

JADE
BROWNE

THE BROTHERS GRIMM SPECTACULATHON

(one-act version)

A SHORT COMEDY BY
Don Zolidis

Playscripts, Inc.

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Cast of Characters

NARRATOR 1 (female) *Halle*
NARRATOR 2 (male) *Graboy*
ACTOR
GIRL
DIRT MERCHANT
RUMPELSTILTSKIN *Kayleigh*
ENCHANTRESS
THE DEVIL
PRINCE 1
RAPUNZEL
HANSEL
GRETEL
WITCH
DWARF 1
DWARF 2
SNOW WHITE
WITCH 2
PRINCE 2
THE DEVIL 2
THE DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER
DOCTOR
GOD (off-stage voice)
CINDERELLA

(Princes, Witches, and Devils may be played by different actors if the director wishes. They may also be played by the same actor should that be the preference.)

Production Notes

Feel free to cut this play as needed to fit into time constraints. The easiest way is to simply eliminate one of the fairy tales and have the narrators connect the story around the hole in the narrative. Ad libbing is encouraged to make the story flow properly.

This play is designed to be as flexible and as quick as possible. There should be no scene changes and any set pieces on the stage need to be brought on by the actors.

Ideally, this play would be performed with five actors, two of which would be the narrators who become many other characters throughout the play. Gender switching is encouraged, and costume changes may take place in full view of the audience. It's up to your group, however, if you wish to have a different actor play all of the 20 roles, then that would be acceptable as well. Any number between 5 and 20 performers will work.

THE BROTHERS GRIMM SPECTACULATHON

(ONE-ACT VERSION)

by Don Zolidis

* (A largely bare stage. NARRATOR 1, a rather proper narrator, enters.)

NARRATOR 1. (To the audience:) Hello and welcome to the Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon!

*(NARRATOR 2 explodes on to the stage.)

NARRATOR 2. (To the audience:) Sunday Sunday Sunday! It's EXTREME! See! Monster slaying action as the three-headed pig battles the wolf-o-bot in a bone-crushing cage match of death. They'll huff and they'll puff and they'll kick some iron! Aaaaaaahh!

(Pause. NARRATOR 1 looks at NARRATOR 2.)

NARRATOR 1. What we are going to do here today –

NARRATOR 2. (Interrupting:) And then the battle you've all been waiting for: Snow White vs. Sleeping Beauty in a mud-wrestling death match. Who's the toughest of them all? With dwarf-tossing afterwards.

NARRATOR 1. (To NARRATOR 2:) Can you stop?

NARRATOR 2. (To the audience:) What happens when the princesses stop being kind and start being real? And covered in mud? And choking each other and one of them gets the other in a crab hold and –

NARRATOR 1. Okay, stop. We're not doing that.

NARRATOR 2. Flames! Flames!

NARRATOR 1. Enough, (actor's name). You're weirding them out.

NARRATOR 2. I'm EXTREME.

NARRATOR 1. No you're not. Can we just do the show?

NARRATOR 2. Fine, but I want you to know something: you are no longer considered extreme in my book. Okay? No longer extreme.

NARRATOR 1. This is the Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon!

NARRATOR 2. That's right. And what we are about to do today is going to blow your mind. We are about to attempt something so spectacular you will never be the same.

NARRATOR 1. If you need to go to the bathroom, go now and we'll wait. We don't want accidents.

(NARRATOR 2 points to someone in the audience.)

NARRATOR 2. You look a little touch-and-go miss. Are you sure? You okay? All right then. *(To the other NARRATOR:)* Keep an eye on that one.

NARRATOR 1. A little background to begin.

NARRATOR 2. The Brothers Grimm were brothers named Grimm. They are dead. But in the period before they died the Brothers Grimm wrote 209 fairy tales that we know today –

NARRATOR 1. They didn't write them –

NARRATOR 2. The Brothers Grimm did not write 209 fairy tales that we know today, they were frauds. We should dig up their bodies and spit on their corpses.

NARRATOR 1. No I'm just saying that they were collectors of stories.

NARRATOR 2. Never mind that last part.

NARRATOR 1. And these stories have become extremely popular: We all know them today:

NARRATOR 2. Such stories as The Wolf and the Seven Young Kids –

NARRATOR 1. The Pack of Ragamuffins –

NARRATOR 2. And Straw, Coal, and Bean.

NARRATOR 1. I forgot about that one.

NARRATOR 2. Oh yeah. Straw, Coal, and Bean? Only the best fairy tale in the entire history of the world. I'm literally like crying buckets by the end of it. Freaking amazing. Changed my life. I can't even look at straw, coal, or beans any more.

NARRATOR 1. What's it about?

NARRATOR 2. No idea.

NARRATOR 1. Those might not be household names, but quite a few of these stories have become immortalized in film and television—

NARRATOR 2. Of course they've all been changed by "the mouse." (*Points to a sign that says DISNEY:*) To feed their enormous octopus-like animation empire which sucks the life out of existence and crushes your soul in a death-grip of happy happy songs and talking objects. I can't even speak their name aloud because they're looking for a way to sue me right now. (*Up to the sky:*) You won't win. My uncle is a lawyer! He defended OJ. That means I can kill anyone I want and no one can get me.

(**NARRATOR 1** looks at **NARRATOR 2**.)

NARRATOR 1. O-kay. What we are going to do for you right now is return these fairy tales to their original glory. We have assembled the greatest troupe of actors the world has ever seen and we—

* (**ACTOR** emerges, halfway in costume, scratching himself.)

ACTOR. I thought there was supposed to be catering back here?

NARRATOR 2. There's like a beef thing somewhere.

ACTOR. Where?

NARRATOR 2. I don't know—in the back somewhere.

ACTOR. Is there anything to drink?

NARRATOR 2. No.

* (**ACTOR** exits, annoyed.)

NARRATOR 1. These actors are so insanely talented that—

ACTOR. (*Off-stage:*) I don't see it!

NARRATOR 2. Do you see the radiator?

ACTOR. (*Off-stage:*) No! Oh wait! No.

NARRATOR 2. There's probably someone sitting on it. Move them.

ACTOR. (*Off-stage:*) Oh here it is.

ANOTHER ACTOR. (*Off-stage:*) Hey!

NARRATOR 1. Anyway, in just the short time we have, our crack team of actors is going to perform all 209 fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm.

NARRATOR 2. That's like three stories per minute.

NARRATOR 1. Or a different number if you actually know math. And we're going to keep the original endings intact.

NARRATOR 2. Blood! Violence! Death! People being cut open with scissors!

NARRATOR 1. *And* to make things more difficult! We are going to perform them as originally intended, which is...

NARRATOR 2. That it's all one enormous mega superstory. That will rock your world.

NARRATOR 1. Are you ready?

NARRATOR 2. I'm so excited I'm going to throw up. Does anyone have a hat? Nope? Excuse me then.

* (NARRATOR 2 *exits*. NARRATOR 1 *stretches and does warm-ups. Perhaps a few wind sprints.*)

NARRATOR 1. Well I don't know when he's coming back. So... Once upon a time there was a girl who was raised by wolves whose mother died in childbirth and she was abandoned by her father who could spin straw into gold and made a deal with a series of elves if they would help him make shoes. There was also a talking fox in there somewhere.

(NARRATOR 2 *returns.*)

NARRATOR 2. And she was beautiful—

NARRATOR 1. Because no one cares about ugly people.

NARRATOR 2. I care about ugly people.

NARRATOR 1. Well no one cares about you. Anyway, there was a girl.

* (GIRL enters in dramatic fashion.)

NARRATOR 2. And she was poor.

GIRL. Oh I am poor.

NARRATOR 2. Dirt poor.

NARRATOR 1. She couldn't even afford dirt.

(DIRT MERCHANT enters.)

DIRT MERCHANT. Dirt for sale! Dirt for sale! Hey, you! Get off the merchandise!

(He exits.)

* **GIRL.** (Crying:) I shall flood the ground with my tears!

(The DIRT MERCHANT returns.)

DIRT MERCHANT. You're getting it wet! Stop it!

(He exits.)

GIRL. If only I knew where my father was who could spin straw into gold and talk to wolves and make deals with the elves and who was also acquainted with a talking fox.

* (An ENCHANTRESS [played by NARRATOR 1] enters.)

ENCHANTRESS. Excuse me—but I couldn't help overhearing your tale of misery and woe. Tell you what—I will grant you your heart's desire if you give me one small thing.

GIRL. That sounds like a great bargain. I won't even ask what the small thing is because I'm so innocent and trusting!

