

Cinderella



By Vicky Orman

CHARACTER LIST

CINDERELLA – PRINCIPAL GIRL (FEMALE)

Cinderella is traditionally one of the sweetest and most lovely of principal girls, and she is all that. She is loved by one and all except for her very jealous stepmother and stepsisters. However, she is most definitely not waiting around for someone to solve her problems for her. She's brilliant at making the best out of a bad situation. She is trying to earn her fortune by upcycling broken bits and pieces so she can leave and make her own way in the world, but her kind heart seems to only be repaid by misfortune - little does she know she's on her way to a real Happy Ever After. She has a lot more depth than most principal girls! Singing and dancing definitely eeded

PRINCE CHARMING – PRINCIPAL BOY (MALE)

Prince Charming has been putting off his royal duty for far too long and now finds himself on the verge of losing everything if he doesn't get a bride. But he's a romantic at heart and wants to marry for love. He has bumped into Cinderella not knowing who she is and fallen in love, and tries to bypass all the rules about marrying commoners (not knowing she is a Baron's daughter) by swearing a royal oath to marry someone who comes to the Royal Masquerade Ball. Otherwise he is a rather progressive Prince, finding different ways to do things. It goes without saying that he is of course very charming – sometimes too much!

BUTTONS – LINK MAN COMIC (MALE – ANY AGE BUT APPROPRIATE WITH DANDINI)

Buttons is Cinderella's best friend and does not fancy her. (Shocking but true – yes people, boys and girls can be actual BFFs!) He instead is rather hopelessly in love with Dandini – hopeless being the appropriate word. He is dragged around as a lackey by the Ugly Sisters a lot, while helping Cinderella behind their backs all the time and also trying to pursue his own love, Dandini. He's loyal to a fault and carries a lot of the comedy, and is vital to the action.

BARONESS MALARIA – VILLAIN (FEMALE)

Baroness Malaria (pronounced Mal-ah-rea as she will quickly correct you) is a nasty piece of work! She is very clearly the one to boo and hiss at. She lies and manipulates and it is darkly hinted at would do worse for social climbing purposes, and wants Cinderella out of the way completely. She is adept at using emotional blackmail to make Cinderella do and say what she wants. She epitomises the description of two-faced and has completely pulled the wool over Baron Hardup's eyes to her bullying ways.

UGLY SISTER RUBELLA – COMEDY DUO DAME 1 (MALE)

Rubella is the slightly more intelligent of the Ugly Sisters but more fond of food. Both Ugly sisters are obsessed with finding a man, marrying into money and will do virtually anything to achieve this. For Ruby, unlimited access to snacks is an essential as well! They are both unpleasant, but have to be comedic with it. They are in fact mainly just following what their mother tells them they should do, and they have been told they need a man, and money to be happy. It is vital they have good chemistry between the two sisters as they have a lot of the comedic action.

UGLY SISTER SCARLETINA – COMEDY DUO DAME 2 (MALE)

Scarletina is the slightly more clueless of the two Ugly Sisters, but definitely more forward with the fellas! She believes that no man can resist her womanly wiles and will flaunt them as her super weapon. Like her sister she is obsessed with finding a man, marrying into money and will do anything to achieve her goals. She also is unpleasant yet comedic and must have chemistry with Rubella, and follows her mother's instructions. The two of them must have a sisterly relationship of bickering, banter, fighting each other but backing each other up as well! Both have to be good at physical comedy .

FAIRY DONNA CORLEONE AKA “THE GODMOTHER” (FEMALE)

Fairy Donna Corleone – known as The Godmother because she doesn't like her name that much - has been tasked with giving out wishes to the deserving. Only, the rules have changed so you have to provide proof that someone is 'deserving' in triplicate. They are meant to stand around waiting for it to happen naturally, but The Godmother is not above manipulating events so they come out how she wants!

DANDINI – COMIC (FEMALE – AGE APPROPRIATE WITH BUTTONS)

Dandini is Prince Charming's valet and aide and BFF. Basically she makes everything happen, usually with devastating efficiency. Dandini is competent in every aspect of life except for love. She likes to wind the Prince up a bit and is close enough to him to tell him when he's being an idiot. She and Buttons will end up with each other but how will be anyone's guess!

BARON HARDUP – OLDER MALE

Cinderella's father is a nice enough chap but completely taken in by his wife's act (less so by the ugly sisters) As Cinderella is forced to lie to him and pretend things like living in the kitchen is something she wants he is perplexed but wants to support her wishes. He does not realise that his new wife is basically a black widow only after his title and money – which they have been spending like water so he is nearly broke! The irony is he is quite observant to everything else except the Baroness.

CHORUS ROLES

Townfolk, Shop Keepers, Juniors, Bodger the Blacksmith, Attendees at the Royal Hunt, UV Transformation ninjas /Horses/ Footmen, Servants at the Royal Ball, Monks, Attendees at the Royal Ball, Wood spirits, Fluffy.

Prologue

In front of front forest drop cloth. SFX flash bang DSR. FAIRY GODMOTHER appears.

FAIRY: Heeeeere's Panto! Did you miss us? Oh no you didn't! I just had to do that otherwise I might explode from all the panto energy built up inside of me. Look at you all, a pantomime audience! The best type! Hello everyone! I said... Hello everyone! Are you here to Pantomime? Yes, you're going to have to up your game if you are going to make it through this show, I can tell you. You may have noticed from the frock and the wings that I'm not your usual Villager number 6. My name is Fairy Donna Corleone.... But most people call me... The Godmother **(Band plays small snippet of The Godfather theme)**. Distant relation I might add!

I'm here to help Cinderella – do you know her? I'll give you a clue, her name's on all the posters and programmes around here. She's a lovely girl but she's had a very hard life. **(plays for sympathy)** No it's sadder than that **(Awww!)** I see the years off hasn't affected your panto reflexes too much. She lost her mother when she was young and her father was bamboozled into remarrying her wicked stepmother, who came with two horrible daughters and they love making Cinderella's life a misery. Normally I'd rock up, grant a few wishes, wave a wand and badda-bing we'd have a Happy Ever After - but nowadays, you need proof with paperwork in Tripoli...sorry, triplicate ... that someone deserves it. **(Unfurls extra long scroll)** I have to fill in all of this then wait around spotting when Cinderella does all these good deeds before I can grant any wishes! Ain't nobody got time for that!, Cinderella will never get her Happy Ever After at this rate! You know, I think I might need help - I used to have a trained helper dog that could do magic. Oh yes, it was a labracadabrador, but it's had to go back for lab testing. Yes, it's not going to get better. I'm on my own and I'll need to help things along a little bit...and that means I'll need some recruits. But where will I find a hundred and sixty or so awesome people willing to help at this time of night? **(Thinks and eventually responds to the audience, or has a brainwave)** wait a minute...there's about that many of you aren't there? If you are awesome and willing to help, cheer now! **(Cheers)**

Oh marvellous! I think we might stand a chance now! I'm off to find Cinderella so if you can help her and her friends until I get there that would be brilliant!

Tata for now!

(Exits SR)

Act 1 Scene 1

SONG 1

(The Town Market Square. Blacksmiths forge at back but visible. Opening number of Townsfolk being generally happy and excited about the prospect of visiting royalty. Commotion with BUTTONS entering with as much disruption as possible, ideally on a bike or unicycle carrying packages that make his erratic progress obvious. Chorus react)

BUTTONS: Make way, Make way! Buttons is here to save the day! Special delivery! Key worker coming through!

ALL: BUTTONS!

BUTTONS: Morning everyone! **(sees audience)** Sorry I was a bit erratic, a book just fell on my head but I've only got my shelf to blame.

Wow! So many people in town today and fresh faces too. I love meeting new people – Hi everyone! You might have gathered my name is Buttons – either that or you thought the townsfolk are in the habit of shouting out random items of sewing haberdashery in unison, which of course they are not!

TOWNS 2: Zippers!

BUTTONS: Okay, except for Quarantine Kate bless her. She crafted her way through the lockdowns and has never been the same since.

