

Plays for Young Audiences

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Beauty and the Beast

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Beauty & The Beast



Characters:

Belle Brizzlewink
Bob Brizzlewink
Seline Brizzlewink
Raymond Brizzlewink
Bruno Fisk
Runky (and other runks)
Mrs Cosysweet
Frank (a horse)
The Boatman
Long-beaked seagull, etc.
The Shipping Clerk
Mr Beleaguer
Mrs Careworn
The Beast



Act One

A vegetable patch on The Brizzlewink Smallholding – a charmingly small-scale, tumbledown, higgledy-piggledy kind of place a couple of miles out of town. Rows of cabbages and broccoli soak up the avuncular morning sun.

A fat and goof-faced rodent, called a 'runk', is munching his way through one of the cabbages. Maybe one or two other runks are kerschnuffling about as well. Belle enters on her own and the runks scurry down into their dank little runk tunnels in the ground. Belle is putting the finishing touches to a scarecrow she has been building, stuffing its chest with extra hay, giving it a decent nose, etc. She is in a bad mood. She sings out to the audience...

Belle:

Do you know how it feels
To be told you scare them off,
Sour the milk, cloud the sky?
In the ointment there's a fly
And it's me-shaped.

Do you know how it feels,
In the morning in the mirror,
See a face all creased
Like a scary, snarly beastie
In a mood?

To be known as a frowner
As a drag, as a downer,
As a furious, unsuitable,
Insensible, unmentionable
Pain who should be dutiful
And beautiful and mutable
But can't because she's uppity
And bothersome and quarrelsome
And curiously furious
And crabby and cantankerous
And wild?!

Having worked herself into a fury, Belle whacks the scarecrow's head off with a farming implement. The runks pop up from their holes for a moment, then dart back down in fear when Belle turns in their direction. Her anger spent, she fixes the scarecrow's head back on.

Belle:

Do you know how it feels
To be told you scare them off?
Face all creased
Like a scary, snarly beast...

Bob Brizzlewink, a man of fizzing energy and expansive gestures, arrives on the vegetable patch. He is followed by his youngest, Raymond, who is lugging a big old bucket marked 'muck'. Raymond is followed by Seline, Bob's eldest, who is inappropriately dressed for a day's work in a muddy field.

Bob: Come along, my loves! Put that muck down here and we'll set to work!

Raymond: So, what are we doing today, Dad?

Bob: *(Waves a bag of seeds.)* Today, Raymond, we are planting radishes! Good scarecrow, love!

Seline: Daddy, I don't feel well.

Belle: Don't lie!

Bob: *(Consults instructions.)* 'Instructions!'

Seline: Please, Daddy, I think I might faint.

Belle: First you rake the soil and get rid of any stones then dig a trench and line it with manure. *(Seline turns away in disgust.)*

Bob: Exactly right!

Raymond rakes the soil and Belle removes the stones. Bob takes a deep and satisfied breath.

Bob: Well, what a day to be out in the open! Don't you just love the smell of the soil?!

All: *(Bored of the question.)* Yes, Dad.

Bob: Just to think, this time last year I was still a boring old merchant! Stuck in that stuffy office, chasing every penny to buy stuff we didn't even need! Curtains, shoes, electronic potato peelers! Now if we want something we grow it ourselves!

Seline: Please don't tell me I have to grow my own shoes.

Bob: Do you know, I'm actually glad my ship got sunk?! If I hadn't lost my fortune we never would have come here!

Seline: Please let me go inside. I think I'm allergic to something.

Belle: Yeah, work.

Bob: Now, girls –

Belle: She never does anything!

Seline: It's not my fault I wasn't born to spend my life covered in muck.

Belle: Never know until you try. *(Flings a handful of muck in Seline's direction.)*

Bob: Belle, that's not helpful.

Seline: No, Belle, that's not helpful. It's exactly the kind of thing that makes you so unpopular.

Belle: Why don't you shut your gob, Seline?

Seline: I will, when you learn to control your temper.

Belle: *(Losing control of her temper.)* I'm perfectly in control of my temper!

Bob: *(Blocking Belle's way to Seline.)* Hey, come on, that's enough.

Belle lets out a squeal of frustration and returns to her work. Bob notices that a runk is munching on one of his cabbages.

Bob: Hey, get off you! *(The runk scurries away.)* Blasted runks! There'll be nothing left of these cabbages! I'll go and fetch the runk repellent.

As he leaves, Bruno arrives on a new bike.

Bob: Morning, Bruno!

Bruno: Howdy doo, Mister Brizzlewink! Howdy doo, my friends! Fancy coming down the bike-track, Ray? Watch me ride my new bike.

Raymond: No, thanks.

Bruno: Why not, scared of getting in trouble?

Belle: Can't you see we're working?