ENCHANTRESS. Excellent. (She makes a magical signal:) I vanish.

(She does not actually appear to vanish. ENCHANTRESS looks around and covers GIRL's eyes.)

ENCHANTRESS. I vanish again.

(She quickly hides behind something.)

GIRL. What a nice lady.

* (THE DEVIL 1 [played by NARRATOR 2] enters.)

THE DEVIL 1. Hey there hot stuff. Oh wait, that's me. Ha ha ha ha!

GIRL. Are you a prince?

THE DEVIL 1. Of darkness.

(He laughs at his own joke.)

THE DEVIL 1. Oh that's a good one! I've got to tell that to the demons back home. Now, I happened to overhear your tale of misery and woe and I'm here to help.

GIRL. Well actually I just—

THE DEVIL 1. Just sign this one small contract and you shall conceive a daughter so beautiful the very earth will want to kiss her. But in a platonic way. Nothing kinky.

GIRL. That sounds like a great idea.

(She signs the contract.)

THE DEVIL 1. Moo ah ha ha ha ha ha!

* *(He looks around. Then runs off.)*

GIRL. This is a busy street.

* *(RUMPELSTILTSKIN enters, limping.)*

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Hello there.

GIRL. You're hideous and deformed!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Look, I have a great bargain for you—

GIRL. My stomach recoils in horror as you approach!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Yes I know that but—

GIRL. Why has God's creation been so perverted?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Do you want to hear my offer or not?

GIRL. Sure. Go ahead. You're probably trustworthy and I'm stupid and don't judge people by their appearances.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. I shall make you rich, rich, I tell you! Beyond your wildest dreams!

GIRL. Can I have my own jet fighter? With Tom Cruise in it? When he was 23 and not into the strange stuff?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. He was still into that stuff, he just wasn't advertising it. Anyway, I will make you very rich, not so rich that you can afford that bra or the jet fighter, but rich enough. And I ask only one small thing in return.

GIRL. Sounds good.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Don't you want to know what the thing is?

GIRL. No, I trust you.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Very well.

✱ (NARRATOR 1 *emerges.*)

NARRATOR 1. It was a good day for the girl. She fell in love with a prince.

✱ (PRINCE 1 [*played by* NARRATOR 2] *enters.*)

PRINCE 1. Hey, you're hot!

GIRL. I am hot.

PRINCE 1. Let's get married!

GIRL. Score!

NARRATOR 2. She grew very rich.

PRINCE 1. Hey look I just tripped over a giant pot of gold! What are the odds!

GIRL. Ha ha! Score!

NARRATOR 2. And she conceived a child.

GIRL. Whoah! How did that happen?

NARRATOR 2. Well you see kids, when a prince and a princess love each other very much—

NARRATOR 1. Through magic. The magic of the devil. And that's where babies come from.

(Goes back to being PRINCE 1.)

GIRL. Ah! The baby's coming!

PRINCE 1. Push! Push! Breathe!

GIRL. *(Screaming in rage:)* I'm breathing! How on earth would I not be breathing! I'd be dead if I wasn't breathing! You need to think before you speak!

NARRATOR 2. The miracle of childbirth.

PRINCE 1. You can do it, honey!

GIRL. *(Continuous:)* I hate you I hate you I hate you I hate you I hate you!

PRINCE 1. *(Continuous:)* Focus your anger! Focus your anger!

(GIRL screams. Nothing happens. She screams again.)

PRINCE 1. I can see her little head!

(GIRL screams again. A baby doll is thrown in from off stage. PRINCE 1 snatches it out of the air like a Frisbee.)

PRINCE 1. Oh it's so beautiful!

NARRATOR 2. Years passed.

(PRINCE 1 throws the baby off-stage like a Frisbee.)

NARRATOR 2. And she grew into a beautiful young teenager, Rapunzel.

PRINCE 1. Seriously? We're going with Rapunzel? I liked Amber.

GIRL. That was the name of your ex-girlfriend!

PRINCE 1. We were just friends!

GIRL. Then why do you save her letters!?

Help Girl with breathing.

* (RAPUNZEL enters with a huge mop of hair on her head.)

PRINCE 1. Are you going to wear your hair like that?

RAPUNZEL. Shut up.

GIRL. Darling, we're going to have dinner so wash your hands.

RAPUNZEL. You can't tell me what to do!

PRINCE 1. Don't talk to your mother that way. She sold her soul to the Devil just to have you —

RAPUNZEL. I don't care! I didn't ask to be born! I'm going out.

GIRL. You are not walking out of this house, young lady!

RAPUNZEL. I do what I want! You don't know me.

GIRL. I'm your mother!

RAPUNZEL. So! I'm gonna go hang with the Frog Prince —

PRINCE 1. He's just using you to get some action!

GIRL. You're going to get warts!

RAPUNZEL. He loves me! I don't care if he's green and slimy —

PRINCE 1. I'm not going to listen to this! I'm going to play golf instead!

* (PRINCE 1 leaves.)

RAPUNZEL. We're gonna run away together and have tadpoles and —

NARRATOR 1. And just then.

* (NARRATOR 1 switches into the ENCHANTRESS.)

ENCHANTRESS. I have returned.

* (NARRATOR 2 switches into THE DEVIL 1 and enters.)

THE DEVIL 1. Your time is up.

* (RUMPELSTILTSKIN enters.)

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. You know I was just passing through the neighborhood and I was thinking that I forgot something like eighteen years ago, and then I was like, oh yeah, I was supposed to get that thing from that girl. And then here I was, right at your house. I mean, that's pretty cool, huh?

GIRL. Fine. What do you want?

THE DEVIL 1 / ENCHANTRESS / RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Your child.

(They all point, then stop to look at each other. Then all begin to argue at once.)

ENCHANTRESS. *(Overlapping:)* Um — my deal was first —

THE DEVIL 1. *(Overlapping:)* I'm the devil, no one gets to —

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. *(Overlapping:)* Well there wouldn't even be a child if I wasn't there providing mood music on the night that —

RAPUNZEL. STOP!! Mom?

GIRL. What?

RAPUNZEL. How many deals did you make?

GIRL. Just three. And I may have promised your hand in marriage to a talking rabbit, but it was dark and — what? I was young! I needed the money! And the baby! And the prince! But really just the money and the baby.

RAPUNZEL. I can't believe you! I hate you! I am so outta here! Why do you think I'm in counseling, huh? You've so ruined my entire life!

GIRL. Oh come on, stop being so melodramatic — so you go with the Devil —

THE DEVIL 1. Thank you. Told ya I had the prior claim.

GIRL. Or the other witch woman or the freaky ugly dwarf guy —

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. If you can guess my name I will release you from —

THE DEVIL 1. It's Rumpelstiltskin.

GIRL. Rumpelstiltskin?

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Ah! Dang it!

(NARRATOR 1 steps forward for a moment.)

NARRATOR 1. And the little man stomped his feet so hard they broke through the floor, and when he tried to pull them out, he broke in half. *(To RUMPELSTILTSKIN:)* Do it.

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Aaggg!

** (RUMPELSTILTSKIN breaks himself in half. NARRATOR 1 jumps back into being the ENCHANTRESS.)*

RAPUNZEL. I'm not cleaning that up.

ENCHANTRESS. Now that that horrid little man is gone, I will take Rapunzel.

(She grabs RAPUNZEL.)

THE DEVIL 1. Um...excuse me? I'm the Devil.

(He grabs RAPUNZEL.)

ENCHANTRESS. So?

THE DEVIL 1. Lord of darkness? All that? I think I've got a little bit more claim to this girl than some stupid little witch.

ENCHANTRESS. Enchantress.

THE DEVIL 1. Whatever. Witch.

(They let go of RAPUNZEL and start circling each other.)

RAPUNZEL. Now's the time, Mom! Let's run!

GIRL. Quiet, honey, I'm watching this. Go Devil!

RAPUNZEL. Mom!

GIRL. I just like him better.

ENCHANTRESS. I curse you!

THE DEVIL 1. I curse you right back! You know what, this is stupid. Tell ya what, if you sign this contract here, I will let you take Rapunzel.

ENCHANTRESS. That sounds like a plan.

(She signs the contract.)

THE DEVIL 1. Moo ah ha ha ha! And I disappear in a cloud of brimstone!

* *(He runs off the stage making cloudy symbols with his hands and returns momentarily as NARRATOR 2.)*

ENCHANTRESS. Well, come along Rapunzel.

RAPUNZEL. Where are we going?

ENCHANTRESS. I built this great tower for you.

GIRL. Run along dear.