TOWNS 3: Buttons, we need our deliveries from Cinderella right now!

BUTTONS: Chill, we've got loads of time – Bodger the Blacksmith hasn't lit the forge, and he does that at nine o'clock precisely **(SFX of Dramatic tones)** ... that's oddly dramatic don't you think? Anyone might think that it was a plot point! You know what, Bodger is a bit of a dodgy blacksmith, deaf as a post and rumour has it he couldn't get his blacksmith qualifications...so he forged them! Okay, that's me peaked for the show right there. Moving on...nice to meet you all. You all look so friendly, especially the young lad picking his nose in row M - me and you dude, I get it – you're friendly aren't you? **(Yes!)** I'm friendly too! If we're both friendly that makes us friends! Do you know why I'm called Buttons? Well, you'd think it was because of my uniform, but it's more because I keep forgetting to do them up! I work up at Hardup Hall as a professional valet – sounds posh but I'm a general dogsbody really, and I got in lots of trouble at Valet school about them being undone... and still do now! And I really need to impress someone I know...

ALL: OooooOOooo!

TOWNS 4: Buttons fancies someone!

TOWNS 5: I bet it's Cinderella! She's lovely! **(All agree)**

BUTTONS: Nope! Nah don't be daft, We're BFFs!. I mean, Cinderella is very lovely and...

TOWNS 6: Way out of your league. **(All Agree)**

BUTTONS: Harsh!... true though. No, Cinderella is my best friend. I fancy someone I went to school with and she was so good at valet – top of the class. Her buttons were always done up properly! **(Sighs)** I really need your help. Will you remind me whenever I come on to check my buttons and stop me from embarrassing myself? Can you shout out Button up Buttons? Let's try it! **(Tries it a couple of times)** Fantastic!

(To Chorus) Anyway, why have you ordered so much of Cinderella's upcycled crafts? **(To audience)** She's brilliant you know, she takes scraps and broken things from the kitchen because that's all her horrible stepmother and stepsisters will allow

her, and makes them into amazing...tat! People buy it and everything! She's going to make her fortune from it and leave her horrible stepmother forever.

TOWNS 7: Haven't you heard? Prince Charming is in town!

TOWNS 8: And it means all the Rich toffs are here.

TOWNS 9: And they love buying handcrafted tat!

BUTTONS: Prince Charming is coming to town? No wonder those horrible stepsisters held Cinderella back. They wanted their legs shaved and we have a special machine...well it's a lawn mower to be honest. You've never seen anything like them... seriously, they're so ugly they could keep Dr Pimple Popper in business for years!

TOWNS 10: They're so fake, Barbie is jealous!

BUTTONS: Yeah, their other body is in the photoshop if you know what I mean! And their mother, the Baroness Malaria is even nastier! I know! She totally hates Cinderella...Now there's someone who needs to be booed and hissed at the moment she comes on. Oo you lot could do that can't you? Dare you to do it when she comes on – you'll know her, she's the one with an expression like she is smelling a fart under her nose all the time – that and she'll probably get a dadadaaaa! from this lot **(nods to the MD)** But you know what? Even with all the bullying, Cinderella is still the nicest person and never lets it get her down.

(CINDERS enters DSR – Furtively behind her the FAIRY lurks in a shifty disguise, with a clipboard and quill. Makes it obvious she is listening and making notes.)

CINDERS: Hello Everyone!

ALL: Hello Cinderella!

BUTTONS: You managed to escape then?

CINDERS: The strimmer cord snapped when I was doing their backs so I got here as quickly as I could. Have you given everything out?

BUTTONS: Ah...oo...um no? I was just saying hello to all my new friends.
(Bodger the Blacksmith enters at the back heading for the forge)

CINDERS: Quick! The market starts when the forge is lit! That means it's time for...

CINDERS & BUTTONS: Express delivery! **(Both do a Cocktail style parcel delivery to townsfolk as at 9 o'clock the forge is lit with some obvious VFX and the market is opened with a banner drop)**

BUTTONS: Phew! Just about made it.

CINDERS: I've got one box of my home made sweets left. Here Buttons, you have them.

BUTTONS: Wow! But.. you need them.

CINDERS: It's okay, I've nearly earned enough to be able to get away and find my own place to live. Share them with your new friends, Buttons!

BUTTONS: What a fantastic idea! **(To audience)** Do you want some? Here you go!
(Banter about them being covid secure, individually wrapped)

CINDERS: How is the upcycling going everyone?

(Chorus looks a bit sheepish)

TOWNS 11: Oo! Oo! I made this out of an old pallet. **(drops a bunch of wood on the floor. They all look at it.)**

BUTTONS: So upcycling is making junk out of garbage.

CINDERS: Good effort but I think you might have missed the point slightly. Here, one moment, Bodger can I borrow your hammer? **(Takes it, turns obscuring junk. SFX of DIY sounds as the Chorus react in unison and then with a drum roll turns around with an impossibly amazing birdhouse.)** What do you think?

TOWNS 12: I think that the birds have better houses than I do! **(gives her money for it which she puts in her money pouch)**

CINDERS: Remember, no matter what you do always give 100%

BUTTONS: Unless you're giving blood!

CINDERS: Anyway, I wanted to warn everyone that my stepsisters are coming to town and they told me to meet them here.

ALL: Oh no!

BUTTONS: They'll be wanting to see the Prince, as much of him as physically possible knowing them..

CINDERS: Join all the women wanting to marry him more likely. How many people here want to marry the Prince?

(Excited raising of hands from all the women and some of the men in the chorus)

CINDERS: See? I don't see the point

BUTTONS: So you're not interested in Prince Charming?

CINDERS: Me? Don't be silly, Buttons. Why would a Prince be interested in someone who spends her days scrubbing floors and sweeping up cinders from the fire? What's he going to do, say 'oh yes, you in the rags, you're the one for me, I find someone in coated in a light dusting of ashes very attractive'. No, we both know that's not how it works.

BUTTONS: A prince could help you, you know. Get you away from the gruesome twosome and your evil Step-mother!

CINDERS: If I waited around for some prince to come and rescue me I could be waiting forever. **(Smiling and pokes fun at Buttons)** I mean, if he's anything like the rest of the male population he's probably stuck in traffic or just lost as he is too stubborn to ask directions!

BUTTONS: Oi, I resemble that remark. Just as well you've got your own plan to escape Hard-up Hall!

CINDERS: Only a bit more to earn from all my broken bits being upcycled! I just don't know why my stepmother and stepsisters hate me so much. Maybe it's because I am her stepdaughter.

BUTTONS: So what? I've got a stepladder but I still love it as much as my other ladders!

CINDERS: You're weird Buttons.

BUTTONS: C'mon Cinders, you've got to talk to your father! They are horrible and mean to you. **(to audience)** And me, but this Panto isn't called Buttons.

CINDERS: I can't, my father is completely taken in by her. Anyway, **(teasing)** now I know why you were in such a hurry to get into town....

BUTTONS: Cinders! Don't tell them all!

TOWNS: Buttons fancies the prince?!!

ALL: OoooOOOOooo!

BUTTONS: You've been practicing that haven't you. No! Lean forward everyone I'll tell you a secret...further forward, whoa no falling in the pit there,...it's Dandini the Prince's valet!

ALL: Ahhhhhh!

BUTTONS: Kinda like a firework show in here tonight.

CHILD 1: Still out of your league, Buttons

BUTTONS: Thanks for the vote of confidence short stuff. What do I do? My relationship is like my iPad - I ... don't have an iPad.

CINDERS: Oh Buttons, what do I always say to you?

BUTTONS: Uh...don't do that in the sink?

CINDERS: No, just remember you need to actually talk to her and not go bright red, mumble and run away as if you are desperate for the loo like you usually do.

BUTTONS: I've been practicing! I've got a great chat up line.

CINDERS: Okay. Let's hear it.

BUTTONS: (To Cinders, really faux voice) Hey girl...touch my sleeve... feel that? That's boyfriend material.