Bruno: Course, when you're my wife, Belle, you ain't going to have to work. I'll make sure of it.

Belle: If I was your wife, I wouldn't be able to work. I'd be too busy being sick.

Seline: Don't worry, Bruno. She's just in a bad mood because Daddy told her off again.

Belle: No, I'm in a bad mood because my sister's a snooty, bum-faced wannabe that thinks she's too important to get her hands dirty.

Raymond: Here we go...

Seline: Belle, how can you even say that? *(Pushes Belle over in the mud.)* I'm happy to get my hands dirty.

Raymond: Seline –

Seline: And my feet! *(Kicks soil from the radish trench at Belle.)*

Belle: Right, that's it.

Raymond: *(To Belle.)* She's just trying to get you in trouble!

Belle: *(To Seline.)* You asked for this, you toffee-nosed mongrel!

Bruno: Come on, Ray.

Raymond, who has seen it all a thousand times before, reluctantly leaves his sisters to fight, exiting with Bruno.

Belle: Prepare to die.

Belle rushes at Seline. A no holds barred fight begins. Rakes are used as swords. Cabbages are hurled. Seline fights dirty but Belle's rage is awesome and eventually she overpowers her sister. Finally, she squashes the 'muck' bucket over Seline's head, brushes her hands clean and walks away...



The vegetable patch at night. Bruno enters carrying a lantern and a book called 'Runk Hunting For Beginners'. Raymond follows behind, wearing pyjamas, carrying a jar of giant pickled onions...

Bruno: Hurry up, Raymond! What is it with you, scared of the dark?

Raymond: No, I'm sleepy. It's the middle of the night, what are we doing?

Bruno: *(Shows the book.)* Well, the book's called 'Runk Hunting For Beginners' so there's a clue.

Raymond: Why though?

Bruno: For the good of the farm, of course! *(Reads from the book.)* ‘The common runk, Latin name *Runkus Runkus*, is every farmer’s worst enemy –

Raymond: Is this just another plan to make my sister like you?

Bruno: Ray, what are you even talking about?! Belle loves me! Not that it would hurt for me to solve the old runk problem, of course. ‘The best way to catch a runk is with their favourite food: giant pickled onions. Leave a giant pickled onion one pace from the runk-hole.’ Well, go on then! *(Raymond leaves a pickled onion one pace from the warren.)* ‘Waft the pickly smell down the runk-hole and hide nearby.’

Raymond reluctantly wafts the pickly smell down the warren and they hide. A runk comes out of the ground and starts sniffing at the giant pickled onion. Bruno gives a thumbs up sign to a reluctant Raymond.

Bruno: *(Whispers.)* Three, two, one...

Bruno dives to grab the runk. It disappears into the ground and pops up somewhere else.

Bruno: Where’d he go?

Raymond: There!

Bruno dashes at the runk but again it disappears and pops up somewhere else. Runks start appearing all over the place...

Raymond: They’re everywhere!

Bruno dashes and dives about to no avail. Raymond watches and laughs, charmed by the runks. One runk sticks its head in the onion jar and steals an onion or two. Bruno is growing flustered by his failure to catch one.

Raymond: They’re too quick, you’ll never catch them!

Bruno moves slowly in on a runk poking out of a hole in the ground. He dives to grab him but the runk disappears, reappearing at a second hole. Undeterred, Bruno goes for him again, but the runk disappears once more and pops up in his original spot. Bruno feints to lunge for a third time, causing the runk to disappear, but this time he stays near the second hole, and when the runk appears there he grabs him.

Bruno: Gotcha! *(The runk burbles and gurgles and spits.)* Now bring that spade over! *(Shouts out.)* Belle, wake up! Come and look at this!

Raymond: The spade, what for?!

Bruno: What do you think?! To whack him with! *(Calls out.)* Belle!

Raymond: Bruno, I don't think she's going to like this. She's a vegetarian. Let's just take him down the road and set him free.

Bruno: I'll hold him down, you smash him over the head.

Raymond: No!

Bruno: All right, baby, you hold him and I'll whack him! *(Bruno thrusts the runk into Raymond's hands and fetches the spade.)*

Belle: *(Enters sleepily.)* Er, what's going on?

Bruno: Just sorting out your runk problem, my love! *(Lifts spade high above his head.)* Hold him down on the ground, please, Ray. As a girl, you may wish to look away.

Belle: *(Pushes Bruno away.)* Bully, what's he ever done to you?! You should be ashamed! *(Takes the quivering runk from Raymond.)* Poor thing. Not your fault you like eating cabbage, is it, Runky?

The runk gurgles affectionately at Belle. She strokes its little runky nose.

Bruno: Yeah, Ray, not the runk's fault if he likes eating cabbage!

Raymond: Eh?

Bruno: Picking on a poor defenceless animal!