RAPUNZEL. But Mom. I don't want to go with the evil Enchantress.

GIRL. Yeah and I didn't want to raise a spoiled brat. But sometimes you don't always get what you want. Unless you make a deal with the Devil and some other weird people. See ya.

NARRATOR 2. So the Enchantress took Rapunzel and locked her in a high tower without stairs or door. As for the girl and her prince—

* *(PRINCE 1 returns.)*

PRINCE 1. I'm back from my golf trip. What did I miss?

GIRL. The forces of darkness battled it out for our daughter's soul.

PRINCE 1. Cool. You want to go to Hawaii?

GIRL. Rock on.

* *(They exit.)*

NARRATOR 2. And the girl lived happily ever after. Rapunzel, meanwhile, grew really long hair cause she was a hippie and lived

in a tower and didn't bathe cause she was a hippie and eventually found her own prince.

NARRATOR 1. But...our story is not even remotely finished.

NARRATOR 2. No wait, it is finished. It's not yet begun. We need to find out where Rapunzel's mother came from.

NARRATOR 1. She wasn't always known as Rapunzel's mother. When she was younger she was known as

* (GRETEL enters. NARRATOR 2 becomes HANSEL.)

HANSEL. Gretel! What are you doing out?!

GRETEL. Nothing.

HANSEL. You seem moody lately. As if something were bothering you.

GRETEL. It's...our mother. And peer pressure. You see, our mother died before we were born.

HANSEL. I remember.

NARRATOR 1. Our next story: Hansel. And. Gretel. Or: After-School Special meets Horror Movie.

GRETEL. I'm haunted Hansel. Haunted by her memory.

HANSEL. I too am haunted. Perhaps we ought to go into the woods where it's dark and scary.

NARRATOR 1. Can we get some cool lighting effects please?

(A cool lighting effect happens. NARRATOR 1 addresses part of the audience.)

NARRATOR 1. Okay. Now you people over here. Awake? Good. Here's what we're going to do. When I point to you I want you to make a scary horror movie music sound like this. (Imitating the sound of a well-known horror movie:) Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a. Can we try that?

(The Audience tries it. NARRATOR 1 ad libs a reaction such as "you suck" "what horror movies have you been watching?" "This

guy isn't scary" etc. He may make them try again as needed before moving to another section of the audience.)

NARRATOR 1. Now, you guys. You look a little smarter than those people over there. I'm sorry, it's true. Look at this guy over here. He's a freaking genius. Right? He's a freaking genius. Now – when I point to you, I want you to say, "Don't go in there!" Okay, let's try that. One. Two Three.

(The Audience says, "Don't go in there!" NARRATOR 1 ad libs reaction before moving to a third section.)

NARRATOR 1. Now you guys. No good horror movie is complete without heavy breathing. Like this:

(He does heavy breathing.)

NARRATOR 1. You try it. *(Points to a couple in the audience:)* Um...you need to take it outside, okay? This is a family show. *(He moves to a last group of the audience:)* And finally. Since this is an after-school special. I want you to repeat after me: Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Can you handle that? You're all a bunch of freaking geniuses. Okay? Say the words. *(He addresses the entire audience:)* All right? Everybody got it?! One last test.

(He points at each group in turn very quickly.)

NARRATOR 1. And back with our story.

GRETEL. Hansel, I'm worried about you.

HANSEL. Why?

GRETEL. I saw you smoking behind the school the other day. Why do you do that?

(NARRATOR 1 points to the audience.)

AUDIENCE. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure.

(NARRATOR 1 stops them.)

HANSEL. Don't tell me what to do, Gretel. Smoking is cool. It makes me feel like a man. A cool man with dark, sultry lungs and a deep, masculine cough. Let's go out in the woods.

GRETEL. I don't know if I want to.

(NARRATOR 1 *points at the audience again.*)

AUDIENCE. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure.

(NARRATOR 1 *cuts them off.*)

GRETEL. Okay.

HANSEL. Smoke?

(NARRATOR 1 *points again.*)

AUDIENCE. Peerpressure. Peerpressure.

(*He cuts them off much faster this time.*)

GRETEL. Okay.

HANSEL. So here we are in the woods.

(NARRATOR 1 *points to the first audience section.*)

AUDIENCE. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a.

(NARRATOR 1 *stops them.*)

GRETEL. Something's not right here.

HANSEL. You're just a chicken.

GRETEL. I feel so strange, Hansel. What's that?!

HANSEL. Nothing.

(NARRATOR 1 *points to the audience again.*)

AUDIENCE. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a.

(*He stops them.*)

GRETEL. It's a house.

HANSEL. It's made out of candy.

GRETEL. What should we do?

(GRETEL *approaches the door.*)

(NARRATOR 1 *points.*)

AUDIENCE. DON'T GO IN THERE!

HANSEL. Do you think I should try the door? If only I had some kind of clue about what to do.

AUDIENCE. DON'T GO IN THERE!

HANSEL. Huh. Let's go in there.

(HANSEL *opens the door. GRETEL follows.*)

GRETEL. It's dark in here.

(NARRATOR 1 *points.*)

AUDIENCE. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a-a. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a-a.

(NARRATOR 1 *points to other group.*)

AUDIENCE. (*Heavy breathing.*)

(NARRATOR 1 *keeps both groups going at the same time, then stops them suddenly.*)

GRETEL. Is that your hand?

(NARRATOR 1 *points.*)

AUDIENCE. (*Heavy breathing.*)

HANSEL. Is that...your hand?

(NARRATOR 1 *points.*)

AUDIENCE. (*Heavy breathing.*)

(NARRATOR 1 *points at three groups at once.*)

AUDIENCE. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a-a. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a-a.

AUDIENCE. (*Heavy breathing.*)

AUDIENCE. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure.

NARRATOR 1. (*To the peer pressure group:*) Oh wait. Not you.

* (WITCH 1 enters.)

HANSEL / GRETEL. Aaaaaaah!

(NARRATOR 1 stops all noise from the audience.)

WITCH 1. Are you eating my house?

HANSEL. No!

(HANSEL puts something behind his back. GRETEL looks at him.)

GRETEL. Were you eating the house?

HANSEL. What? I'm hungry. You should try the floorboards, they're really tasty.

WITCH 1. I'm so disappointed in today's young people. I'm going to have to teach you a lesson. By eating you.

GRETEL. Eating us?

WITCH 1. But not right now. I'm going to fatten you up first.

(She exits.)

NARRATOR 1. So Hansel and Gretel were locked away and force-fed sugar water like mice and they got fatter. And fatter. And then they dieted a little bit. But then they got fatter again. Until one day –

(WITCH 1 returns.)

HANSEL. Why does my cologne smell like gravy?

WITCH 1. Well my pretties, except you, the boy, you have more of a rugged masculinity about you.

HANSEL. Thanks.

WITCH 1. Well, I need some help cleaning out my oven. I'll take volunteers.

(Pause.)

WITCH 1. Anyone?

HANSEL. Ooh. Me.

WITCH. Excellent. Come along, Hamsel.

HANSEL. It's Hamsel.

WITCH 1. Oh. Right. Hamsel.

(She laughs evilly.)

WITCH 1. Can you put this apple in your mouth please?

HANSEL. No problem.

(She puts an apple in HANSEL's mouth as she leads him to the "oven.")

WITCH 1. Now if you'll just crawl in here.

(NARRATOR 1 points to the audience.)

AUDIENCE. DON'T GO IN THERE!

(GRETEL escapes from her cage.)

GRETEL. Oh. Hey. I dropped a quarter. Can you pick it up?

WITCH 1. A quarter?

(She bends down.)

GRETEL. Eat this, witch!

(GRETEL shoves WITCH 1 into the "oven.")

WITCH 1. Aaaaaaaah! I'm melting! Oh wait... I'm burning!

HANSEL. Well I'm glad that's over with. Let's eat her house!

NARRATOR 1. So they made it. But the horror wasn't over.

(Points to part of the audience.)

AUDIENCE. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a-a. Ch-ch-ch-ch-ch. A-a-a-a-a-a.

HANSEL. Hey Gretel. I was talking to some bad kids down by the park behind the school.

GRETEL. I don't like those bad kids.

HANSEL. And they were telling me that drugs are cool.

GRETEL. Drugs aren't cool!

HANSEL. Come on, Gretel. All the cool kids are doing it.

(NARRATOR 1 points to part of the audience.)

AUDIENCE. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure.

GRETEL. I don't know, Hansel.

HANSEL. It's fairy dust. Everyone's doing it. It lets you fly.