(Everyone groans and slaps foreheads in exasperation)

CINDERS: I think hello would be better. I've got to go get a few things before they get here. See you in a little while. **(Exits SR)**

(FAIRY sneaks forward to talk to the audience)

FAIRY: Aha! It's me! Did you spot me? What do you mean it is a rubbish disguise? I suppose the wings, wand and tiara are a little difficult to hide. Now let's see how we are doing on Cinderella's list of worthiness

Beautiful – yes, Generous, well she gave you lot her sweets...I've managed to tick off a lot but I think we need to encourage things along. Time for a quick spell.

Fairy magic by sky and sea,

Bring some helpers direct to me!

(Magic SFX, Kids appear and run over to her)

Ah, you can always rely on the kids - usually to say something embarrassing loudly at an inconvenient moment. Now kids, we have a very important job to do!

KID 2: What's it worth?

FAIRY: A feeling of good will and satisfaction?

(All Junior chorus fall about laughing then all suddenly and simultaneously stop laughing and look VERY serious, and put their hands out.)

KID 3: No, seriously, what's it worth.

FAIRY: You lot would put my extended family to shame. Okay a coin each if you help me get Cinderella her happy ever after!

(All kids relax)

KID 4. Why didn't you say it was for Cinderella?

KID 5: We'll help you for free!

FAIRY: Aww, I've got a tear in my eye – oo! I can tick off 'good influence on the young'! Come with me, we have some plotting to do... **(Ominous music)** Wait...I can sense something monstrous heading this way!

(UGLY SISTERS enter at back of auditorium) Coooooooooooooeeee!!!

BUTTONS: **(to audience, overly dramatic before exiting)** RUN, SAVE YOURSELVES!

RUBY: Too late we've locked the doors! **(They flirt their way down the auditorium as virtually everyone vacates the stage)**

SCARLET: Oh look at all these men in town today Rubella!

RUBY: Call that lot men Scarletina. Surely you can't want him over there?

SCARLET: He's wearing trousers isn't he? That's my gold standard.

RUBY: First time I've known you to be that picky! I'd rather pull a muscle than one of them. Although that one there in Row C, I could go for a bit of that. Feast your eyes on our unnatural beauty!

SCARLET: and anything else you've got too!

RUBY: I am Rubella Hard-Up

SCARLET: And I am Scarletina the sexy.

RUBY: We want something, we get it! No one will stop us!

SONG 2

RUBY: Where is that useless Buttons?

SCARLET: ...and hideous Cinderella?

RUBY: You mean Cinder-smella! **(They both laugh)**

SCARLET: You're so clever Ruby!

RUBY: They should be here to get me a snack. I'm starving!

SCARLET: I thought that you were on a diet.

RUBY: I don't mean to brag but I finished my 2 week diet in just under 1 hour and 3 minutes. A new PB.

SCARLET: I never step on a scale because a scale doesn't measure SEXY!

RUBY: What was it you wanted to do before we got down to business?

SCARLET: Oh yes, return these drawing pins I bought last week. They're useless! I put them on a piece of paper and they haven't drawn a single thing!

RUBY: Sometimes sis you are such a numpty. Well mumsy will sort them both out.

SCARLET: Good point!

BOTH: Mumsy! **(Enter MALARIA SL)**

MALARIA: Look at this pitiful rabble, booing and hissing, how judgemental, you don't even know who I am. Don't you know that I'm a baroness you horrible lot? You lot look useless. I bet you couldn't muster a burp in a fizzy lemonade drinking contest. Ah there you are my gorgeous girls! Look at you both!

SCARLET: What's it like being mother to the most beautiful amazing girl in the world?

MALARIA: I don't know sweetie, you'll have to ask your grandmother. Now where is that imbecile Burtons or whatever his name is?

RUBY: Him and Cinderella ran off mumsy! They are so horrible to us!

MALARIA: What?! They'll pay for this. **BILTONG!** GET YOUR INCOMPETANT BEHIND HERE NOW! Have you seen the Prince yet my darlings?

UGS: No Mumsy!
(BUTTONS reluctantly slinks on)

MALARIA: (Moves as if going to take Buttons to task) Remember he is our meal ticket. I've just about drained that idiot Baron Hardup dry and...
(BARON enters and her demeanour completely changes to sweetness and light)

BARON: What was that my scrumptious Sweetie-pie?

MALARIA: Oh there you are snookums! Ruby and Scarlet were just looking for Cinderella. They were so worried about her running off on her own they ran all the way into town after her.

BARON: That's unexpectedly sisterly of you both.

SCARLET: She's like our best friend and everything!

RUBY: I don't know why she keeps running off all the time.

BARON: I'm glad to see you getting on like a house on fire...

BUTTONS: Yes, people screaming and running for their lives!

BARON: Pardon?

BUTTONS: (MALARIA giving him the evils behind Baron) Nothing, nothing your Baron-ship! **(Baron turns back and MALARIA Switches to sweet)**

BARON: Have you seen Cinderella? I was hoping to see her before I went to the bank, Malaria my quixotic queen of puddings.

MALARIA: It's Mal-ah-Rea

BUTTONS: (to audience) Sounds like she's got problems with her bottom!

MALARIA: What was that?

BUTTONS: Oh um...**(grabs bucket from Chorus)** I was just thinking about being sick in this bouquet...I mean bucket.

BARON: My tiny tiramisu, we need to talk. I need you to stop spending quite as much money..

MALARIA: (cannot believe her ears).... What did you say?!

BARON: We're a teensy bit up a certain creek without a paddle financially speaking. We need to make cut backs! No more extra snacks!

RUBY: (over dramatic) Noooooo!!!

BARON: No more new clothes every day.

SCARLET: (Over dramatic) Noooooooooooooo!!!

MALARIA: Well my Barony-warony, they will still need new dresses for Prince Charming's Ball this year.

BARON: But, but you've got hundreds of dresses! Each!

RUBY: Think of the shame if we wore something so... last season!

SCARLET: Oh, I'm feeling faint! We'd have to miss the Prince's balls forever!

BUTTONS: Lucky escape for him. Balls, balls, you're both obsessed with the Prince's balls.

SCARLET: But they get bigger and better every year!

BUTTONS: There are so many things I could say to that that I just can't even...

BARON: Scarletina, I thought you were trying to give up all these innuendos.

SCARLET: Oh I was. But it's hard....so very hard.

MALARIA: They MUST have new dresses. Rumour has it that he has to pick a wife this year or lose the throne, and all his lovely money and kingdom will be shared with them and their deserving mother.

BARON: (sighs) Just keep it modest won't you? And what was all that noise I heard last night?

RUBY: There was a man banging on our door all night

BARON: Really? I'm... frankly shocked!

SCARLET: Yes but we wouldn't let him out.

(Cinderella enters SR followed by a stalking FAIRY. A few small children enter near UGS and they grab hold of them once Baron has stepped forward)

BARON: Cinderella! There you are, I missed you this morning at breakfast **(all through this dialogue MALARIA and UGLY SISTERS are behind the BARON on SL and giving CINDERS the evils and threatening small children so Cinderella has to protect them. Whenever the Baron turns back they instantly adopt an identical expression and posture of innocence)**

CINDERS: I...had my breakfast in the kitchen with Buttons, father

BARON: Ah, yes you do seem to like it a lot down there recently

BUTTONS: What? No she didn't! She didn't get any breakfast at all! She's been working since dawn!

CINDERS: Oh yes I uh...love it.

BARON: Good , good as long as you're happy

BUTTONS: But she's not happy! That's it I'm saying something... **(makes to march over to Baron)**

MALARIA: (intercepts) Butleigh or whoever you are.. get over here. I was wrong, You're not good for nothing after all, you can always serve as a bad example... **(UGLY SISTERS throw him off stage.)**

CINDERS: I ... am happy father, I like helping out with the cooking, the cleaning, the shopping, the scrubbing, the sweeping, gardening, washing up, polishing ,ironing...