Bruno exits. Belle takes the runk back to the house. Raymond follows behind with the pickled onions.



The vegetable patch. Bob is with Mrs Cosysweet, an anger management specialist.

Bob: *(Calls out.)* Belle, my love! Can you come out here, please?

Seline: *(Arrives clutching a note.)* Look, Daddy, a letter!

Bob: Ah, Seline, have you seen Belle?

Seline: Shut up, Daddy, and look! Your goods that were lost in the shipwreck, they've been found!

Bob: Really?!

Seline: *(Reads.)* 'Four thousand luxury oven mitts. Ninety-seven thousand highlighter pens...'

Bob: That's my stuff, all right...

Seline: Isn't it wonderful?! *(Reads.)* 'Please come to the office to collect.' *(Gives Bob letter and hastily smartens his appearance.)* Well, don't just stand there, the office shuts at five!

Belle: *(Enters.)* What's going on?

Seline: Daddy's going back into business!

Bob: It seems the goods have been found.

Seline: So he's going to sell them and start working as a merchant again.

Bob: Well –

Seline: And buy the big house back and hire all the old servants!

Bob: Let's just –

Seline: *(Pulling Bob away.)* Never to return to this horrid place!

Belle: *(Pulling Bob back.)* But Dad, you like it here. You're the one always going on about the smell of the soil. You hated being a merchant!

Bob: *(Pulling free.)* I have to consider what's best for all of you. This place doesn't make any money.

Belle: Who needs money?

Seline: I do, desperately! Come along, Daddy!

Belle: But I'm happy here!

Bob and Seline leave. Belle lets out a yell or a growl of frustration then turns and registers the presence of Mrs Cosysweet for the first time...

Belle: And you are?

Mrs Cosysweet: Mrs Cosysweet, pleased to meet you.

Belle: And what are you doing on my farm?

Mrs Cosysweet: You weren't told?

Belle: Told what?

Mrs Cosysweet: Perhaps we should go inside.

Belle: Told what?!

Mrs Cosysweet: My name is Mrs Cosysweet –

Belle: You said.

Mrs Cosysweet: I'm an anger specialist. Your father got in touch about your anger problem –

Belle: He did what?!

Mrs Cosysweet: ...and asked if I'd help.

Belle: Okay, there must be some mistake. I don't have an anger problem!

Mrs Cosysweet: Yes... well, I'm here now so we may as well use the time, don't you think? Let's dig out your file.

Mrs Cosysweet searches her case for Belle's file. Meanwhile, Raymond is preparing Frank, the family's depressed and knackered old horse, for a journey.

Raymond: (*Saddling Frank.*) Hold still, Frankie. Bet you're looking forward to stretching your legs. Have a carrot! (*Frank grumpily takes the carrot.*)

Bob and Seline enter.

Seline: Now, Daddy, if they don't have any in pink then blue is acceptable but they must be silk!

Bob: (*Climbing onto Frank, who groans.*) Don't think I'll be going past any shops, love.

Seline: Then go a different way!

Bob: Giddy up now, Frank. (*Frank does nothing.*) Giddy up, old boy. (*Frank reluctantly starts walking.*) Bye, my loves!

Raymond: Bye, Dad!

As Frank trudges along, Mrs Cosysweet, having found Belle's file, begins the process of assessment.

Mrs Cosysweet: *(Reads label on front of file.)* 'Belle Brizzlewink! *(Opens file, reads.)* 'Older sister, younger brother, mother gone, that's interesting –

Belle: I don't see why.

Mrs Cosysweet: 'Enjoys gardening and fighting, once threw a sandwich at a vicar.'

Belle: That is not true! I threw the sandwich at my sister, the vicar just got in the way.

Mrs Cosysweet: 'Slams doors, breaks things, put runk dropping in sister's yoghurt...'

Belle: If you knew her you'd shake my hand.

Mrs Cosysweet: And when did all this begin, Belle? Around the time Mummy left?

Belle: I've always been angry. I've just got better at showing it, that's all.

Mrs Cosysweet: But that's when it got out of hand, when Mummy left?

Belle: It's nothing to do with 'mummy'!

Mrs Cosysweet: *(Mrs Cosysweet makes a note.)* Interesting.

Bob: *(Puts up an umbrella.)* Looks like rain, old boy. *(Frank snorts irritably.)*

Mrs Cosysweet: I'd like us to play a little game. I'll say a word and I want you to say the first thing that comes to you.

Belle: Why?

Mrs Cosysweet: To help me see what's going on in that sweet but stormy little head. Ready?

Belle: Steady.

Mrs Cosysweet: Sorry?

Belle: Lorry.

Mrs Cosysweet: No.

Belle: Yes.

Mrs Cosysweet: We –

Belle: Poo.

