

# Cinderella in New York

By Wade Bradford

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**STORY OF THE PLAY**

The Reporters Grimm bring you the scoop of the year: True Love Conquers All! Set in the middle of the Great Depression, the familiar story of Cinderella has been given a vibrant, inspiring twist.

Cinderella Fitzgerald once led the perfect life, until her father lost everything when the stock market crashed. To make matters worse, she is surrounded by conceited stepsisters and a vengeful, gold-digging stepmother. Sure, she still has her friends (mostly wise-cracking rats), but there is no real happiness in her life. No happiness, that is, until she bumps into Johnny Prince, the gorgeous star of stage and screen.

Unfortunately, Cindy's stepmother will stop at nothing to keep the two lovebirds from getting together. Through all of the romantic pitfalls and twists, Cinderella learns to depend more on herself rather than magic and fairy godmothers.

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**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(Flexible cast. Approx. 9 m, 9 w, 10 or more flexible.)*

**JAKE GRIMM:** Reporter in New York.  
**WILLY GRIMM:** Jake's younger brother, a photographer.  
**FATHER:** Cindy's father, Scotty Fitzgerald.  
**CINDERELLA:** His loving daughter.  
**STEPMOTHER:** Selfish; mother of Samantha and Roxanne.  
**SAMANTHA:** Mean stepsister to Cinderella.  
**ROXANNE:** Another.  
**NORTON:** A rat, friend of Cinderella.  
**RALPH:** Another.  
**CAGNEY:** Another.  
**JOHNNY PRINCE:** A star who falls in love.  
**P.J.:** Johnny's agent.  
**DOUGLAS:** Cinderella's dog.  
**JEZEBEL:** Stepmother's cat.  
**GODMOTHER:** Appears as a bag lady.  
**LITTLE MOUSE #1/ANGEL #1:** Cindy's friend/ Godmother's helper.  
**LITTLE MOUSE #2/ANGEL #2:** Another.  
**NEWSIE:** News boy or girl.  
**VENDOR:** Selling from a cart on the street.  
**REVEREND/DOCTOR/ATTORNEY**  
**DIRECTOR/BUM**  
**FANS 1-3**  
**EXTRAS:** As Townspeople, Store Clerks, Camera Crew, Bums, and Ball Guests

**SETTING**

A cityscape backdrop revealing the buildings of 1929 New York City. At one side of the stage is a penthouse, established by sparse but elegant furniture. Other scenes will take place in Central Park and the Shubert Theatre transformed for the ball.

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**SYNOPSIS**

**Act I**

Scene 1: A street in New York and the Fitzgerald penthouse.

Scene 2: A street in New York, a short time later.

Scene 3: A street in New York and the penthouse, weeks later.

Scene 4: The penthouse, one disastrous morning.

Scene 5: The penthouse, seven years later.

Scene 6: A street in New York, a short time later.

Scene 7: The penthouse, later that day.

Scene 8: Central Park, a short time later.

**Act II**

Scene 1: Before curtain, just before the ball.

Scene 2: At the ball.

Scene 3: The penthouse, late that night.

**\*Additional notes at the end of the script.**

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**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: The cityscape backdrop illuminates itself, revealing the buildings of 1929 New York City, and the sparkling stars behind them. An old, spry WOMAN, who will later appear as Cinderella's fairy godmother, pushes an old cart with lots of odds and ends, makes her way across the stage. LIGHTS UP on another part of the stage. A cruel-looking woman, the STEPMOTHER, stands with her arms folded across her chest. Her two DAUGHTERS linger behind her. LIGHTS DOWN. LIGHTS UP on a grown-up CINDERELLA, dressed in ragged, dirty clothes; she is sitting, dreaming. LIGHTS UP on JOHNNY PRINCE, well-groomed, handsome, also dreaming. LIGHTS DOWN. Finally, a single, small beam of LIGHT illuminates a beautiful slipper made of blue glass. It rests on an elegant pillow (held by Johnny's agent, P.J.) and shimmers in the spotlight. LIGHTS DOWN as optional MUSIC comes to its conclusion. Just as it does, a NEWSPAPER BOY hustles across the stage carrying a stack of newspapers.)*

NEWSIE: Extra, extra! Read all about it. True love conquers all!

