

Beauty and the Beast: A Faerie Tale

By Kristi Cunningham

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DEDICATION

For my parents who have always believed I could do anything.

For Felicia Ellis and the Licking High School Drama students for giving me the honor of writing for them.

And in loving memory of Gail Johnson, cherished friend, mentor and inspiration. May the light of your life shine forever in our hearts.

STORY OF THE PLAY

Faerie Tale, keeper of the stories of the wood, begins this classic tale, retold with a bit of an Irish twist. It's the beloved story of a kindhearted prince tragically imprisoned in a beast's body, and the girl who comes to love him. Due to the scheming and manipulation by the family business manager, a devoted father is lead to believe he and his three daughters are destitute. Keala and her two spoiled sisters, including Fanny, who is in love with a mirror, and Tallula, who has a fixation for bonbons, have no choice but to move to a rundown cottage. They are unaware that the land is under an enchantment until their father encounters the Beast nearby. For having picked a rose from the Beast's garden, Father is forced to make a promise to return. Keala decides to go in place of her father, and over the following weeks, befriends the lonely creature. With some help from the good faeries, Keala and the Beast are able to overcome the evil Faerie Una and find a friendship that transcends every boundary and a love that breaks every curse.

PREMIERE PERFORMANCE

Licking (MO) High School, November 2007.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 9 w, 6 flexible, extras. Much doubling possible)

FAERIE TALE: Narrator. Keeper of the stories of the wood.

PRINCE REGAN / BEAST: Kindhearted prince under a spell.

TOMAS: Beleaguered father of Keala, Fanny, and Tallula.

KEALA: Caring and good-natured daughter of Tomas.

FANNY: Spoiled and selfish daughter of Tomas. She is in love with Desmond.

TALLULA: Spoiled daughter of Tomas with a fixation for bonbons.

DESMOND: Tomas' conniving business manager.

FAERIE UNA: Fallen queen of the faeries. Spurned by Prince Regan.

FAERIE AILEN: Sprightly and mischievous faerie.

FAERIE ASHLING: Dream faerie.

FAERIE BREENA: Faerie of the wood.

FAERIE RHOSWEN: Faerie of the wood.

FESTUS: Naughty rascal and servant of Faerie Una.

FERGUS: Naughty rascal and servant of Faerie Una.

BRIDGET: Servant to Tomas, Keala, Fanny and Tallula.

THIEF: Stole bread to feed his family.

GUARD 1: Royal guard.

GUARD 2: Royal guard.

SERVANT: Royal servant (non-speaking)

HORACE: Tallula's husband. (one line)

EXTRA RASCALS

EXTRA FAERIES

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TIME: Once upon a time.

PLACE: In a land far away.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

- Scene 1: The Enchanted Wood
- Scene 2: The family home
- Scene 3: Sitting room of a cottage in the Enchanted Wood
- Scene 4: Later that day in the sitting room
- Scene 5: Lost in the Enchanted Wood and castle
- Scene 6: Sitting room of castle and garden
- Scene 7: Sitting room of the cottage
- Scene 8: Sitting room of castle

ACT II

- Scene 1: The next morning in the castle
- Scene 2: Somewhere on the castle grounds
- Scene 3: Sitting room and garden
- Scene 4: Sitting room that evening
- Scene 5: The garden
- Scene 6: Sitting room of cottage
- Scene 7: The castle garden

SETTING

The set can be designed to be as intricate or simple as the director's vision requires. Many scenes begin in front of the curtain or in the Enchanted Wood which includes the audience.

The family home: For this scene the stage is divided into two parts. A formal sitting room should be indicated SR with a fireplace, chairs, sofa/settee and table. It should reflect the status of the family. SL is Tomas' office, which can be done simply with a desk and two chairs.

Cottage sitting room: Can be very similar to the formal sitting room. Should reflect the loss of status of the home.

Castle: The castle is divided. Right is the sitting room which can be quite sparse. Only a small table and a couple of chairs by the fireplace are necessary. If possible, the fireplace can be two-sided, one for home and one for castle. If not, the mantel of the fireplace can be changed to reflect the castle. The garden can be either SL or can encompass the entire US area. For this a curtain or scrim would be necessary to separate the two. The rose garden should be lush and dreamlike.

NOTE: Lighting is an important part of the play. The set can be as simple as one or two pieces, but the lighting will set the tone of the play. Side lighting rather than overhead lighting will enhance the mood of the script.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: FAERIES enter from the back of the theatre and make their way to the front through the audience. They can take their time interacting with the audience. All but two exit through the wings. FAERIE ASHLING and FAERIE AILEN sit behind FAERIE TALE who is seated on a toadstool SL. Faerie Tale can be carrying a large magical storybook, if so desired. A SPOT comes up on the three. Faerie Ashling and Faerie Ailen are whispering to Faerie Tale.)

FAERIE TALE: *(Listening.)* Ah, I see. *(Sniffs the air.)* 'Tis human they be. *(More whispering then FAERIE TALE rises and addresses the audience.)* Welcome to the Enchanted Wood. From the smell of ye, I kin tell ye've not been here before. Allow me to introduce ourselves. This sprightly faerie, for merry and mischievous is she, is Faerie Ailen, a faerie of jests and mischief she be. And this fanciful faerie with a glow and a light is Faerie Ashling, a faerie of dreams that dance in the night. And I, well, I am Faerie Tale, keeper of the stories of the wood.

(FAERIE TALE bows while FAERIE ASHLING and FAERIE AILEN exit with giggles.)

FAERIE TALE: *(Cont'd.)* I don't know how ye got here, but I tell ye true, 'tis away ye'll want to be from this enchanted wood. Aye, for the Faerie Queen will not like to find ye here. She's a mean one, she is. Faerie Una be her name, and she's as evil as the day is long. *(FAERIE UNA gives an evil laugh from offstage.)* Aye, ye'll not want to run into her, so away with ye. But be careful, the wood has a way of changing all around ye. *(Nods to the audience then begins to exit. Stops and sniffs the air and peers at the audience.)*

FAERIE TALE: *(Cont'd.)* Bless my soul! But I smell the want of a story in ye. *(Sniffs the air again and looks around, appearing satisfied he/she plops down on the toadstool again.)* Oh aye, I'll tell ye a story, a story 'tis true. A story of love and of loss and a blooming anew.

(CURTAINS open to reveal the garden of the castle. The scene is played out as FAERIE TALE talks. The FAERIES, including FAERIE UNA as well as extras, can be in the background of the scene.)

FAERIE TALE: *(Cont'd.)* Once upon a time in the enchanted wood, for no one knows exactly when, but there lived a king, a queen and their prince. The prince was a goodly lad, being kind and compassionate to all whose paths he crossed. Why, it has been told ... well, perhaps it's best if you see for yourself.

(LIGHTS up as PRINCE REGAN enters SL with SERVANT; Prince is met CS by TWO GUARDS and a shoeless THIEF from SR.)

PRINCE REGAN: What have we here?

GUARD 1: A thief, Sire.

GUARD 2: He was caught stealing bread from the baker's.

GUARD 1: He had the two loaves still on him when we caught him.

PRINCE REGAN: Hmm ... a thief you say ... and a shoeless one at that. What have you to say for yourself?

THIEF: Forgive me, Your Highness, but my family is starving. I didn't know what else to do. I have three children at home and my wife is sick.

GUARD 1: A likely story.

PRINCE REGAN: What is your work?

THIEF: I was let go, Sire, two months ago. My employer couldn't afford to keep me, and times being what they are, I haven't been able to find work since.

GUARD 2: Let us take him to the prison, Sire. He'll soon pay for his thievery.

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