BARON: Well as a little treat, why don't you get yourself a gown for the ball?I'm sure you'll be invited and I didn't like to say anything, but you are looking a bit raggedy nowadays. Your step mother says you won't wear new clothes because you are so "woke" **(does the air quotes)** about recycling. Would you? Just this once?

CINDERS: Oh father that would be lovely! **(full evils from the others)**... if I were going to the ball.

MALARIA: Cinderella hates dancing!

(Chorus gasp at blatant lie)

FAIRY: Oh no she doesn't!

UGS & MALARIA: Oh yes she does!

MALARIA: Shut up you lot ! Unless your name is google, stop acting like you know everything!

BARON: Well if that's what you want. Oh, I'm going to be late for my meeting at the bank! Come on my perfect pannacotta.

MALARIA: In a moment snuggle-buns! **(To UGS)** Both of you hang around here and look alluring for when the Prince arrives.

BOTH: Okay Mumy.

MALARIA: Come along Cinderella, I'm sure you won't mind helping me with my Shopping. Wouldn't want the Prince seeing your ugly mug now would we?. **(BARON, MALARIA, CINDERELLA exit stage left. UGLY SISTER ADOPT alluring poses)**

SCARLET: Why are we trying to get the prince again?

RUBY: You're not pretty enough to be this stupid. Because he is powerful and has piles of gold!

SCARLET: Oh poor man, that sounds rather painful! You can get cream for that you know.

RUBY: Scarletina, I can explain it to you, but I can't understand it for you. He's rich, we marry him and get to have a Happy Ever After

SCARLET: Ohhhhhh...How long we have to be alluring?

RUBY: Until the Prince comes.

SCARLET: That could be forever!

RUBY: If he saw you in that dress, you could be right. That outfit only needs one button. A self destruct button.

SCARLETT: I know sis, it's a week old already! You know, we could just..pop into Ye Olde Primarni.

RUBY: Ooo yes just a quick peek! **(They both exit rapidly SL)**

DANDINI enters in full posh valet gear with a scroll and fanfare trumpet. Fanfare sfx. Chorus re-enter curiously in a tight mob.

DANDINI: Make way, make way for his Royal Highness Prince Charming of Wells and all the really cool bits of Somerset...and Shepton Mallet!

PRINCE enters.

PRINCE: Royal Greetings everyone! **(gives signature charming smile with a SFX triangle ting)**

(He is immediately mobbed by all the chorus ladies. He backs away but is pinned by the group at SL) Dandini, help!

DANDINI: (grabs a small fake chair and whip and liontamer style forces the chorus off or some behind a small barrier) Ha! Ha! Get back!

PRINCE: What would I do without you Dandini?

DANDINI: The evidence would suggest not a lot your highness.

PRINCE: This looking for a wife business is ridiculous.

DANDINI: It isn't going particularly well your princiness.

PRINCE: Are you sure the law says I have to marry before the new year?

DANDINI: If you don't, you can't be King. That passes to your cousin Prince Boris of Johnson and nobody want him to be king.

PRINCE: But I don't want to marry someone because of a law! Where's the romance and love...oh, It's so hard being a Prince!

DANDINI: I imagine the unlimited wealth, women throwing themselves at you must be trying.

PRINCE: Being a Prince is not all thigh slapping, waving at peasants and cutting ribbons you know - I have problems too. At least you're not named after an adjective! Prince Charming! **(slaps thigh)** Sorry, it's a reflex.

DANDINI: But it's an adjective loved by estate agents everywhere. Could be worse. Could have been quaint, or ooo, oo, fixer-upper. Prince Fixer-upper

PRINCE: Thank you for that. No, I want to be able to marry for love

DANDINI: Love, huh. Love can be a bit tricky your Princey-osity

PRINCE: Oh ho, you're dark horse Dandini. You know about love? **(Dandini looks a little embarrassed)** You do! You're in love!

DANDINI: I might like someone a little..

PRINCE: Is it one of the village people?

DANDINI: Maybe....

PRINCE: Which one? The Construction Worker, the Policeman or the Native American?

DANDINI. Not those village people. Just...someone I went to school with.

PRINCE: Tell me more! **(They mime talking)**

BUTTONS (Enters SR) Hi Everyone! (Button up Buttons!) Oo thanks! (sees Dandini) Oh! Oh it's Dandini! I ..ooo..Should I try and talk to her? (Yes!) I don't know if I can .. my voice goes all funny..oh no it's doing it now, up and down like a yo-yo.... And my knees start knocking. No, Cinders said I needed to talk to her. Shall I...? Okay... (Starts to walk over, all wobbly, hyperventilates into paper bag) I can't do it! (Runs off SR again)

PRINCE: So how do you fall in love then?

DANDINI: Well, you don't need money...

PRINCE: Right..

DANDINI: You don't need fame...

PRINCE: Got it.

DANDINI: Don't need a credit card to ride this train...

PRINCE: Come on, you're winding me up!

DANDINI: Well, that's the power of love.

PRINCE: But all the women around here just see the Prince. **(waves at Chorus folk group who swoon, and throw underwear at him)** See? How can I get to know someone if they are yeeting items of clothing at me?. If I could be just... normal just for a bit, I might actually get to talk to some of them. But how to do that?

DANDINI: It's almost like you need to swap identities or something your Highness. **(counts down visibly as the Prince ponders!)**

PRINCE: ...I've just had a brilliant idea! I need to swap with someone else.

DANDINI: He gets there eventually.

PRINCE: You and I will swap Dandini! You can be the Prince and I can be the artist formerly known as the Prince.

DANDINI: Wait a minute, I'm a girl. No-one's going to believe a boy dressed up as a girl.

PRINCE: I do wear fishnets.

DANDINI: A good point. But they're not going to believe I'm a Prince just because I'm wearing a posh jacket and a crown.

PRINCE: Trust me, that's all they are looking at. We'll try it at the Royal Hunt this afternoon. I'll have the rest of the day to find love!

DANDINI: Good luck with it being that easy.

(UGLY SISTERS ENTER SL)

RUBY: ...and then Andy the tennis player dumped me! Can you believe it!

SCARLET: You should never have relationships with tennis players. Love means nothing to them.

RUBY: (Does a double take) Shhh! Look it's the Prince! Emergency Prince Pursuing Protocols now! **(They both rip off bits of their dresses to be more revealing and any Chorus member on stage behind barrier flee as they rush over)** Oh Princey!

PRINCE: (Terrified)....Dandini!

(DANDINI Grabs lion tamer chair - SCARLET snatches it and tears it apart and Ruby pushes Dandini off stage)

RUBY: Alone at last!

SCARLET: Can I call you Andrex?

RUBY: Idiot, don't call him after a toilet roll

SCARLET: Not even if he is soft, strong and..

RUBY: Not even then. Anyway You're confusing his name with that Kitchen roll... Cushelle or something.. Charmain!.

PRINCE: The name is Prince Charming and I have to go and get ready for the Royal Hunt and the announcement about the Royal Ball.

RUBY: Oh we love your Royal Hunts.

SCARLET: And we love your Royal Balls!

PRINCE: ...well, marvellous, I'll see you there. Must go, affairs of state you know! Farewell! **(he manages to duck under an arm and runs off)**

RUBY: **(Calls after him)** Affairs! I love affairs.

SCARLET: He got away! I didn't have chance to get my lasso out!

RUBY: I think we made an impression though. He won't forget us in a hurry!

(MALARIA enters SL with Cinderella overloaded with bags)

MALARIA: You know I was going to give you lot a nasty look, but I see you already have one. Is that what you miserable eejits call booing and hissing?

RUBY: It's like frying bacon...I'm starving!

MALARIA: Hurry up Cinderella! Useless girl. Stop being idle. Polish that handbag. Dust that bit of dirt. Where is that ridiculous Croutons or whatever his name is!
CROUTONS!

BUTTONS: **(Enter SR)** Hi everyone! **(Button up Buttons!)** You bellowed your Baronessy?