GRETEL. I don't want to fly!

(NARRATOR 1 points to part of the audience.)

AUDIENCE. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure. Peerpressure.

GRETEL. No!

HANSEL. Fine. I'll do it myself then.

(He runs to the front of the stage.)

NARRATOR 1. And he jumped off a cliff.

HANSEL. I can fly! Maybe.

NARRATOR 1. It's up to you, audience. If you clap hard enough, Hansel will live. Come on people!

HANSEL. (Imploring the audience:) Come on people! Let me live!

NARRATOR 1. Come on! Don't you believe a boy can fly!?! Come on!

(A glowing light appears on HANSEL. It gets brighter as the audience claps.)

HANSEL. (Desperate:) Come on out there! Please!

(Audience applause and glowing light crescendo. Then the light suddenly goes out.)

HANSEL. Aaaaaaaah.

X (HANSEL makes a "splat!" sound.)

(Pause. NARRATOR 1 looks sad.)

NARRATOR 1. You didn't clap hard enough. He died. You know I've...done this show a lot. And every time the audience clapped hard enough to let Hansel live. Every time. I just don't know what to say. *(NARRATOR 1 picks someone in the audience:)* I think really it comes down to this guy. This guy right here. He didn't clap hard enough. His heart wasn't really into it. How do you face your children, sir? How do you face your children? *(If the audience member is about to respond:)* Don't talk to me.

GRETEL. Hansel?

NARRATOR 1. I'm sorry Gretel.

GRETEL. Oh no. Fairy dust has claimed another young life. Like candles being blown out before their time. *(She sings, falteringly:)* All we are is dust in the wind.

X (She exits.)

NARRATOR 1. *(Suddenly chipper again:)* Anyway, after Hansel's untimely death, thank you very much Mr. *(Describes person in the audience.)* She married a wandering woodcutter. And they had a daughter. Who would grow up to make a deal with several supernatural entities who would eventually imprison her daughter in the tower.

X (NARRATOR 2 returns.)

NARRATOR 2. But.

NARRATOR 1. There's always a but.

NARRATOR 2. One question remains:

NARRATOR 1. Where did the witch come from?

NARRATOR 2. Funny you should ask. Once upon a time. There was a dwarf.

X (DWARF 1 enters.)

DWARF 1. I prefer little person.

NARRATOR 1. In fact, two dwarves.

* (DWARF 2 [played by NARRATOR 2] enters.)

DWARF 2. I prefer dwarf.

NARRATOR 1. And these dwarves worked all day in the mines.

DWARF 1. (*Singing:*) I've been workin' on the railroad –

NARRATOR 1. Mines!

DWARF 2. (*Singing:*) Whistle while you work

NARRATOR 1. We can't use that song.

DWARF 2. I do what I want.

NARRATOR 1. No it's like copyrighted, we can't use it. The Mouse will sue us. So the dwarves worked in the mines, they sang their little song, and then one day they came home to find –

* (*Enter SNOW WHITE. She falls asleep.*)

DWARF 1. What the heck is that thing?

DWARF 2. She's huge! Get her away from me! She's going to eat me!

(DWARF 2 runs.)

NARRATOR 1. You see, in those days, most people were cannibals. Which explains the witch from before. The first dwarf, though, who we will name Dopey –

(NARRATOR 2 enters, coughs and shakes his head.)

NARRATOR 1. Slappy – wasn't afraid.

DWARF 1. Gar. I like ladies. So...uh...baby, I couldn't help noticing that you're in my bed –

(*He sits next to her.*)

NARRATOR 1. Stop! This is a children's story.

DWARF 1. So I'm going to chop you up and eat you.

(DWARF 1 takes out fork and knife.)

NARRATOR 1. Time out. Time out.

DWARF 1. What? I'm just going with what my character wants.

NARRATOR 1. You do not get to eat Snow White. You're not the villain of the story.

DWARF 1. No. Look. I've been doing some character work. Slappy has had a hard life. He's been discriminated against for being a dwarf. He works in the mines all day—he's got like the black lung, you know? And he hates the world. He just hates it—

NARRATOR 1. He does not!

DWARF 1. And he wants revenge against the humans who have wronged him, so when this giant chick comes into his home and sleeps in his bed...dinner time.

NARRATOR 1. No. We are going to do this story as written. Snow White cleans house for the dwarves, then she gets poisoned by an apple, then a prince shows up—

SNOW WHITE. (*Waking up:*) Why do I have to clean the house? Is it because I'm a woman?

DWARF 1. Yes.

NARRATOR 1. No it's because you feel sorry for the little dwarves because they're messy and you have OCD and want to make everything nice.

SNOW WHITE. I don't see why I have to be a maid! I'm the princess here, they should be cleaning up for me.

DWARF 1. All right, she's become too much trouble, let's eat her.

NARRATOR 1. We are doing the story as originally written!

(*NARRATOR 2 approaches.*)

NARRATOR 2. You know, maybe we should just let them rewrite the story.

NARRATOR 1. I don't think so.

DWARF 1. Okay, I got another one. I've been cursed by a witch and I now have supernatural powers—

NARRATOR 2. Besides, sometimes the originals are...how do you say, bad?

NARRATOR 1. Oh really? These are classic stories. Classics!

DWARF 1. And now I can animate zombies. I've always wanted to animate zombies.

NARRATOR 2. Classics, huh? Let me show you a classic. Here we go—number 191. Lean Lisa.

NARRATOR 1. Never heard of it.

(SNOW WHITE *wakes up.*)

SNOW WHITE. Am I beautiful?

NARRATOR 2. You're lean.

SNOW WHITE. Ooh. Skinny. I've always wanted to be skinny.

DWARF 1. Have you thought about ingesting tape worm eggs? It really cleans you out on the inside.

NARRATOR 2. So once upon a time, Lean Lisa lay in bed with her husband, Long Laurence.

DWARF 1. Do I get to be Long Laurence?

NARRATOR 2. Yes.

DWARF 1. Sweet.

(DWARF 1 and SNOW WHITE *rearrange themselves.*)

SNOW WHITE. Dear husband, I was thinking.

DWARF 1. I'm trying to sleep, woman.

SNOW WHITE. I'm tired of being poor and hungry. What if we took the cow in the field and tried to get her to have calves? Then we could raise the calves and sell them and we'd have enough money to buy more animals. And then we wouldn't have to starve any more.

DWARF 1. That sounds like a lot of work.

SNOW WHITE. You're lazy!

DWARF 1. Quiet your wagging tongue woman!

(DWARF 1 *strangles* SNOW WHITE.)

NARRATOR 2. And she died. The end.

(SNOW WHITE *dies. Pause.*)

NARRATOR 1. Seriously? That's what it says?

NARRATOR 2. Right here.

NARRATOR 1. Wow. That story sucks.

SNOW WHITE. Can I tell my version now?

* (WITCH 2 *enters.*)

WITCH 2. Are y'all gonna need me any time soon?

SNOW WHITE. Yes. We are starting over right now. Once upon a time there was a beautiful girl.

(*The actors look around. SNOW WHITE gets upset. She points to DWARF 2.*)

SNOW WHITE. You're going to be Snow White this time.

(*Author's note: Whatever the double-casting, it is imperative that DWARF 2 be played by a male actor.*)

DWARF 2. Really? I've always wanted to be Snow White. I remember my fifth birthday party; it was a dress-up party and all my friends came as Boba Fett and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and that weird thing from the McDonald's commercials. But I was Snow White. And I was so pretty in my little dress and my wig and tiara—that was the happiest day of my life until my mom told me I was a boy. Of course she's the one who'd been dressing me in those clothes since—

NARRATOR 1. And moving on.

SNOW WHITE. She was the most beautiful girl in the entire kingdom.

DWARF 2. I am! I am the prettiest!

SNOW WHITE. But her step-mother was jealous.

* (WITCH 2 enters.)

WITCH 2. Snow White.

DWARF 2. Stepmother.

WITCH 2. Is that a zit I see on your face?

DWARF 2. You'd like that, wouldn't you?

WITCH 2. I do believe you're putting on weight.

DWARF 2. Not on this body, sister. These curves are tight and streamlined like a racing yacht owned by a rich Columbian drug dealer.

WITCH 2. I think you might need to tweeze your eyebrows. They're looking...puffy.

DWARF 2. My eyebrows are sculpted like a block of clay in the hands of a blind god of sculpting eyebrows.

(DWARF 2 looks concerned. He looks over to SNOW WHITE.)

DWARF 2. Who writes this stuff?