Mrs Cosysweet: What?

Belle: Why?

Mrs Cosysweet: Right...

Belle: Left.

Mrs Cosysweet: We haven't started yet! (*Starts the game.*) The first word is 'home'.

Belle: Gnome.

Mrs Cosysweet: Good.

Belle: Bad.

Mrs Cosysweet: No –

Belle: Yes.

Mrs Cosysweet: Please!

Belle: Thank you!

Mrs Cosysweet: Right.

Belle: Wrong.

Mrs Cosysweet: You're spoiling it on purpose! (*Returns to list.*) Family.

Belle: Jammily.

Mrs Cosysweet: Jammily?

Belle: Family.

Mrs Cosysweet: Stop it now.

Belle: Start it then?

Mrs Cosysweet: Quiet!

Belle: Noisy!

Mrs Cosysweet: Stop it, please, I beg of you! *(Returns to list.)* Mother. *(Belle refuses to speak.)* Mother. Mother.

Belle: I already told you, it's got nothing to do with her!

Bob: *(The rain is heavier now.)* All right, Frankie, nearly there, easy boy...

Mrs Cosysweet: I disagree. I think you're feeling very let down.

Belle: Yeah, by my dad for phoning you.

Mrs Cosysweet: I think you miss her very much.

Belle: Well, you're wrong.

Mrs Cosysweet: You're angry about her going and that's why you're being difficult.

Belle: I'm not being difficult!

Mrs Cosysweet: Come with me to the milking shed. There's something I'd like to try.

Mrs Cosysweet heads off to the milking shed. Belle follows.



The shipping clerk's office. The rain drums on a corrugated iron roof. The clerk is on the phone. There is a little bell on his desk.

Clerk: Yes, Jeremy. *(Bob enters.)* Yes, Jeremy. No, Jeremy. Hang on, Jeremy, someone's here, I'll call you back. *(Hangs up.)* Yes, Sir?

Bob: Bob Brizzlewink?

Clerk: No.

Bob: No, that's my name.

Clerk: And that makes it my name too, does it?

Bob: No –

Clerk: I've a name of my own. It's Jeremy.

Bob: Wasn't he Jeremy?

Clerk: Who?

Bob: On the phone just now.

Clerk: Yes, that was me.

Bob: No, on the other end.

Clerk: Other end of what?

Bob: The phone.

Clerk: *(Clerk peers at the phone, puzzled.)* The other end of the phone.

Bob: The person you were speaking to, what was his name?

Clerk: Jeremy. We're both called Jeremy, it's not like we're brothers.

Bob: I'm Bob Brizzlewink. *(Hands over the letter.)* You sent me this?

Clerk: *(Reads.)* 'Dear Mister Brizzlewink.' And that's you, is it?

Bob: That's me.

Clerk: 'Items belonging to you, thought to have been lost in the storms of last year, have washed up on the beach. These include Four thousand luxury oven mitts, ninety-six thousand highlighter pens... *(mumbles)* ...ear trumpets... decorative hammocks...'

Bob: I'd given up hope!

Clerk: *(Reads.)* 'Please come to my office to collect... *(turns page to reveal the rest of the message.)* ...the only thing that wasn't spoilt and thrown away, a small statue of a doggy playing golf. *(He presents Bob with a small statue of a doggy playing golf.)*

Bob: Oh.

Clerk: I saw the rest of it myself. Turned completely to mush. As we say in the trade, the ocean is the cruellest of all babysitters.

Bob: I'm sure.

Clerk: You all right? Thought you'd be pleased to have your doggy back.

Bob: No, I am. In fact, I'm really pleased. Thank you, Jeremy!

Phone rings.

Clerk: Ooh, that'll be Jeremy. *(Picks up phone.)* Hello Jeremy...!
Yes, Jeremy...



A distant rumble of thunder as Bob clammers back onto Frank and puts his umbrella up. Frank reluctantly gets moving. Meanwhile, Belle is in the milking shed with Mrs Cosysweet. She has a machine called The Tantrum Neutraliser.

Bob: *(Cheerful)* Oh well, Frankie, a wasted journey, it seems. Still, it's not a bad life!

Mrs Cosysweet: So, Belle, this is a new machine we've been trying out called the Tantrum Neutraliser. Now, I know it looks rather comical –

Belle: It looks ridiculous.

Mrs Cosysweet: And I'm afraid it can't bring your mummy back –

Belle: I don't want my mummy back!

Mrs Cosysweet: But it may help control your anger. It works by inducing a tantrum in the problem child.

Belle: I'm not a problem child!

Mrs Cosysweet: The problem child's rage is spent while strapped in the chair, improving their behaviour the rest of the time. All at once the chair will play music you dislike... *(She presses a button and we hear a second or two of her least favourite music.)* ...provoke you with pictures... *(Pictures of Seline and Bruno are set up and ready to go.)* ...and bash you about with the boxing gloves. In you get and we'll strap you down.