MALARIA: Idiot, how do you manage to do so many stupid things in a day?

BUTTONS: I get up early?

MALARIA: Get my girls a snack immediately...shoo! **(Buttons goes off and comes back with a platter of food as they continue)** Now darlings, did you meet the Prince?

RUBY: We did! We did everything you taught us mumsy.

SCARLET: But he got away! Sad times **(sighs)**

RUBY: But! But we found out there's a Royal hunt this afternoon.

MALARIA: We need to follow up on your advantage. The both of you must go, and Buttons you will assist them. Now where is my useless husband the Baron? The sooner one of you marries the Prince and I'm rid of him the better. **(CINDERS AND BUTTONS react in horror)**

CINDERS: Don't be horrible about my father. You don't love him at all, you're just using him!

MALARIA: Me? I love husbands. That's why I've had so many of them. You know I still have my first husband's epi-pen. He really, really wanted me to have it when he was dying for some reason. Mwahahahah! Ah, I said I like the simple things in life, but I didn't mean in a husband, so Baron Hard-up is going to have to go!

BUTTONS: How can you be so mean?

MALARIA: It's a gift. Listen Bullocks or whatever your name is...

BUTTONS: I suppose I should be grateful you went with that considering the other options.

MALARIA: You are going with Rubella and Scarletina to the Royal Hunt and you Cinderella... we don't want you anywhere near the hunt.

CINDERS: But why? Why do you hate me so much? I've only been nice to you

MALARIA: Nice is for losers. You are in my way, so you can go off to the Haunted Forest and collect firewood or something.

BUTTONS: But it's dangerous in that part of the forest! It's full of strange spirits, and not the type everyone discovered in quarantine.

MALARIA: Is it really? What a shame. Off you go Cinderella. Try not to get ripped limb from limb!

BUTTONS: But...

CINDERS: I'll be okay Buttons. It's only dangerous at night. Don't forget if you see Dandini...just speak to her. See you later. **(Exits SR)**

BUTTONS: You are all so horrible!

ALL: And proud of it!

BARON: **(Enter SL behind her)** Malaria my lovely lemon meringue, there you are.

MALARIA: **(Rolls eyes and adopts sweet smile)** Yes my snugglebumble?

BARON: I've just been given more bills! Look, a bill for £1000 for underwear from Victoria's Secret. How can it be that expensive?!

RUBY: Well we have to have it custom made.

SCARLET: We're not like other women.

BUTTONS: You can say that again **(MALARIA thwaps him around the head with handbag when Baron not looking)**

BARON: It must stop. We won't have enough for food at this rate!

RUBY (Hyperventilates, nearly passes out in horror very OTT!)
Noooooooooooooooooooo!!!! Never! NEVER!

SCARLET: Why are you speaking like that?

RUBY: It's called acting. You should try it sometime! Woe, Woe and thrice woe!
(collapses)

MALARIA: Now look what you've done. Buttons, help pick her up and hurry up and get to the Royal hunt. We can't afford to be late!

(All EXIT as FAIRY slips out of hiding to the front)

FAIRY: She's a particularly nasty bit of work isn't she? They're just getting nastier and nastier. It's no good, I'm going to have to step up my plans a little quicker than I thought. We've got a couple of big things to tick off the List of Worthiness but I'm sure Cinderella can do it. See you in a bit!

ACT 1 SCENE 2

(In the Forest – Midstage Roller – can open out later. DANDINI enters to Centre stage. Fanfare SFX)

DANDINI: Hear ye, hear ye! Come one, come all! The Royal Hunt is about to begin!
(Chorus enters with coconuts. PRINCE enters DSR)

PRINCE: Hello my Royal subjects! **(He is swarmed by fangirls)** Dandini! Heeelp!

DANDINI: (drives them off with a bucket of water) Behave yourselves! Naughty Chorus! On your bed! Sit, stay!

PRINCE: Thank goodness you're here, one of them nearly had me by my...frilly lace.

DANDINI: (Aside to PRINCE) Don't worry you'll soon be one of the common people....you know, doing whatever common people do...

PRINCE: Dandini. Right, better get on with it! **(Gestures and Dandini plays a fanfare).** Welcome to the Royal Hunt!

ALL: Hurrah!

PRINCE: As you know, I disagree with blood sports so today's hunt will have only coconut horses. Furthermore, we shall only be driving 4x4's reared to a high welfare standard, and we will be hunting our professional fox imitator, **(Chorus member in Velcro jacket and fox headdress steps forward and bows to polite applause)** who will lead us on a merry chase through the forest. Those who manage to hit the bullseye on his target will get the prize!

ALL: Ooooo!

PRINCE: So if we are all ready... **(interrupted by UGLY SISTERS running on from SL)**

BOTH UGS: Wait for us! **(They crash into the FOX, who falls over dramatically unconscious)**

BUTTONS: Hi everyone! **(Button up Buttons!)** Ooo thanks! Oh! Dandini's here. Get it together Buttons.

DANDINI: (Trying to wake up FOX) Oh no! What am I going to do? The Hunt is ruined and all the Prince's plans! If only someone could help me!...**(pause)** I said, if only someone could help me!

BUTTONS: Here's my chance. Just talk to her... **(voice goes wobbly)**. I could help you Dandini.

DANDINI: Buttons?

BUTTONS: I've already checked them!

DANDINI: I mean, you'd help me out by becoming the fox for the Royal Hunt?

BUTTONS: Of course! I'd do anything for you...because we're friends. Yeah, friends.

DANDINI: Friends will be friends..

BOTH: When you're in need of love they give you care and attention. **(both laugh and then look bashful)**

DANDINI: Thank you so much! Just put on this jacket..

(MALARIA & BARON Enter SL)

MALARIA: Yes, yes get it out of your systems - I bet your brains feel good as new seeing that you've never used them.**(laughs at self)** Oh I'm wasted on this place, give me Shepton Mallet any time. They've got a sense of humour there. Mind you, they need it.

BARON: My plumptuous profiterole, why are people booing and hissing when you walk on?

MALARIA: It's a sign of their love and appreciation. Oh yes it is! **(Oh no it isn't!)** Yes well you lot are stupid. Oh did I hurt your feelings when I called you stupid? I'm sorry...I thought you already knew! Mwaaha! Now Rubella and Scarletina you must stay close to the Prince at all costs.

BOTH: Yes mumsy!

MALARIA: You, Botox or whatever your name is..

BUTTONS: My name is Buttons you know, like what's down my top.

MALARIA: I thought that was dribble. Or yoghurt. If you don't lead the prince to my daughters I will feed you those Buttons one by one. The consequences will be painful! **(Buttons looks terrified)**

PRINCE: **(Gives a secret thumbs up to Dandini)** Okay then, mount up everyone!

(Much clattering of coconuts and some chorus hand out some balls to the audience. DANDINI blows a hunting horn and shoves Buttons to run. He runs a bit around and then up the auditorium with ball throwing going on. Dandini and Prince loiter)

PRINCE: Quick Dandini, before anyone notices.

DANDINI: **(They swap crown and jacket)** Seamless. Happy hunting...Dandini!

PRINCE: What? ...Ohhh... Happy hunting Prince Charming! **(Dandini slaps her thigh and exits after others).** Peace at last! I might be able to hear myself think. I think I'll take a nice walk.. **(starts to MSR. FAIRY appears DSR Right and waves wand and half the juniors as animals appear from different entrances and herd him to exit from a different place. FAIRY give the audience a thumbs up and disappears)**

(CINDERELLA enters from a different point surrounded by the other half of juniors)

CINDERS: You're all so cute! I wonder why you have led me here! Oh wow, look at the upcycling material here. Thank you!

PRINCE is ushered in from different spot and while looking at the animals who dance off ends up backing into CINDERELLA.

PRINCE: Oh I'm terribly sorry! **(Eyes meet SFX)**

CINDERS: No, it's my fault I was so busy collecting upcycling material I didn't notice .you.

PRINCE: Upcycling?