SNOW WHITE. Just go with it. And the stepmother went to her room and gazed into her magic mirror.

(DWARF 1 forms the magic mirror.)

WITCH 2. Mirror, mirror, on the wall. Who's the fairest of them all?

DWARF 1. (As the mirror, a drawn-out ghostly voice:) Well it's certainly not you.

WITCH 2. Curses!

DWARF 1. (As the mirror:) Hey that's a good idea. You should try that.

SNOW WHITE. Meanwhile, Snow White had other plans.

DWARF 2. Mirror, mirror, hanging on black hooks. Why must I be judged by my looks?

DWARF 1. (As the mirror:) Fashion magazines.

DWARF 2. But I'm so much more! I've got a brain and martial arts skills! I'm going to one of the Seven Sisters after I graduate from high school where I plan on double-majoring in Social Psychology and Women's Studies!

DWARF 1. (*As the mirror:*) I only respond to rhyming questions. Besides, those aren't real majors.

DWARF 2. Okay. Mirror mirror, hanging over there. How do I make the young people care?

DWARF 1. (*As the mirror:*) Put it in a music video with hot chicks.

DWARF 2. That's not a very good —

SNOW WHITE. And just then.

✱ (*WITCH 2 enters.*)

SNOW WHITE. It was her stepmother.

WITCH 2. Stepmother.

DWARF 2. Snow White.

(*They look confused. SNOW WHITE gestures that they have it reversed.*)

WITCH 2. Snow White.

DWARF 2. Stepmother.

WITCH 2. Look at me and know despair, Snow White. For I have a lot of money and have been through a lot of plastic surgery in Hollywood. My bust points north, my skin is as smooth as a lake after a storm and I've had all my tattoos lasered off. I've tucked, sucked, vacuumed and erased every visible trace of life experience in the past twenty-seven years, and now, I am more beautiful than even you.

DWARF 1. (*As the mirror:*) Not quite.

WITCH 2. Dang it! Well, how about an apple as a peace offering?

DWARF 2. When are you going to learn Stepmother, that we women shouldn't be judged by our surface beauty but rather by the contents of our brains?

WITCH 2. Um...that's just stupid.

DWARF 2. Well how bout I use my martial arts skills to take you out then?

WITCH 2. Oh it's on!

(They assume fighting stances. NARRATOR 1 becomes PRINCE 2 and enters. It is also imperative that PRINCE 2 is played by a female actor.)

PRINCE 2. Hey I was just in the neighborhood looking for a girl in a coma to make out with and – whoah! Chickfight!

(DWARF 2 and WITCH 2 square off.)

SNOW WHITE. And it was a glorious battle.

(WITCH 2 pulls on DWARF 2's wig.)

DWARF 2. Ow! Ow! Ow! Ow!

(DWARF 2 stomps on WITCH 2's foot.)

PRINCE 2. Go Snow White!

(DWARF 2 waves coquettishly to PRINCE 2 as WITCH 2 jumps on her back from behind.)

SNOW WHITE. A titanic struggle of good and evil. Purity versus corruption.

(DWARF 2 pulls on WITCH 2's nose, who pokes DWARF 2 in the eyes.)

SNOW WHITE. Until finally.

WITCH 2. I shall transform myself into a black dragon! Ah ha ha ha!

(Pause.)

SNOW WHITE. No that was in the Sleeping Beauty movie.

WITCH 2. I thought we were doing Sleeping Beauty.

SNOW WHITE. No this is Snow White.

(DWARF 2 *grabs* PRINCE 2's sword and stabs WITCH 2 in the heart.)

DWARF 2. Take that, witch!

WITCH 2. Ah! I'm melting! Actually I'm...bleeding! Aaaaaah.

(WITCH 2 *dies*.)

PRINCE 2. That was so hot.

DWARF 2. Like somebody else I know, Prince.

PRINCE 2. You're very forward.

DWARF 2. I'm a modern woman. Come on, let's get married.

(She *grabs* PRINCE 2 and hoists him over her shoulder.)

SNOW WHITE. And just then.

* (DWARF 1 *enters*.)

DWARF 1. Hi ho. Hi ho.

DWARF 2. What'd you just call me?

DWARF 1. Um. Nothing. Look, I'm living with a bunch of other dwarves—

DWARF 2. I've heard enough! You are lucky enough to become my servants. Come with me.

SNOW WHITE. And they all lived happily ever after and avoided traditional gender roles. And the seven little dwarves cooked for them, cleaned the house, and did all that other junk that Snow White was supposed to do in the story. The end.

* (NARRATOR 1 and NARRATOR 2 *enter once again*.)

NARRATOR 1. That was enlightened.

SNOW WHITE. Thank you.

* (She *exits*.)

NARRATOR 2. But the witch actually survived the vicious stabbing.

WITCH 2. It's just a flesh wound!

NARRATOR 1. Stop.

WITCH 2. What? It is. It's just a flesh wound. I've had worse.

NARRATOR 1. Can we please get through this play without any Monty Python references?

WITCH 2. You're no fun.

* *(She exits.)*

NARRATOR 2. And she decided to make a house out of candy and eat children.

NARRATOR 1. But where did the dwarf come from?

NARRATOR 2. Exactly. You see the true secret origin here is of dwarf number 2. This is a little story I like to call number 95. The Devil's Grandmother.

NARRATOR 1. The Devil has a grandmother?

NARRATOR 2. Everyone has a grandmother. And you need to call yours. Before she dies.

NARRATOR 1. I have a phone call to make.

* *(NARRATOR 1 leaves.)*

NARRATOR 2. I thought she would never leave. Now before I start this very special story, I'd like us all to think about that special old person in our lives. You know the one. And imagine what if it would be like to be old for a day. *(Points to someone in the audience in their 40s:)* You already know sir.

(Steps out into the audience.)

NARRATOR 2. Imagine how it must feel to have your best days behind you and only really be waiting for the welcoming arms of death. To feel your body decay, your mind collapse. Tell us about it sir.

(Waits for response from the person in the audience. If no response...)

NARRATOR 2. This man is so old he can't even speak.

(Finds someone sitting with the first person, preferably a wife or girlfriend.)

NARRATOR 2. You must be his caretaker. I pity you.

(NARRATOR 2 returns to the stage.)

NARRATOR 2. Well...this is a very special story brought to you by the Hallmark Channel. Could we get some warm soft fuzzy lighting please? Maybe a kind of soft warm glow around everyone on-stage?

(The lights do not change. NARRATOR 2 speaks up to the light booth.)

NARRATOR 2. Could you try that again please?

(The lights do not change.)

NARRATOR 2. What is your problem? Yeah I'm talking to you! We're trying to have a very special moment here! You're ruining the special moment! What did you just say to me?! This is a family show you walking pile of putrescence! You don't even know what putrescence means do you? You know why you don't know? Cause you went to public school and they don't teach vocab any more! Hey where did you get that picture of my mom?

(NARRATOR 2 reacts in horror.)

NARRATOR 2. You're dead!

(NARRATOR 2 charges through the audience, scrambling to get up into the light booth. He disappears.)

NARRATOR 1. *(On microphone in soothing, hallmark voice:)* And now for a very special hallmark channel presentation: The Devil's Grandmother.

(Lights change on stage.)

NARRATOR 1. Times were tough on the old farm.

* *(DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER enters, carrying seeds.)*

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Now that your grandpa's dead, I'll just plant in this garden. It's all I've got left, really.

NARRATOR 1. A special garden. A garden of love.

✱ (THE DEVIL 2 enters.)

THE DEVIL 2. Grandmama! I heard about Grandpa! Could you use a hug?

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Boy could I.

(They hug.)

NARRATOR 1. And so began a very special relationship between a grandmother and her grandson, who just happened to be the Devil.

THE DEVIL 2. Can I help you plant those peas, Grandmama?

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Sure you can, Grandson. Just don't let me catch you using that black magic of yours.

THE DEVIL 2. Oh Grandmama!

(They laugh and hug.)

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Say are your horns getting bigger?

THE DEVIL 2. I'm growing up.

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. So you are. So you are.

NARRATOR 1. But the garden couldn't stay green forever.

THE DEVIL 2. Grandmama what happened?

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Do I know you?

THE DEVIL 2. What? I'm your grandson, the Devil.

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Now where did I put my glasses?

✱ (DOCTOR enters.)

DOCTOR. I'm afraid your grandmother has Alzheimer's.

✱ (DOCTOR leaves.)

THE DEVIL 2. No! It's not fair! It's not fair Grandmama!

NARRATOR 1. So they decided to go on one last road trip together.