Belle: No flipping way. *(A closer rumble of thunder and the rain gets heavier; Frank doesn't like stormy weather.)*

Bob: Stay calm, old boy, it'll pass.

Mrs Cosysweet: Now, let's not make a silly fuss –

Belle: I don't need your help and I'm not getting in your stupid machine!

Mrs Cosysweet: I have other people to go and see!

Belle: Then go and see them!

Bob: Easy boy!

Mrs Cosysweet: (*Approaches Belle.*) Give me your hand.

Belle: No! (*Pulls a boxing glove arm from the machine.*) Get away from me!

Mrs Cosysweet: Now look what you've done, you've broken it!

Belle: (*Brandishing the arm.*) Yeah, and I'll break you in a minute!

Mrs Cosysweet: You clearly have an anger problem.

Belle: The only problem I have is with you! (*A bolt of lightning; Frank struggling; Belle swinging the arm.*) You and idiots like you telling me there's something wrong with me! (*Lightning; Frank panicking, Belle on the attack.*)

Bob: Whoa, Frankie!

Belle: Now, get off my property! Now! (*More lightning; Frank panicking.*)

Bob: Whoa!

Belle: Go!

Mrs Cosysweet makes a run for it. Meanwhile, Frank is in a distressed state and Bob is struggling to control him. A yell from Belle coincides with a final crash of lightning which causes Frank to throw Bob from his back and run off. Bob is unconscious. Belle is alone, most of her anger now faded to sadness. Ray comes in. He approaches her gently.

Raymond: Belle?

Belle: Go away.

Raymond: What happened?

Belle: What if they take me away?

Raymond: That won't happen.

Belle: Do you ever wish you were someone else? Someone completely the opposite?

Raymond: All the time.

She leaves.



It is night-time now and the storm has passed. Bob is still lying on the ground. The Boatman enters, dragging his boat.

The Boatman: Don't want to sleep down there, Sir.

Bob: *(Comes round.)* Uhh?

The Boatman: Said I should get up, I were you. 'Fore the ants make a home o' your pants.

Bob: *(Gets up.)* Who are you?

The Boatman: Boatman, Sir. Take you where you're going in my boat.

Bob: Where's my horse?

The Boatman: Brown one?

Bob: That's right.

The Boatman: Take you in my boat, Sir.

Bob: *(Confused.)* You know where he is? That's marvellous...!

Bob and The Boatman climb into the boat and The Boatman begins to row. Bob peers out of the boat.

Bob: Strange... There doesn't seem to be any... water...

The Boatman: Flying boat, Sir.

Bob: Right...!

The Boatman: Like me to sing you a song, Sir?

Bob: No –

The Boatman: Did you ever see a seagull with a foot long beak?

Long-Beaked Seagull: *(Flying alongside boat.)* No, boys, no!

The Boatman: Or a fat, sleek seal with a rough, grey beard?

Bearded Seal: *(Bobs its head up.)* No, no, no!

It seems the The Boatman's song is over. The long-beaked seagull and the bearded seal are gone.

Bob: Lovely!

The Boatman: Did you ever see a fishy with the ears of a bunny-bunny?

Human-Eared Fish: No, boys, no!

The Boatman: Or a wart-faced toad in a tall top hat?

Top-Hatted Toad: No, no, no!

The Boatman: Time pass quicker with a song, I find.

Bob: So, this is it... *(Clambers out of the boat.)* Where will I find my horse?

The Boatman: *(Rowing away.)* 'Orse, Sir?

Bob: My brown horse?

The Boatman: Thought you said 'brown castle', Sir.

Bob: What?!

The Boatman: Thought you said 'brown castle'. 'Valways 'ad difficulty tellin' word "'orse' from word 'castle'. Anyhows, castle's o'er yonder, see? *(Rows away.)*

Bob: Wait, wait, where are you going?

The Boatman: Back in the mornin', Sir.

Bob: No, don't go! Take me now! I'll die of cold, a night like this!

The Boatman: Suggest you shelter in the castle. Them's decently friendly, I'm told.



Inside the castle.

Bob: *(Calls out, voice echoes.)* Hello? Is anyone there?

Mrs Careworn, a housekeeper, appears.

Bob: Hello there. Bob Brizzlewink?

Mrs Careworn: No.

Bob: No, that's my name.

Mrs Careworn: Oh. And are you wangling to kersnooze?

Bob: I'm sorry?

Mrs Careworn: I said are you wangling to kersnooze? It's no blather if you are, we should be happy to have you.

Bob: Okay...

Mrs Careworn: Nibblish, Sir?

Bob: Nibblish?

Mrs Careworn: (*Mimes eating.*) Peckety?

