAT'S.)

JOHN: Patricia! Please, leave the cat alone. I'm sorry about your shirt, Samuel. I'll wash it for you. Patricia, stop bothering the cat.

(PATRICIA enters; she holds a snake behind her back.)

PATRICIA: I don't have to. I don't have to do anything you say. You're stupid. What are you eating, Guinevere?

GUINEVERE: Apple pie. You can't have any. Did you see the enormous spot of dirt Samuel got on his shirt?

SAMUEL: Stop it.

PATRICIA: Oh, look, Guinevere, his trousers are torn too.

(When GUINEVERE looks away, PATRICIA places snake on the plate.)

SAMUEL: My trousers are not torn!

GUINEVERE: Oh, I see. Right in the backside.

SAMUEL: *(HE is trying to see.)* They are not.

PATRICIA: That sure is strange-looking apple pie.

GUINEVERE: What's so strange about--

(SHE sees the snake and begins to scream. She and SAMUEL climb out of harm's way. PATRICIA rolls on the ground laughing. JOHN picks up the snake.)

JOHN: Don't be frightened. It's only a grass snake. It can't hurt you.

GUINEVERE: Get it away.

SAMUEL: Get it away. Well, I'm not afraid. It's just that snakes are messy. It may mess up...it may get my shirt dirtier.

PATRICIA: Let's chop off its head with the hoe.

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JOHN: Stop that! We will not. You will not. I don't want to see you go near that hoe. This snake is harmless. I'm going to set it free! *(JOHN starts to exit and PATRICIA begins to follow.)* No. You stay here.

PATRICIA: I hate the country! When is father coming back? I want to go home to the city!

GUINEVERE: Didn't you know, Patricia? You're not coming back to the city with us. We're leaving you here with strangers.

PATRICIA: You better stop it. That isn't true.

SAMUEL: Oh, yes, it is true. You'll live with mean strangers who will treat you like you treat the cat.

PATRICIA: I won't. I won't live with strangers. I'll scream until they take me home. Like this...

(SHE begins to scream and continues to do so until CAPTAIN RAINER stops her.)

SAMUEL: Stop that horrible noise.

GUINEVERE: Stop it. Quiet!

SAMUEL: You're hurting my ears!

(CAPTAIN RAINER enters with JOHN.)

CAPTAIN RAINER: Patricia! What is this noise?

GUINEVERE: Father!

SAMUEL: Did you remember to get my boots shined?

PATRICIA: What did you bring me from the village?

GUINEVERE: I hope you bought me some candy. What did you bring me?

CAPTAIN RAINER: Children, children, quiet, please. I ... PLEASE; I need all of you to be quiet. Sit down.

PATRICIA: I don't see any packages.

GUINEVERE: But you have my candy in your pocket, don't you, Father?

JOHN: Patricia! Guinevere! Father has asked us to be quiet.

SAMUEL: John, you are such a boring person.

End of Freeview

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