CINDERS: It's okay not many people know about it.

PRINCE: It's when you transform rubbish into something beautiful isn't it and help save the environment too?

CINDERS: **(Mouth drops open)** Yes! Yes, that's it exactly!

PRINCE: I'm sure someone as wonderful as you makes stunning things.

CINDERS: **(laughs)** That was just a teensy bit corny wasn't it?

PRINCE: Yes. Sorry...

CINDERS: It was also sort of...charming. **(eyes meet and thrill of music SFX)** I really like you. Gosh, this is all a bit sudden...

PRINCE: Yes but this is panto so we have to do the entire courtship in 3 minutes including song.

CINDERS: Better get on with it then!

SONG 3– DUET With dancing

CINDERS: This is the happiest I've been in ages! I love singing and dancing so much!

PRINCE: I feel the same. I would like to know who...**(interrupted by phone ringing SFX)** Oh I'm sorry, I better take this. **(Takes out tin can on string)** Latest thing apparently. Runs on 4P, 4 Peasant or something...Can you pass this back? **(Dandini standing half way up the auditorium)** Modern technology is wonderful isn't it? Ah there we go? Hello?

DANDINI: Your highness, I have an urgent message for you!

PRINCE: Oh hi, I'm kinda in the middle of something right now

DANDINI: Those two ugly sisters are **(SFX of static)** ...headed...**(Static SFX)** ...you...

PRINCE: You're breaking up! I think the signal is bouncing off the bald heads in row G!

DANDINI: I'll text you! **(Starts feeding the pictures on the line down to stage of two UGS and the word RUN)**

PRINCE: Marvellous thing really. Though the signal isn't brilliant in Wells. Hey, we can take a selfie! **(Does so)** There, that'll come through in about...3 or 4 years as a lovely needlepoint tapestry.

CINDERS: But your friend is just over there. You could just talk to them from here.

PRINCE: Oh, this is much more convenient. **(Eventual Text SFX)**

DANDINI: You got it?

PRINCE: Got it, thanks! Oh no! Um, this is an emergency and I've got to go but you really like dancing don't you? Here, here's an invitation to the Royal Ball, I'll be there and I'd love to see you again

CINDERS: I'd love to see you but I don't think I'm the type they want at a Royal Ball..

PRINCE: Don't worry, it's going to be open to all this year and you're just the type I would want to see there! **(hands over invite)**

RUBY: (offstage) This way Scarletina!

CINDERS AND PRINCE: Oh! **(Both run off DSR & DSL as UGLY SISTERS enter USL)**

SCARLET: (Squats down as if checking tracks.) He was here, I can sense it!

RUBY: Oi you horrible lot, was the Prince just here? No?

SCARLET: I don't believe you! Oh yes he was. **(Oh no he wasn't!)**

RUBY: He's got to be here somewhere!

MALARIA: (Enters SR) Yes, yes, get it over with we have a Prince to catch. Well? Where is he?

SCARLET: He was just here...I can smell the royalness.

MALARIA: Blast! Now how are we going to find him?

(Small Child enters DSL with a sign that says. Wise woman this way. All questions answered)

MALARIA: Aha! You there, we want to see the wise woman right now!

KID: (Dramatically) Two things must ye know about the wise woman...one, she is...wise. Two, she is...

MALARIA: a woman?

KID: (Ordinary) Oh you've met her then?

MALARIA: No, just a wild stab in the dark which is incidentally what you'll be getting if you don't hurry up!

KID: Keep your hair on **(Leads them over to FAIRY who appears DSR disguised as the Wise Woman)**

FAIRY: Ah, I see you have come to further your own selfish wishes.

ALL: Yep.

FAIRY: What is it that you want?

RUBY: Got any snacks?

SCARLET: How do we snag the Prince...

RUBY: and all his lovely money?
(Fairy makes mystic gestures)

FAIRY: *Prince Charming is not for either of you.
His heart has been given to a love so true
But mend your ways, seek joy and laughter
If you wish your own happy ever after!*

MALARIA: What a load of tosh. Just because you speak in rhyme you think that's a good argument. Some wise woman you are! I'm telling you now, one of my daughters WILL marry the prince, and I'll be the Queen Mother and everyone will bow before me and I'll remember everyone of you who stood in my way and will make you self-isolate for YEARS! Mwaahahaha! Nothing anyone can do will stop us!
(Storms off followed by UGLY SISTERS)

FAIRY: Well she was unpleasant. Time to put my plan into action.**(Pulls random items from bag – including random horsehead. Gets out bandages and stethoscope. Children run on)**

KID: Cinderella is coming!

FAIRY: We have two items left on the List of Worthiness before Cinderella can have her wish. One is to give up something important for someone she cares for, and the other is testing her ability to make a sacrifice for people she doesn't know. We'll do that one first. Places everyone! **(They all hide as BUTTONS runs on)**

BUTTONS: Hiya everyone **(Button up Buttons!)** Phew! Look at the state of me! Who got me in the bullseye? Was it one of you? It was? Come up to the steps here and tell me to my face. I don't trust stairs you know, they are always up to something. Hmm, I think I recognise that throwing arm. I'm getting twinges just looking at you so I hereby award you the Royal Hunt Trophy for marksmanship! Round of applause! **(hands small Trophy)**
(CINDERS enters SR looking happy)

BUTTONS: Cinders! Wow, you look happy.

CINDERS: I met this wonderful man in the woods.

BUTTONS: Oh reaaallly? You met a boy?! OH EM GEE!

CINDERS: I know! **(They both jump up and down excitedly, very teenage girl-ish except BUTTONS is ten times more girly than CINDERS)**

BUTTONS: Okay girlfriend tell me EVERYTHING!

CINDERS: Oh Buttons he...hang on why are you dressed like that?

BUTTONS: Doing a favour for Dandini.

CINDERS: Oh reallllly? you actually managed to speak to her?

BUTTONS: (Trying to be cool) I managed to speak to her...like a boss!

CINDERS: Yeah, never do that again.

(FAIRY steps into view and waves wand. Magic SFX. Junior Chorus stagger on, bandages on, crutches, pretending illness. Cinderella steps forward)

BUTTONS: Whoa, whoa social distancing guys, have you learned nothing?

CINDERS: But they need my help!

KIDS: Help us Cinderella!

KID 1 :The wise woman (**indicates FAIRY SR as doctor**) can cure us. But it costs too much.

BUTTONS: But we have the NHS...oh hang on we're in a fairy tale. Why didn't anyone write the NHS into fairy tales!

FAIRY: They're more the superhero genre.

CINDERS: Well I have my life savings.. (**gets out money pouch**)

BUTTONS: But that's all of it. It's your only way to escape the disastrous duo and your step mother of doom!

KID: (KID Collapses dramatically in BUTTON'S arms) I can hear the angels...I can hear them calling to me from the sky...

CINDERS: If there is a cure, they should have it no matter the cost. (**Hands over the money – FAIRY seen making a tick on the scroll of worthiness and curing kids miraculously - as they exit she follows. Cinderella looks at the empty money pouch wistfully.**)

BUTTONS: Are you okay?

CINDERS: Yes. I'm fine. (**deep breath pulling self together**) I've made the money before, I can do it again. Just a setback in my plans.

BUTTONS: That's the spirit! (**Hunting horn SFX.**) That's the others. We'd better get out of here! (**Exit DSR. DANDINI and PRINCE Enter from different entrances**)

PRINCE: Marvellous, there you are Dandini. We better swap back before everyone else gets here. (**Exchange Jacket and crown as they speak**)

DANDINI: How did it go?

PRINCE: I'm in love! I met this wonderful upcycling girl.

DANDINI: I bet she's living in her upcycling world.

PRINCE: Well, yes I suppose.

DANDINI: And she's never met a Downtown Abbey kinda guy?

PRINCE: Well I guess not...hey!

DANDINI: So what's her name?

PRINCE: I..uh..didn't get it?

DANDINI: Seriously your highness, getting the name is one of the dating basics.