Bob: No.

Mrs Careworn: In that case, I shall fungle you a snooze-pouch quickety-speed. Mr Beleaguer! We have a kersnoozing guest!

Mr Beleaguer: (*Arrives and stares at Bob.*) Heavenly crumpets!

Bob: Hello!

Mr Beleaguer: Are you squertain this is wisible, Mrs Careworn!

Mrs Careworn: What choice? Leave a poor man pouchless on a night so niperty-shiver? (*To Bob.*) Mr Beleaguer will shugg you to your room. I'll fetch you an extra blankisquish. Oh, and if you needle a night-time wee-woo there's a toilidge just next door.

Mr Beleaguer: This way.

Bob: Right-o!



The vegetable patch. Belle is leading a rhubarb-harvesting mission. Ray and Bruno are assisting her. The runk that Belle saved from death by spade kerschnuffles about adoringly at her side. Seline sits a little way off, filing her nails.

Belle: Right, so we're going to harvest the rhubarb. If we leave it any longer it'll be too thick.

Bruno: Like you, Ray.

Belle: But only two pieces from each plant. Any more and you'll kill the whole thing.

Bruno: Leave it to me, my darling. *(Bends down to snap off a stem of rhubarb.)*

Belle: Yeah, don't call me that and don't snap them, it's bad for the root.

They work at harvesting the rhubarb. Runky picks a stem and gives it to Belle.

Belle: *(Strokes Runky.)* Thank you, Runky. Who's a clever boy?

Bruno: Yeah, good boy, Runky.

Bruno tries to stroke Runky too but gets burbled and spat at by the loyal rodent.

Raymond: Where do you think he is, Belle?

Belle: You know Dad. He probably bumped into an old friend or something.

Raymond: Never been gone all night before.

Bruno: What's the matter, Ray? Going to cry cos your daddy's not here?

Belle: Why don't you bog off home, Bruno?!

Bruno: My dad said he'd pay me if I stayed out all day.

Raymond: Do you think we should call the police or something?

Belle: Not yet.

Seline: I can tell you why he's not come back.

Belle: What are you even doing out here, Seline? Shouldn't you be inside, rubbing some kind of apricot moisturiser into your big fat elephant-skin bumcheeks?

Raymond: Come on, Seline, let's start taking this rhubarb inside –

Seline: He's left because he's tired of Belle's tantrums, same as Mum.

Belle: What do you mean, same as Mum?

Seline: She went because she was sick of your temper, did no-one tell you?

Belle: Take that back!

Seline: Poor Daddy loved her so much and you basically ruined his life.

Belle: *(Threatening Seline with a stick of rhubarb.)* Take that back right now!

Raymond: Belle, don't –

Seline: Are you threatening me with a stick of rhubarb?

Belle: I'll shove it up your piggy nose unless you take it back!

Bruno: I love her when she gets like this!

Belle: Mum went when the money went. That's all she cared about, same as you!

Seline: If that's what you want to believe then fine, but we all know what really happened. First you drove her away and now him.

Raymond: Stop it, Seline –

Seline: He was so desperate he brought in that silly anger management woman.

Belle is too hurt by what Seline is saying to start a fight. She returns to the rhubarb.

Seline: Well, if you chaps have everything covered I think I'll go for a nap. Enjoy the sun!

Seline exits, pleased with her work. Belle returns to the harvesting work in unhappy silence. Frank appears, tired and fed up.

Raymond: Frankie, you're safe! *(They run to Frankie.)* But where's Dad? *(Frank shrugs.)* Frankie, what happened to Dad?



*Outside the castle, on an otherwise bare tree a perfect pineapple grows.
Bob appears. He has been up for a while, calling the Boatman, and has become frustrated...*

Bob: Mr Boatman! Mr Boatman! I need to go home!

Bob is astonished to see the pineapple.

Bob: How extraordinary...!

Bob decides to pick the pineapple. He stands on a bucket, gets hold of it and pulls. Mrs Careworn dashes out...

Mrs Careworn: Er, no, Mister Brizzlebonk, please don't...

But it's too late. Bob has picked the pineapple.

Mrs Careworn: Oh dear.

The sky quickly darkens and thunderous, menacing footsteps can be heard to approach, accompanied by weird, throaty, growly breathing. A big and chilly shadow grows across Bob and Mrs Careworn. Bob looks in terror at the approaching Beast. (We don't see The Beast in this scene, just the shadow.)

Bob: What on earth...?!

Mrs Careworn: You've pickypinched the Master's pineapple! The only toothsome thing he's ever growed and you've nabbed it, you silly nincomplonk!

The Beast has arrived. He snarls furiously.