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. I've always wanted to see the Grand Canyon.

THE DEVIL 2. We'll make it there. Even though I can't legally drive.

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Earthly laws never stopped you before.

THE DEVIL 2. You're right!

(They laugh and hug.)

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Who are you again?

NARRATOR 1. It would be the wackiest road trip of their lives.

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Did you just burn Albuquerque to the ground by calling on the power of Hades?

THE DEVIL 2. Oh Grandmama!

(They laugh and hug.)

THE DEVIL 2. Shhh... You didn't see anything.

NARRATOR 1. But maybe, just maybe, they'd learn a little something about the power of the human heart.

THE DEVIL 2. Grandmama we ran out of gas so I stole a human heart and am using it to power our car!

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Who are you again?

NARRATOR 1. But the greatest lesson would be when they reached the Grand Canyon.

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. You know, Grandson. Me and your grandpa were simple people. We liked simple things. We were supposed to come out here for our honeymoon. Never made it cause there were chores to be done. Boy he woulda loved this view though.

THE DEVIL 2. I could summon him from the dead and place his soul inside a coyote.

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Wouldn't be the same. Which coyote?

NARRATOR 1. But even very special Hallmark Channel movies have sad endings.

THE DEVIL 2. Grandmama! Grandmama!

* (DOCTOR enters.)

DOCTOR. She didn't make it.

* (DOCTOR leaves.)

THE DEVIL 2. No! No! Why, God, why?

GOD. (*Booming overhead voice on microphone:*) BECAUSE YOU'RE THE DEVIL AND I DON'T LIKE YOU.

THE DEVIL 2. I curse you and your kingdom!

GOD. YEAH. I KNOW THAT. WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT IT?

* (DOCTOR enters.)

DOCTOR. Um...your grandmother didn't have insurance, so I'm going to have to charge you her medical bills for dying, which amount to about twenty three thousand dollars.

THE DEVIL 2. I curse you!

NARRATOR 1. And he shrank and shrank until he became quite small. In fact, a dwarf.

THE DEVIL 2. Now go work in a mine with the rest of your kind.

* (*The DOCTOR exits.*)

THE DEVIL 2. I'm going to Disneyland. To work there. In one of those big costumes where I walk around and pretend to be one of the Disney characters. But you don't know which one. So next time you're in Disneyland and you see Chip and Dale walking toward you—

* (NARRATOR 2 enters.)

NARRATOR 2. And I'm back to prevent lawsuits.

THE DEVIL 2. Too late! Moo ah ha ha ha ha!

* (THE DEVIL 2 *exits as* NARRATOR 1 *enters*.)

NARRATOR 1. But of course we can't really understand that story until we know where the Devil's Grandmother came from.

NARRATOR 2. Can we just pause for a second?

NARRATOR 1. What.

NARRATOR 2. Is that really how the Brothers Grimm recorded that story?

NARRATOR 1. Well that's more of a modern adaptation... You know, we took a few liberties... Okay, fine, the real story is about a couple of soldiers who sign away their souls but the Devil's grandmother feels sorry for them, blah blah blah blah! Nobody gets killed in the end. I just thought the title was funny.

NARRATOR 2. Fine. But now we have to fit that into our storyline.

NARRATOR 1. No problem. Because long before she was the Devil's grandmother, she was a little girl.

* (CINDERELLA *enters, overacting*.)

CINDERELLA. Oh I am orphaned! Oh I am sad!

* (An ACTOR *enters*.)

ACTOR. Can we pause here for a second?

CINDERELLA. Oh how sad I am!

ACTOR. Just hold on.

NARRATOR 1. What is it?

ACTOR. There was like some really bad beef in the catering—

CINDERELLA. Oh the catering is bad!

NARRATOR 1. Uh-oh. I had the beef.

ACTOR. So like everybody is throwing up back here.

NARRATOR 1. Excuse me.

* (NARRATOR 1 *runs off*.)

ACTOR. We don't have enough actors left to do this one.

(CINDERELLA stops acting.)

CINDERELLA. What?

NARRATOR 2. Well I guess we can skip it them then. Too bad about the Frog Prince, Little Red Riding Hood, The talking fish, Cinderella.

CINDERELLA. NO WE ARE NOT SKIPPING IT.

NARRATOR 2. How many actors do we have left?

ACTOR. Um...me.

CINDERELLA. Now you listen to me you little reject from Nickelodeon—this is my chance to be a star, got it? We are going to tell my story, I am going to get a full-length feature film out of it, and you are going to make me look good, got it?

ACTOR. Well, I—

CINDERELLA. GOT IT? OR I WILL TEAR OUT YOUR TINY HEART AND USE IT AS A CHEW TOY FOR MY HALF-CHI-HAUHAU, HALF-DOBERMAN MIX, GOT IT?

ACTOR. Yes, Ma'am.

CINDERELLA. Thank you.

(The ACTOR exits. CINDERELLA immediately goes back to acting sad.)

CINDERELLA. Oh how sad. Life. So sad.

NARRATOR 2. Okay, so, her mother died and her father remarried—

CINDERELLA. *(Overlapping:)* Mother? Where are you mother? Are you dead?

NARRATOR 2. And the woman he married was beautiful of face but black of heart. Now, Cinderella's stepmother had two daughters, both equally beautiful—

(CINDERELLA raises her hand.)

CINDERELLA. I'm sorry. I think you've got that wrong. I'm the pretty one. They're quite hideous.

NARRATOR 2. Says here they're beautiful too.

CINDERELLA. I think I know my story, thank you.

(She returns to the floor.)

CINDERELLA. Oh they are so mean to me. Oh so mean. I can barely stand it. My tears, oh so many tears, shall wash these dusty flagstones.

* *(She cries. The two WICKED STEPSISTERS enter. [played by the same actor or actress in two different wigs] ACTOR switches places, voices, and wigs for each role.)*

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Look what the cat dragged in.

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. Does it smell in here, or is it just her?

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Oh that was a good one, Jiselle.

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. Thought you'd like it.

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Oh Cinderella. I need to get ready for the ball—

CINDERELLA. What ball?

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. The ball being thrown by Prince Charming.

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. He's so charming. When I see him I just want to grab his little tights-wearing bottom and squeeze until his guards spray me with pepper spray.

CINDERELLA. Can I come?

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Of course you can...NOT come. Balls are for people who bathe.

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. But we do have a treat for you. You are going to get us ready for the ball.

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Make us pretty.

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. Make me prettier than her. I need Charming. I need him. Please.

CINDERELLA. I suppose. I'm going to need a lot of makeup.

NARRATOR 2. So, being the good girl that she was—

CINDERELLA. I'm so good.

NARRATOR 2. Cinderella dressed both her sisters for the ball.

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. I'm so hot.

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. I'm gorgeous.

* (ACTOR runs off as WICKED STEPSISTER 2, then returns and runs off as WICKED STEPSISTER 1.)

CINDERELLA. (*Overacting:*) Life. So unfair. The room is spinning. Why, God, why? Why am I just a servant—a slave! Lower than the dust. Lower than the worms who crawl beneath the dust. So low. So so low. I shall now cry myself to sleep as I do every night.

(*She cries.*)

NARRATOR 2. (*To the audience:*) I think she thinks the Oscar committee is watching. But just then, her Wicked Stepmother entered.

* (WICKED STEPMOTHER [*played by the same actor or actress that played the STEPSISTER, in a third wig*] enters.)

WICKED STEPMOTHER. Why Cinderella, what seems to be the trouble?

CINDERELLA. Life! Life and the misery it entails! If only my mother—my poor, dear, dead mother, were alive, she would take me to the ball.

WICKED STEPMOTHER. Come here and sit on your stepmother's lap.

(CINDERELLA eyes her suspiciously.)

CINDERELLA. That's weird.

WICKED STEPMOTHER. Get over it.

(CINDERELLA gingerly sits on her lap.)

WICKED STEPMOTHER. Now – boy, you’ve really been hitting the pot roast, haven’t you? You’d think that eating dust and sleeping on the hearth would make you skinny –

CINDERELLA. I’m big-boned.

NARRATOR 2. Just then, one of Cinderella’s step-sisters, Jiselle, entered.

** (The WICKED STEPMOTHER looks angrily at NARRATOR 2, dumps CINDERELLA on the floor, runs to the side of the stage and switches wigs.)*

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. Mother, aren’t you coming?

** (She runs back to the chair, grabs CINDERELLA, plants her on her lap and switches wigs.)*

WICKED STEPMOTHER. In a moment dear, run along.