*(Walking to very lively swing MUSIC, NEW YORKERS hustle and bustle about onstage. Five TOWNSPEOPLE grab a paper from the NEWSIE.)*

NEWSIE: Extra, extra! The world's greatest fairy tale right here in the Big Apple!

*(At this, the five TOWNSPEOPLE have strutted up toward the front of the stage. They flip up their newspapers. Each paper, which directly faces the audience, has two large, bold letters printed on it. Together the papers spell out "C-I-N-D-E-R-E-L-L-A.")*

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*(Note: This bit is optional, depending on cast size. JAKE GRIMM, a tall lean young man, dressed in a typical reporter's hat and overcoat, steps out onto the stage and snatches a paper from the NEWSIE. He reads it over, amused. The audience, too, can see the headlines: "HAPPILY EVER AFTER.")*

JAKE: Ha. "Happily Ever After." Sure, the story sounds simple enough, but if you're the one writing it, it's pretty complicated. I oughta know because I'm the one who's been following this story from day one.

*(Another REPORTER, this one considerably shorter, marches out onto the stage, waving a finger. He looks like the younger brother of JAKE, and in fact he is. His name is WILLY GRIMM. He carries an old camera.)*

WILLY: Now wait just a minute, you yellow-bellied journalist. I helped too!

JAKE: Yes, I suppose you helped a little.

WILLY: A lot!

JAKE: *(Steps in front of WILLY, then refers to HIMSELF.)*  
Folks, you're looking at New York's finest investigative reporter.

WILLY: Not to mention Manhattan's finest photographer.

JAKE: I'm Jake Grimm. This is my brother Willy.

WILLY: Say cheese! *(Takes a picture.)*

JAKE: That's right, we're the brothers Grimm. You've probably heard of us. For the past decade we've been covering every scoop from the Big Bad Wolf trial up until the Little Old Lady Who Lived in a Shoe got arrested by Child Protective Services. But this story is bound to put me in the Hall of Fame.

WILLY: Me too.

JAKE: Yes, you too. Look, Willy, *(Points to the audience.)*  
John Q. Public is eating it up like free sauerkraut. It's perfect, absolutely perfect.

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WILLY: Well, I wouldn't say perfect. The headline is all wrong. "Happily Ever After." The story doesn't start there. It takes a lot of pain and suffering and agony, a lot of stepmothers and creepy sisters, and lots of icky, unpleasant things before you finally get to the "Happily Ever After."

JAKE: Willy, my brother, it is the H.E.A. that sells newspapers. It's the best part of the whole scoop.

WILLY: Sure, but you have to be miserable first. Otherwise, you don't appreciate it.

JAKE: All right, genius. What would your headline read?

WILLY: It'd be great. Each word in bold letters, this big. *(Measures two inches with HIS fingers.)* Written by Willy Grimm—that part would be written this big. *(Measures six inches.)*

*(JAKE, annoyed, squeezes WILLY'S fingers down, going back to a half inch.)*

WILLY: And my headline: "Little Girl Almost Loses Hope."

JAKE: What?!

WILLY: It's tragic and beautiful at the same time. And it's what the story is really all about.

JAKE: You're either blind or you're nuts. I oughta know the meaning behind my own report. It's about true love and all that other garbage. Look here, page one. Manhattan. 1929. Nice start, don't you think? "The entire city is alive and thriving. Spirits are high and stock prices are even higher. And high up in a lofty penthouse, a little girl sits, playing with her doll, humming a pleasant melody."

*(LIGHTS UP on CINDERELLA.)*

JAKE: Her name is Cinderella Fitzgerald.

*(LIGHTS UP on the penthouse, established by sparse but elegant furniture. With a book nearby, CINDY plays with her doll as she sings out a jazzy, upbeat version of "The Itsy-Bitsy Spider.")*

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