Bob: *(Still on bucket, terrified, clutching pineapple.)* G-good morning!
B-bob Brizzlewink? *(Confused growl.)* No, that's me, I'm B-bob Brizzlewink. *(Offers a hand to shake, retracts it when The Beast growls violently.)*

Mrs Careworn: Keep your fingles deep in your pockypouches for now, Sir.

Bob: So, this is your castle! Then I must thank you for letting me stay! And this must be your p-p-pineapple! *(Offers the pineapple but The Beast growls furiously.)*

Mrs Careworn: Keep it, he says, though it's factful to say he's not best happiness.

Bob: I'm so sorry, I p-picked it for my d-daughter, Belle. She's a lovely girl –

The Beast growls and roars at some length, leaving Bob cowering, before stomping away back to the castle.

Mrs Careworn: Oh dear, this is horrifilous! Quite horrifilous! The Master requizzles that you send your girl for eight o'clock this evengloom.

Bob: Send her here, but why?!

Mrs Careworn: To live, Sir.

Bob: You can't be serious!

Mrs Careworn: Oh, but truzzle me, you must! Or you'll soon be kersnoozing with the fishlings. He'll hunt you down and make beastfood of your belly, Sir! Oh dear!

Mrs Careworn runs off back to the castle.



The vegetable patch. Belle is digging/working. Bob is recovering from his ordeal. Seline and Bruno are there too.

Seline: Oh well, if it's Belle he wants, I suppose we don't have much choice.

Bob: No. If anyone's getting eaten by a beast, it's me. That's what being a dad's all about.

Bruno: But how's he going to find you? It's not like you gave him our address.

Belle: Our address? You don't live here.

Bob: I'm afraid he knows the address. Before we met I broke the toilet. I left my address so they could bill me for the repair, it seemed only decent.

Seline: So you've no money for stockings but you've money for other people's toilets!

Bob: *(Brings Bob a bowl of rhubarb crumble.)* Here you go, Dad. Rhubarb and pineapple pie.

Seline: I decided we should harvest the rhubarb. Before it got too thick.

Bob: Good thinking, Seline. Mm, delicious pineapple! Just have to hope it doesn't cost me my life!

Bruno: (*Wielding a hoe.*) I'll protect you, Mister Brizzlewink!

Bob: Let's hope it doesn't come to that.

Raymond: What does the beast look like, Dad?

Bob: Dreadful. He's a bit like a cross between a giant goat-faced monkey and a giant monkey-faced goat. And he's got these hideous horny hairy hooves and these horrible hairy scary horns and this hideous hair and this horrible stare and teeth like sharpened parsnips!

Seline: You're quiet, Belle. Don't you care that Daddy nearly died?

Belle: Of course I care.

Seline: Although I suppose it was your fault in a way. If Daddy hadn't been picking you the pineapple –

Belle: No, it was my fault. I was only picking the blasted thing to say sorry for calling in the anger woman. That was a totally mad thing to do.

Belle: Then it was my fault. If I hadn't driven you mad in the first place, and driven Mum mad –

Bob: Let's just look to the future. If the Beast comes after me, I'll just have to make him see reason.

Bob, Seline and Bruno go. Bruno stays to put a consoling arm around Belle but gets short shrift and goes.



Late at night. The vegetable patch. Belle kneels on the ground, wafting the fumes from a giant pickled onion down a runk hole...

Belle: Runky... Runky...

Belle's pet runk appears...

Belle: There you are!

Belle picks Runk up and feeds him the onion. She whispers to Runky...

Belle: Now listen, Runky, I have to go away for a while, okay? It's time I started making up for all the mess I've caused.

Runky cries.

Belle: You'll be okay. Just don't take any rubbish from Bruno and go easy on the radishes.

Runky burbles and burps.

Belle: And if anything happens I should know about, you come and find me, all right?

Runky gurgles in agreement.

Belle: I'll be at the castle. *(She puts Runky back down his runk-hole.)* Wherever that might be...

The Boatman appears, dragging his boat.

Belle: Er, excuse me. *(He ignores her.)* I said excuse me, this is private property. *(He continues to ignore her.)* You're squashing my flipping broccoli!

The Boatman: *(Stops.)* Know what they say about broccoli o' course.

Belle: No, what do they say about broccoli?

The Boatman: They say it's green.'Orse you're goin' to, is it?

Belle: What?

The Boatman: Castle you're goin' to, is it?'

Belle: Maybe, why, do you know where it is?

The Boatman: Took your daddy there 'n' back. Take you too if you like, in my boat.

Belle: And how are you going to do that with no water?

The Boatman: Suggest you leave that to me, me bein' The Boatman.

The boat has a magic glow about it. Belle climbs in and soon they are making steady progress in the direction of the castle.

Belle: So where is this castle?

The Boatman: 'Chever way the wind blows. Like me tell you a story, Miss?