PRINCE: Oh! But I gave her an Invitation to the Ball – she'll be there and I'll know her anywhere!

DANDINI: But what if she is a commoner?

PRINCE: I'll make it a masquerade Ball and invite everyone. That way no one will know who is rich or poor because we'll be wearing masks - and I'll promise to marry someone I choose on that night!

DANDINI: It might just work **(Takes out hunting horn and blows fanfare)** Hear ye! Hear ye!

(Adult Chorus including UGS and MALARIA AND BARON enter)

PRINCE: I, Prince Charming **(slaps thigh)**, declare that this year's Royal Ball shall be a masquerade and ALL shall be given an invitation! **(Much reaction)** I also vow that I will choose someone to whom I will propose and, if they accept my offer, they shall become my queen!

SCARLET: Ooo! I volunteer as tribute!

RUBY: To be fair, she is the biggest queen around.

PRINCE: Yes, well I shall see you all tonight! **(All cheer and Prince exits royally)**

DANDINI: Collect your invitations from me, no admittance without one! **(UGLY SISTERS and MALARIA Snatch theirs off of him rudely. Chorus leave)**

BUTTONS: Uh, Dandini? Can I have one for a friend of mine who's not here?

DANDINI: Of course Buttons! And thankyou for helping me earlier.

BUTTONS: Any time!

DANDINI: See you at the Ball later? If you come I'll know that...you really like me.
(puts invite in Buttons' hand)

BUTTONS: It's a date! (She kisses him on the cheek and exits. Buttons stands there stunned with the ticket in his hand. MALARIA stalk over and snatches it

MALARIA: What's this? A ticket to the Ball for Cinderella no doubt. Well we can't have that can we?

BUTTONS: Oh yes we can!

UGS & MALARIA: Oh no we can't!

MALARIA: Oh look a freak wind has accidentally blown it into the air where it is accidentally blasted into pieces by a rogue pistol shot into itty bitty pieces (RUBY fires as it is thrown up and there is confetti thrown too. (JUNIORS come on and enact what she says)

RUBY: Which were accidentally trampled on by a hedgehog...

SCARLET: Nibbled on by a rabbit

MALARIA: And weed on by a squirrel. Sad times. Right you two, time to get ready. We've only got about six hours! Blowtorch or whatever your name is get back to Hardup Hall and get the pedicure equipment. We have a Royal Ball to prepare for!
(Black out)

ACT 1 Scene 3

Ugly Sisters' Bedroom.

BUTTONS: (Enters SR carrying industrial grinder and tray of cakes) Hiya Everyone! (Button up Buttons!) You know what, I was really upset about them tearing up the invitation I got for Cinderella, but then Cinders told me her new love-interest from the woods had given her one. An invite. That's good because it means both of us can go to the Ball if Cinders can get a dress! Knowing her she could make one ten times better than anything these two could buy. Shhh don't tell anyone though.

RUBY: (Enter SR in dressing gown and hair in towel) Ooo! Snacks! Scarletina stop waxing the hair in your belly button and have something to eat.

SCARLET: Ruby dahling, have you seen the foundation?

RUBY: I was just using it (Hands over industrial Polyfilla) What kept you?

SCARLET: I was looking for my star trek pants.

RUBYS: Oh these (Picks up thong)..the ones that boldly go where no ...

SCARLET: That's the ones! (takes them)

BUTTONS: Could have been the Klingon ones! (During this **BUTTONS** is setting up the angle grinder, and being gestured to do horrible personal beauty chores like pulling out nose hair with a plier so it like a big stretchy long wire, painting nails, heaving at corset ties like it's a tug of war)

RUBY: I can't find the beauty spot I put on my left cheek so men can admire my beauty!

SCARLET: You've already put it on darling. You're sitting on it. Did you remember to put deodorant on the shopping list?

RUBY: Oh I never need to buy deodorant. People just give it to me – complete strangers in the street sometimes.

SCARLET: Oh no! My stockings have got so many ladders in them, that last week the window cleaner was running up my leg with a chamois.

RUBY: Biggest thrill you've had for a while.

SCARLET: Ooo I know. I was thinking.

BUTTONS: Not her skill set.

RUBY: Polish the Musical Director's baton Buttons, stop being idle.

BUTTONS: I'm going nowhere near his baton!

SCARLET: You're so clever Ruby. Can I ask a stupid question?

RUBY: Better than anyone I know.

SCARLET: What shape does a pear go when it goes wrong?

RUBY: Sometimes I'm stunned we are sisters

SCARLET: And, and, does the world have a first name? Like...Steve.

RUBY: ... Steve the world? Did you have an extra bowl of stupid this morning? The Prince isn't going to want an airhead!

(Doorbell SFX and Button steps off to answer it and come back with Pizza boxes)

SCARLET: He will so stunned by my beauty he won't want conversation. Better an airhead than a lard bottom! You should work on your fitness and getting into shape.

RUBY: I do!

BUTTONS: I guess round is a shape! (**RUBY snatches the pizza box. Gestures to BUTTONS to continue beauty treatment eg neck massage,)** When you do squats, are your knees supposed to sound like a goat chewing on an aluminium can stuffed with celery?

RUBY: How very dare you. I work on my fitness, in fact I'm doing it right now (**Takes pizza**). Fittin-this pizza into my mouth!

SCARLET: Ooo give your sister a piece, we're a team! There's no I in Team.

RUBY: But there is in pizza! (**growls at SCARLET if she tries to take a bit**)

SCARLET: That's not sticking to your diet.

RUBY: This is just a snack! And I only had a salad for dinner.. Actually it was a fruit salad, well it was mostly grapes. Okay it was all grapes. Fermented grapes. Wine. I had wine for dinner.

SCARLET: I need your opinion on my chat up line. I was going to go with 'If you were a vegetable you'd be a cutecumber!'

RUBY: Stick with what you know. I'm going with 'I want someone to look at me the way I look at chocolate cake. (**Leers at chocolate cake on tray**)

BUTTONS: I think I might be sick.

SCARLET: What about something a bit more festive – Can I take a picture of you so Santa knows what I want for Christmas?

RUBY: I've got a better one for you – my love is just like diarrhoea – I just can't hold it in.

SCARLET: Genius! But I probably won't need it . You know, I just flutter my eyelashes and men come running.(**demonstrates**)

RUBY: What, to defibrillate you?

SCARLET: Don't be disgusting!

RUBY: Prince Charming will sweep me off my feet!

BUTTONS: Someone tell him some sort of Industrial crane might be in order!

RUBY: Hey, I might be full bodied but I identify as skinny. I'm trans-slender!

SCARLET: Ooo perhaps I should dye my hair to match my name. Hey, you Buttons have you ever given a henna rinse?

BUTTONS: No, but I've given a duck a wash! (**she throws something at him**)

SCARLET: Ruby dearest, am I wearing too much makeup?

RUBY: Not if you are going out to try and kill Batman. Make-up tip: you're not in the circus.

SCARLET: You know sis, I'm really going to miss this place when I marry the Prince. Say what you like there'll always be a little piece of me left here.

RUBY: Yeah, we never did get that toilet flush to work properly again did we?

BUTTONS: Could I have a snack too? I've not had anything to eat all day?

MALARIA: (Enters) Stop thinking with your belly, Buttons!

BUTTONS: (Gasp) How do you know I've got more than one!?

MALARIA: What are you lot booing and hissing about? If you've got something to say raise your hand...and put it over your mouth because I'm the one speaking here! Mwaaha! So my darlings are you girls ready for all your dreams to come true?

RUBY: What ALL of them?

SCARLET: Even the one when you think you're going to the loo?

BUTTONS: Definitely that one!

MALARIA: No, the one where one of you snag the Prince and we live in luxury all our lives. Now, come on girls, hurry up we're nearly out of time. Pedicure time.

SCARLET: But Cinderella does it better than Buttons!

MALARIA: Well, hard luck. Cinderella is not leaving that kitchen until the ball is over and the Prince is snagged by one of you. I've told her if she leaves it I'll do something really nasty.