** (She dumps CINDERELLA, runs back to the other spot on the stage and switches wigs.)*

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. Thank you I will.

NARRATOR 2. But then, from the other side of the room, Cinderella’s other Wicked Stepsister entered.

** (The ACTOR gives NARRATOR 2 an evil look and rushes to the other side of the stage, switching wigs as he or she goes.)*

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. I really need to be going.

** (Runs, switches.)*

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. You do that. Witch.

** (Runs, switches.)*

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. What did you just call me?

** (Runs, switches.)*

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. You heard what I said. Witch.

** (Runs, switches.)*

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Oh no you didn’t!

* (She runs and turns back into the STEPMOTHER, dropping CINDERELLA onto her lap, completely out of breath.)

WICKED STEPMOTHER. Girls, please! You're both pretty. You're both going to the ball. You both need to exit right now without saying anything else.

NARRATOR 2. And so...they left.

WICKED STEPMOTHER. Thank you. Now, Cinderella, I am a fair wicked stepmother, so...I am going to empty an entire dish of lentils into the fireplace, and once you have picked them all out, you may go to the ball with us.

NARRATOR 2. And with that, she dumped a dish of lentils into the fireplace like she said she was going to do.

* (The WICKED STEPMOTHER exits.)

CINDERELLA. What are lentils?

NARRATOR 2. They go in soup. And they're difficult to get out of a fireplace. Apparently.

CINDERELLA. Oh, the humanity! Oh Gods! Why must I always be punished!? But what's that? What could it be?

(She pops up to listen.)

CINDERELLA. My fairy —

NARRATOR 2. It was a swarm of birds.

* (ACTOR returns, raising his or her hand.)

ACTOR. Question: Do I have to play each individual bird or can I be collectively, The Birds?

NARRATOR 2. I guess you can be a collective group of birds.

ACTOR. You have no idea how much that means to me.

* (ACTOR becomes THE BIRDS and begins running around tweeting.)

THE BIRDS. Tweet! Tweet tweet! Tweet tweet tweet!

CINDERELLA. Oh look, birds! They're so beautiful! Come, my little feathered friends, come and peck these lentils out of the fireplace.

✂ (THE BIRDS *descend on the fireplace.*)

THE BIRDS. Peck peck peck peck! Peck Peck peck!

CINDERELLA. Oh I am truly blessed! Thank you birds! Fly, fly to freedom!

✂ (THE BIRDS *fly away and immediately transform into the WICKED STEPMOTHER, who returns.*)

WICKED STEPMOTHER. We're off to the ball!

✂ (She leaves.)

CINDERELLA. How can life be so cruel! WHY?!!!! What's that? My fairy —

NARRATOR 2. It was another swarm of birds, carrying a dress.

✂ (THE BIRDS *enter, carrying a dress.*)

THE BIRDS. Tweet tweet! Tweet tweet!

CINDERELLA. What a lovely dress. Thank you, swarm of birds.

THE BIRDS. Tweet tweet tweet!

CINDERELLA. So who's going to do my hair? Um...what a surprise, a fairy godmother.

(Pause.)

CINDERELLA. Isn't this where she sorta comes in and does her magic thing?

NARRATOR 2. Nope.

CINDERELLA. What?

NARRATOR 2. We're going by the original. There's no fairy godmother. Just a lot of birds.

THE BIRDS. Tweet tweet tweet tweet—

CINDERELLA. Shut up. Let me see that.

(She takes the book from the NARRATOR and reads.)

CINDERELLA. There's no fairy godmother in here.

NARRATOR 2. I was about eleven when I figured out I didn't have a fairy godmother.

CINDERELLA. Well I can't do this without a fairy godmother. Who's going to turn the pumpkin into a coach?

NARRATOR 2. You walk there.

CINDERELLA. What?! This is retarded! I'm Cinderella! I have a fairy godmother, and a coach made out of a pumpkin and a bunch of mice turned into coachmen! Oh so there's no mice either is there! Next thing you know there won't even be a glass slipper—THERE'S NO GLASS SLIPPER!? Well, then I don't even know how this story goes! Maybe I just get beheaded at the end? I JUST GET BE-HEADED AT THE END?!!

NARRATOR 2. Maybe. I don't know. I haven't read to the end yet.

CINDERELLA. Ahhhhh! I QUIT!

✱ *(She leaves in tears in the middle of a fit, hyperventilating.)*

THE BIRDS. Tweet tweet. Tweet tweet.

NARRATOR 2. Well, guess somebody's not living happily ever after is she? All right then, let's continue with our story.

ACTOR. Um...we can't continue. There's no Cinderella.

NARRATOR 2. Sure there is.

✱ *(NARRATOR 2 stares at ACTOR.)*

NARRATOR 2. Put on the dress, *(name)*.

(ACTOR stares at the NARRATOR, then slowly, unhappily, puts on the dress. Until noted, every part except for the NARRATOR is now played by the ACTOR.)

NARRATOR 2. So Cinderella had her dress. And she felt very pretty.

CINDERELLA. I feel very pretty. Thank you birds.

THE BIRDS. Tweet tweet tweet!

CINDERELLA. Now I shall walk to the ball.

NARRATOR 2. But the ball was guarded by a bouncer, a one-armed eye-patch wearing Scottish pirate named Mac.

** (CINDERELLA runs, rips off her dress, puts one arm behind her back, the other hand over her eye and affects a Scottish accent.)*

MAC. Arrgh, What ye be doin' at this here ball? If it's not Scottish, it's crap!

** (Runs and becomes CINDERELLA.)*

CINDERELLA. Well I would like to come in please.

** (Runs and switches to MAC.)*

MAC. Shut it!

NARRATOR 2. And just then Cinderella's Wicked Stepmother and two wicked stepsisters arrived.

** (ACTOR runs, grabs three wigs and becomes each character in turn.)*

WICKED STEPMOTHER. Cinderella!

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. What are you doing here?

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. You suck!

(Switches to CINDERELLA.)

CINDERELLA. I have a dress and I'm going to the ball because the birds brought it to me!

NARRATOR 2. And then the birds came down.

(ACTOR grabs a feather and waves it.)

THE BIRDS. Tweet tweet!

NARRATOR 2. And they pecked out Mac's other eye.

(ACTOR becomes MAC again.)

MAC. Ack! Birds! Me eye!

(Switches back to BIRDS.)

THE BIRDS. Peck peck peck peck!

(Back to CINDERELLA.)

CINDERELLA. I'm in! Sweet!

NARRATOR 2. And just then.

(ACTOR quits dancing, runs and becomes the HERALD for a moment.)

HERALD. *(Blowing imaginary horn:)* Dun de dun dun! His royal highness, the Prince!

(Switches, becomes PRINCE CHARMING, affects a British accent for no apparent reason.)

PRINCE CHARMING. 'Ello there. We're having a nice time, are we? Blimey. She's gorgeous. Who's that minx?

(Becomes CINDERELLA.)

CINDERELLA. My name's Cinderella.

(Switches.)

PRINCE CHARMING. Right-o. Come here and give us a taste, love.

(PRINCE CHARMING and CINDERELLA begin to dance. ACTOR continually switches sides during this conversation, keeping the beat.)

CINDERELLA. Oh Prince. Stop. You're embarrassing me.

PRINCE CHARMING. I'll do more'n that later. Blimey. Your skin's as supple as a baby's bottom!

CINDERELLA. Oh really?

PRINCE CHARMING. I'd like to pour hot sauce on you and roast you over an open pit till you're brown and tender like a chicken breast.

CINDERELLA. I'd like that.

NARRATOR 2. All right, this is getting weird. I have to say I'm pretty impressed with this guy. Maybe he should win the Oscar.

* (CINDERELLA [*the real one*] darts back on to the stage and grabs PRINCE CHARMING.)

CINDERELLA. Oh Prince. You dance divinely.

PRINCE CHARMING. 'Ello. What's all this, then?

NARRATOR 2. And they danced all night long.

(CINDERELLA *breaks away from him.*)

CINDERELLA. What are these strange feelings? Could it be...love? Oh my heart is beating so fast. What am I to do? Will he love me back?

* (She leaves.)

CINDERELLA. Um... Question: wasn't I supposed to drop a slipper or something?

NARRATOR 2. You drop a slipper on your third trip to the prince's balls. The birds keep bringing you more dresses and then you keep dancing and then finally the prince smears pitch on the steps of the palace, and then your shoe sticks, your golden shoe by the way—

CINDERELLA. Golden shoe?

NARRATOR 2. And he comes looking for the foot that fits the golden shoe.