Belle: No, thank you –

The Boatman: 'Pon a time did live a prince. And the prince of a magical kingdom were he, a kingdom not known to normal folk, it bein' so hard to find. An' fiercely out o' sorts were this prince since his mother and father both did die, he of a terrible sickness and she of a broken heart. Then one day a witch did come to the prince's door. 'O Majesty,' she did croak. 'Pity the poor. Spare a cup o' water.' But the prince 'ad no pity for she, and so slam the door on 'er warty green nose.

Belle: Is that it? Okay, for a start, there's no such thing as a... *(She realises she is alone in a magical kingdom.)* magical kingdom. And the end needs serious work...



The dining room at the castle. An opulent and old-fashioned place with a long table and dramatic gothic lighting. Three covered platters sit grandly on the table. The Beast can be heard in the room above, stomping and crashing about. Mrs Careworn is setting things up for the evening meal. She is excited, almost giddily so...

Mrs Careworn: *(Polishes a knife.)* Polish the knifelings... *(Adjusts the position of a fork.)* Set the forklets straight. *(Dims the lights.)* Dipple the lights, make things romanciful... *(Puts a cushion on the guest's chair.)* And a pretty silken comfisqueish for benunder the guestgirl's bumpyboo. Perfect! *(An extra loud bump from above sends plaster raining on the table. She tuts affectionately and calls up to The Beast.)* If the Master wishes to scrubble his paws with soap, dinner will be served in two honks of a badger's whoopety! And quickety-speed with the toothsome gravy, Mr Beleaguer!

Mr Beleaguer: *(Off.)* Yes indeed, quickety-speed, just coming with the toothsome gravy, Mrs Careworn.

Mrs Careworn: And when that's laid you can swabble the place-mats with a soapy raggle. The master's been bumping the ceiling down again.

Mr Beleaguer: *(Enters with gravy in an agitated mood.)* Swabble the place-mats, right-o!

Mrs Careworn: Smudgety place-mats just won't do, not with a guest coming. What is the mungus, Mr Beleaguer?

Mr Beleaguer: Mr Beleaguer: I just don't think it's right, that's all. You telling that man he must send his daughter, else he'll be beastfood. Master said no such thing, that was a flash-flaming whoppity you told!

Mrs Careworn: Serves the man right for pickypinching the prize pineapple. Anyhap, the Master's pleased she's coming.

Mr Beleaguer: Ha! Could have fooled me! He's been non-stop blathersome all day! Like a bear with a sore belly!

Mrs Careworn: (*Affectionately.*) He's just nervous. Thinks she'll start pukeling when shes his horrugulous face.

Mr Beleaguer: And what if she does?! Or what if he thinks she looks toothsome and squaffles her up! I'll meet her at the gate, tell her go home...!

Mrs Careworn: Do no such thing, Mr Beleaguer! Opporchances of this flavour don't splat upon us willy-niggly. Even the Master knows that! (*Pulls herself together.*) Anyhap, it's nudging eight already. There's each and every chance she won't come.

Mrs Careworn bongs the fooding gong and the staff quickly move to their greeting places. The Beast enters the dining room. He is pretty much as Bob described - a bizarre cross between a monkey, a bear and a dog, but also strangely like a frog or a fish with horns. But he has made an effort with his appearance for the evening. His behaviour shifts without warning between chaotic, animalistic rowdiness and quiet, still, almost predatory behaviour. Mr Beleaguer is scared of him. The Beast thumps madly on the table, signalling to the staff that they should sit too.

Mrs Careworn: I'm squertain our fooding guest won't be long, Master.

Mr Beleaguer: Oh yes!

The Beast barely seems to hear. He stares intently at the empty chair set for Belle.

Mrs Careworn: Magnarvellous veggies you've growed us again, Master.

Mr Beleaguer: Indeed!

The clock strikes begins to chime eight o'clock. A wild burst of tortured madness from the Beast, followed by pained and shamed crying. The staff gather round and console him, forming a sad and desperate tableau. Belle appears.

Belle:

Do you know how it feels
When you've had a big idea,
Rush of blood to the head,
Now you've made yourself a bed
You've got to lie in it?

Do you know how it feels
To be held in the paws
Of a lion, with your head
In its jaws, and there's
Only you to blame?

Thought you'd show 'em, thought you'd wow 'em,
Thought you'd make amends
Thought they'd miss you, want to kiss you
Thought you'd win a load of friends,
But now you're a pickle
With a tickle in your brain saying
Go back home,
Go back home,
Go back,
Go back home.

The air is kind of chilly here.
The smell is unfamiliar.
I've bitten more than I can chew,
But what's to lose?
I'll see it through.

Belle enters the dining room and The Beast and his staff see her for the first time. They look at her in astonishment as she takes her place at the table.

Belle: So what's for dinner?