BUTTONS: Like breathing.

MALARIA: Get on with it! **(Buttons takes up position with the industrial grinder and acts placing it to their toes at the point where they need SFX so words are bleeped out)**. It's just as well the both of you have no boyfriends at the moment.

RUBY: I dumped Nigel last week. Well I had to - his *(nose)* was too long and *(feet)* too big.

SCARLET: I know what you mean. You know, I went out with Ed Sheeran once.

RUBY: You never did!

SCARLET: Had to dump him because he kept *(singing)* in the bath!

MALARIA: Better there than on stage.

SCARLET: Oh, all night he was singing.. you know, “She played a fiddle in an Irish band, but she fell in love with an English man. kissed her on the (*neck*) and then I took her by the (*hand*) Said, baby I just wanna (*dance*).”

MALARIA: Hmm, you were well shot of him. Mind you husband number 5 was nearly Mick Jagger.

BOTH: Really?

MALARIA: Yes. I was playing hard to get and he was all “I can’t get no (*satisfaction*).” Then I tried for Tom Jones and he was all “Mama told me not to (*come*)”

RUBY: Fancy turning you down!

MALARIA: I once thought about making a play for *<despised powerful person eg President Trump>*, but even I have standards.

BUTTONS: There - all done.

MALARIA: Now girls, hurry up and get your frocks on. We’ve not got long before we will be leaving and you’ll have no competition whatsoever with Cinderella staying behind. **(All Laugh)**

BUTTONS: Hah, that’s what you think. **(They stop mid laugh)**

MALARIA: What was that Buttons?

BUTTONS: I uh... you all stink? **(Backing away as they surround him and menacing him with hair tongs)**

RUBY: I think he knows something Mumsy.

SCARLET: I think he’s keeping secrets...probably about Cinderella!

MALARIA: **(Catches hold of Buttons ear)** You two go and get changed, I’ll deal with this.

(UGLY SISTERS EXT SL)

MALARIA: Now Buttons, let’s have a little chat shall we? **(snaps the hair tongs at him)**

BUTTONS: Oo blimey!
(Black out)

ACT 1 Scene 4

The kitchen of Hard Up Hall. CINDERS is randomly sweeping. Two Junior chorus as mice are lurking.

CINDERS: There, I've finished everything. Maybe I could try and go to the Ball. Ha, who am I fooling, I don't have a dress, or anyway to get there. But...just one night of dancing and fun would be SO good... What do you think Fred and Freda?
(Mice squeak encouragingly and then run and hide as BARON enters)

BARON: (Carrying a dress box) Cinderella? Are you here?

CINDERS: Father! What are you doing down here?

BARON: Well, I know Malaria said you were morally against dancing or something but...I thought that maybe you might change your mind? The Cinderella I know would never miss out on an opportunity to dance. So, I got a dress for you. It's nothing fancy but...

CINDERS: Oh Father! That's so lovely of you.

BARON: I know the real reason why you work so hard. It's because you don't want to waste our money and have to give up our home isn't it?

CINDERS: Well..

BARON: Which is very thoughtful! I wish your stepsisters could do the same.

CINDERS: Father, about them and Malaria...

BARON: Oh I'm sure they'll all tighten their belts soon enough when they understand. Their hearts are in the right place - they're just not as clever as my lovely daughter.

CINDERS: I'm not sure if I can go Father...

BARON: Nonsense! Try on the dress and I'll see you at the Ball sweetheart. I'm sure you could get a lift with your sisters. **(Exits SL)**

CINDERS: (Pulls out invitation and looks at it) Maybe I could go? I have a dress now, and it wouldn't take a moment to get ready! Then I might see him again and dance the night away! Oh, that would be amazing to not be trapped inside, locked away but to just...be free and have fun if only for tonight. Surely, I could have one night of dreams?

MALARIA: (enters SL dragging BUTTONS) Quiet you horrible lot! You know what if idiots could fly this place would be Heathrow airport! Aha!

BUTTONS: Hiya everyone! **(Button up Buttons!)** I really wish I had buttoned up this time! Cinders, I'm sorry she forced me to tell her about the invitation.

MALARIA: An invitation that you, my dear Cinderella, will tear up! MWhahaha! Oh yes she is! **(Oh no she isn't!) (Oh yes she will etc.)**

CINDERS: No! I am going, I have an invitation and a dress. For once I am going to do something for me!

MALARIA: Oh really? This dress here... but Cinders sweetie, it's all ragged and broken! **(Tears arms off it)**. And you know what? To replace it would cost almost exactly what we would pay Buttons. So it's simple isn't it? Go to the Ball, Buttons loses his job. Rip up the invitation and Buttons gets to stay.

BUTTONS: Why you horrible bully...

CINDERS: **(Grits her teeth and tears up the invitation)**

MALARIA: Mwahahaha! Have a lovely evening with the rats and mice down here Cinderella! Your father will be soooo disappointed you didn't come but I'll make sure he understands...Mwahahaha ! **(Exits SL)**

BUTTONS: She is nastier than coronavirus. **(He pulls out his own invitation and seems to make a agonised decision)** Cinders, this is all my fault. You should have my invitation.

CINDERS: No Buttons, It's okay. Besides I've got nothing to wear.

BUTTONS: You'd look lovely with nothing to wear!

CINDERS: I don't think it's that kind of a ball, Buttons. Anyway, you've been after Dandini for years. This is your first date. I can't stand in the way of that and you told me she said if you came she would know if you really liked her or not. It's okay. I'll be fine.

BUTTONS: But your man from the woods...

CINDERS: If it's love it'll find a way Buttons. Now go and find *your * way. I'm perfectly okay.

BUTTONS: If you're sure....

CINDERS: Wait, you've got something weird on you. **(Moves to rub something on his cheek)**

BUTTONS: What?

CINDERS: No wait it's just your face..

BUTTONS: Cinders! **(Both laugh)** Okay, I'm going, I'm going.

CINDERS: Have a great time! **(BUTTONS exists SR and immediately CINDERS' cheerful demeanour drops.)** Just one night...just one dance.

SONG 4

CINDERS: I wish things could be different, I wish I could go to the Ball.
(Flash bang DSR SFX and the FAIRY appears!)

FAIRY: Congratulations Cinderella! With that last selfless act for someone you care for, you qualify for your wish! All your dreams can come true!

CINDERS: Who are you?!

FAIRY: Do the wings and wand not give it away? I'm your fairy godmother, here to make you an offer you can't refuse **(speaks very quickly)** Terms and conditions apply.

CINDERS: Terms and Conditions?

FAIRY: Well the magic conks out at midnight but I'm pretty sure you can get your Happy Ever After before then!

CINDERS: But how? I've got no invitation, no dress, no way to get there...

FAIRY: Lets just see what some magic can do about that. Invitation **(picks up scraps, Magic SFX produces the whole one)** . Now, I am going to need some mice, some, rats...

CINDERS: Got plenty of those down here.

FAIRY: The biggest pumpkin you can find....and a glass of wine. That one is for me.

CINDERS: **(Collects up the items)** Anything else?

FAIRY: Stand back... it's Show Time!

SONG 5

Fairy Singing UV Scene – Transformation

At end we have a Coach, and horses and footmen, but Cinderella is without a new dress.

CINDERS: Uh, Fairy godmother, aren't you forgetting something?

FAIRY: Good heavens, of course... Cinderella,
Magic of diamond stars and blue of sky
Create a dress to catch your true love's eye!

(Cinderella spins and transforms into wearing a beautiful dress)

FAIRY: Now don't forget your magic glass slippers which glow in the presence of true love and one last thing...most of this magic will disappear at the last stroke of midnight.

CINDERS: I can't believe it! Thank you Fairy Godmother! Thank you so much (**Gets in Carriage**)

FAIRY: Cinderella you SHALL GO TO THE BALL!
(**Spot light on Cinderella in Carriage as it leaves BLACK OUT. Curtains close**)

END ACT 1