CINDERELLA. Huh. That does sound more comfortable than glass.

(ACTOR *raises his hand.*)

ACTOR. Can we skip to that part please? I'm going to die.

NARRATOR 2. You know what, why don't you put a little effort into this, okay? Fine. A little of this, a little of that, the prince stops by with a shoe looking for a girl who fits it.

PRINCE CHARMING. 'Ello then. Any of you darlings lost a shoe?

CINDERELLA. Well, I—

* (ACTOR switches into WICKED STEPSISTER 1.)

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Oh I did. I did! Let me see that!

(She takes the shoe.)

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Hold on one minute. Do you mind if I try this on in the bathroom? I'm shy.

PRINCE CHARMING. Take all the time you like, luv.

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Excellent!

NARRATOR 2. And of course her foot was too big, so she chopped off her big toe.

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. *(Blood-curdling scream:)* Aarrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrgghghghghg!

(Runs, becomes PRINCE CHARMING.)

PRINCE CHARMING. Say, you all right in there?

(Runs back into the bathroom, hops around on one foot.)

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. Aarrghghghghghghghg. *(She limps back out:)* It...fits...fine. I...love...you.

PRINCE CHARMING. Bangers and mash! Let's go get married then. 'Op into me carriage.

* (WICKED STEPSISTER 1 limps in.)

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. It's...nice...garrrrrhgh.

PRINCE CHARMING. Say, what's all this then? There's blood everywhere.

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. I popped a zit. On my foot.

PRINCE CHARMING. You chopped off your toe, you did!

WICKED STEPSISTER 1. I've never had toes.

PRINCE CHARMING. Out of my carriage you!

NARRATOR 2. So the wicked stepsister went back home and the prince returned to find Cinderella's other wicked stepsister.

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. May I please try the shoe on in the bathroom so no one can watch what I'm doing?

PRINCE CHARMING. Of course, I'm not all that bright.

NARRATOR 2. And once she was in the bathroom, the shoe didn't fit either. So she did the only sensible thing and chopped off her heel.

(Blood-curdling scream.)

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. Son of a mother-witch! Arrghghghffhfhgh!

PRINCE CHARMING. All right in there?

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. Arrrgghghgghghgh! I'm...fine! *(She limps out:)* See...it fits.

PRINCE CHARMING. Why you're as pretty as a daisy. All right then, let's get married. Jump in me carriage.

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. Sounds...peachy.

NARRATOR 2. But as they were riding.

PRINCE CHARMING. Say – do you smell blood? I'm not terribly observant either. Blimey! Is that blood on your foot?

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. I cut myself shaving. I have hairy feet. Like a hobbit.

PRINCE CHARMING. You cut off your heel you daft wench!

WICKED STEPSISTER 2. I did it for you!

NARRATOR 2. And so the Prince returned to the house for a third time.

PRINCE CHARMING. 'Ello there. I realize several of the ladies in this here house have chopped off body parts to fit in this here shoe, but I was just wondering if anyone else fit in it. You see, I'm not very smart, but I make up for it by being very persistent. It makes me ideal to run the government.

(CINDERELLA runs to him.)

CINDERELLA. I will try the shoe.

PRINCE CHARMING. It fits!

CINDERELLA. My love!

PRINCE CHARMING. It is you!

CINDERELLA. It is I!

NARRATOR 2. And they lived. Happily. Ever. After. As for the wicked stepsisters. The swarm of birds pecked out their eyes. Just for fun.

(ACTOR grabs the feather.)

THE BIRDS. Peck. Peck. Peck.

(NARRATOR 1 returns.)

NARRATOR 1. However.

ACTOR. I don't think so.

(ACTOR falls over, exhausted.)

NARRATOR 1. However. That is not the end of the story.

NARRATOR 2. That's the beginning.

NARRATOR 1. Exactly.

NARRATOR 2. I thought you had the beef?

NARRATOR 1. Oh, we were all fine. We just wanted to see if he could do it.

NARRATOR 2. That's not very nice.

NARRATOR 1. Eh. What can you do? Well, we're out of time—

NARRATOR 2. So it's time for the lightning round re-cap!

NARRATOR 1. It is?

NARRATOR 2. Of course. Otherwise no one would be able to follow the narrative. So what we're going to do to finish off the show is re-perform everything we've already done...in two minutes. Ready?

NARRATOR 1. I was born ready.

NARRATOR 2. All right then. And...GO!

NARRATOR 1. Cinderella got pregnant—

CINDERELLA. Heavens!

NARRATOR 1. After they were married.

CINDERELLA. Joyous day!

NARRATOR 1. But her daughter married a demon.

(ACTOR becomes PRINCE CHARMING.)

PRINCE CHARMING. This is your fault!

NARRATOR 1. And Cinderella became old.

* *(THE DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER runs on.)*

THE DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. I'm old now!

(She shoves PRINCE and CINDERELLA off the stage.)

THE DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Grandson!

* *(THE DEVIL 2 runs on.)*

THE DEVIL 2. You're losing your mind cause you're old!

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. You're the Devil!

THE DEVIL 2. I know!

* *(DOCTOR runs on.)*

DOCTOR. You're sick!

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Let's go to the—

DOCTOR. You're dead!

DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER. Ack!

(She dies.)

THE DEVIL 2. I curse you!

(DWARF 2 runs and shoves DOCTOR out of the way, taking his place.)

DWARF 2. Now I'm a dwarf! I mean little person!

* (DWARF 1 runs in as THE DEVIL 2 and THE DEVIL'S GRANDMOTHER run out.)

DWARF 1. Let's start our own dwarf village with five of our friends!

DWARF 2. That's a great idea!

* (SNOW WHITE runs in.)

DWARF 1. Ah a giant hottie!

SNOW WHITE. Ah a dwarf!

DWARF 2. Little person!

DWARF 1. How 'bout you clean our house and tuck us in at night?

SNOW WHITE. You're not going to oppress me!

* (WITCH 2 runs in from the other direction.)

WITCH 2. I'm hotter than you!

SNOW WHITE. I don't judge myself by my looks but I am still hotter than you!

WITCH 2. Want to fight about it?

SNOW WHITE. Yes.

(They fight.)

WITCH 2. Your kung fu is stronger than mine.

* (She dies. PRINCE 2 enters.)

PRINCE 2. What's going on here?

SNOW WHITE. I'm an emancipated princess and I'm going to take what I want: you.

* (She carries the PRINCE off.)

WITCH 2. I'm not dead yet.

* (SNOW WHITE *runs back in.*)

SNOW WHITE. I said no Monty Python!

* (*She runs out as HANSEL and GRETEL enter.*)

HANSEL. Hey let's eat that lady's house!

GRETEL. That's a great idea!

WITCH 2. How 'bout I eat you instead?

HANSEL. How 'bout I push you in an oven and you die!

WITCH 2. Ah I'm dying in an ironic way!

GRETEL. Hey look I'm having a daughter! Ah I'm dying in child-birth! Darn it.

* (*GIRL runs on, shoves GRETEL off.*)

GIRL. Somehow I'm poor.

* (*THE DEVIL 1, THE ENCHANTRESS and RUMPELSTILTKIN run on.*)

GIRL. Ah the Devil, and Enchantress and a weird guy!

RUMPELSTILTSKIN. Rumpelstiltskin. (*Realizes he's just said his name:)* Darn it!

* (*Dies.*)

ENCHANTRESS / THE DEVIL 1. Deal?

GIRL. Deal.

* (*They run off and transform into PRINCE 1 and RAPUNZEL.*)

PRINCE 1. Hey baby let's get married.

* (*A baby is thrown at them again just before RAPUNZEL runs on.*)

RAPUNZEL. I hate you all because I'm a teenager.

GIRL. Tough cause I already sold you to the Devil and the Enchantress and the weird guy!

ENCHANTRESS. Come along Rapunzel I have a nice tower for you.

THE DEVIL 1. You can have her as long as you sign this contract.

ENCHANTRESS. Fine!

GIRL. Bye!

PRINCE 1. Bye!

RAPUNZEL. Bye!

THE DEVIL 1. Bye!

* (RAPUNZEL and THE ENCHANTRESS exit. Everyone stops, out of breath.)

NARRATOR 1. And they lived. Happily ever after.

NARRATOR 2. And.

* (THE ENCHANTRESS returns.)

THE ENCHANTRESS. I hope that contract I signed with the Devil doesn't have any repercussions.

* (THE DEVIL 1 enters.)

THE DEVIL 1. You'll find out.

NARRATOR 2. The. End.

(Lights down.)

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