

# Plays for Young Audiences

A PARTNERSHIP OF SEATTLE CHILDREN'S THEATRE AND CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY - MINNEAPOLIS

2400 THIRD AVENUE SOUTH  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55404  
612-872-5108  
FAX 612-874-8119

## *Beauty and the Beast*

by  
Charles Way

*Beauty and the Beast* was originally commissioned and produced by The Library Theatre,  
Manchester, England, on November 2001.

**DO NOT REPRODUCE.  
NOT LICENSED FOR PRODUCTION.**

## **CHARACTERS**

**George Godwin**

**Cassandra**

**Belle**

**Daniel Knightly**

**Jan**

**The Beast**

**The Housekeeper**

**Dancers/Shadows/Wolves**

## SETTING

*The action takes place in London and the West Country Circa 1790. Belle is born in 1775, the same year as Jane Austen.*

## **ACT ONE**

*A crack of thunder. The play begins in the bind of Belle, a merchant's daughter. She is dreaming about a storm at sea, which is slowly gathering strength. All manner of objects, to do with ships and the sea, float by her – ropes barrels, anchors. These need not be realistic in size. Some can be miniature and others enormous. Voices can be heard trying to shout over the rising wind. Belle herself, dressed in a night gown, stands in the middle of the confusion, her eyes wide open. She barely moves, but she clutches a soft toy dog, to her.*

*Behind her, shapes become clear and we see the figure of a seaman, in silhouette, trying to hold the wheel of the ship steady. This silhouette is important since it forms part of the 'shadow language' for the rest of the play. It is the form Belle's dreams or visions take.*

*The noise of the storm then ceases, though the action continues. Belle then becomes part of the dream, dancing beautifully through the moving objects. The wind then returns and she is no longer in control. The storm reaches a climax, with a terrible crack of thunder, and Belle collapses, the dream vanishes.*

*It is Morning. Enter Belle's sister Cassandra.*

**CASSANDRA**

Belle? Belle, wake up, wake up!

*Belle stirs.*

**CASSANDRA**

I wish you'd stop doing this.

**BELLE**

Where am I?

**CASSANDRA**

Home where do you think?

**BELLE**

Is it over?

**CASSANDRA**

Is what over?

**BELLE**

Thunder, lightning.

**CASSANDRA**

You had another dream, that's all.

**BELLE**

No, it was more than a dream – it was –

**CASSANDRA**

And you were sleep – walking. I woke up and you were gone – again – on your travels with – *(She picks up the toy dog)*

**BELLE**

Janet.

**CASSANDRA**

Do you think that's a proper name for a dog?

**BELLE**

Give it back.

**CASSANDRA**

Was it a scary dream, Janet?

**BELLE**

There was a terrible storm and everything was floating about, like in a ...

**CASSANDRA**

Like in a dream.

*Cassandra opens the shutters and light floods in.*

**CASSANDRA**

There you see – no storm, just another beautiful day, cloudless. Belle, come to the window, come on. What are you scared of now?

**BELLE**

Nothing.

**CASSANDRA**

Then come here.

*Slowly Belle approaches the window – suddenly Cassandra is behind here and covers her eyes with her hands.*

**BELLE**

Don't, don't –

**CASSANDRA**

Stop wriggling – stop. There's nothing to be scared of.

**BELLE**

What are you doing?

**CASSANDRA**

It's a game.

**BELLE**

I don't like tit. What's out there?

**CASSANDRA**

Listen.

*Slowly the sound of the outside world; the sounds of a busy street in London. Belle opens her eyes.*

**CASSANDRA**

How sill you are. *(Mimics)* What's out there? London is out there. London. Horses, coaches, dances, theatre, opera –

**BELLE**

I don't like London.

**CASSANDRA**

Nonsense. "To be scared of London is to be scared of life." Someone nearly said that once. Anyway, there's nothing to be scared of, as long as one walks at a swift pace.

**BELLE**

Then there is something to be scared of?

**CASSANDRA**

Very well, we'll run. We will run headlong down the Strand.

**BELLE**

Run?

**CASSANDRA**

With our hair flowing all the way back to Buckingham Palace. And then we'll go to Convent Garden and laugh at some very strange shaped vegetables.

**BELLE**

I'd rather stay in.

**CASSANDRA**

Oh Belle.

**BELLE**

In my dream.

**CASSANDRA**

It is my solemn duty, sister, to inform you that your dreams are incredibly dull. I shall go on my own.

**BELLE**

You can't Father said quite clearly, that we must only go into town together.

**CASSANDRA**

Then, come with me. You force me to disobey him.

**BELLE**

You wouldn't dare.

*Cassandra knows this is true and in frustration, she throws 'Janet' at Belle. Belle throws it back.*

**CASSANDRA**

Perhaps Janet would like to see London?

**BELLE**

Don't, don't! *(Cassandra throws the dog out of the window.)* Cassandra!

**CASSANDRA**

Now look at you run to the window, without a fear in the world.

**BELLE**

It's him – he's here.

*Cassandra runs to the window.*

**CASSANDRA**

At this hour? Daniel. *(She waves)*

**BELLE**

Cassandra!

**CASSANDRA**

Come up – come up.

**BELLE**

No, we're not dressed.

**CASSANDRA**

How wicked we are.

*Belle tries to flee but there is a knock at the door. She freezes, grabs a bed cover and wraps it round her. Enter Daniel Knightly with dog, he bows.*

**DANIEL**

Ladies, good morning.

**CASSANDRA**

It is, suddenly, a very good morning.

**DANIEL**

I see, I've caught you unprepared.

**CASSANDRA**

Perhaps not. Don't blush, Belle, it doesn't match the – the dress.

**DANIEL**

That's a new style I take it.

**CASSANDRA**

Just in from – from Paris – la spread de bed.

**DANIEL**

Bonjour, Madame Belle. Your dog gave me quite a scare. It is yours, I believe, Madame?

**CASSANDRA**

She's lost her voice.

**DANIEL**

I'm sorry to hear that.

**CASSANDRA**

You won't have to – it's lost – lost. She's very careless – lost her sense of humor years ago – how we searched.

*She takes the dog from Daniel and throws it back to Belle. Then she takes Daniel to one side.*

**CASSANDRA**

It's very early to be calling on a young lady.

**DANIEL**

I've come to speak to your Father, on a most urgent matter.

**CASSANDRA**

That concerns?

**DANIEL**

That concerns our future happiness.

**CASSANDRA**

Daniel...

*She throws her arms around him.*

**BELLE**

Cassandra!

**CASSANDRA**

Did you hear something?

**DANIEL**

Nothing, nothing at all.

*They kiss. Belle covers her face with the bedspread.*

**CASSANDRA**

I'll go and wake Father. Belle, stay with Mister Knightly – entertain him.

*Belle has never been so embarrassed.*

**DANIEL**

Belle...May I speak plainly to you? It is my fervent hope that your sister and I shall be married. And I also hope – that you and I, can be friends. may I assure you, that whatever my reputation, as a – an adventurer – that I love her. I love her more than is possible to say, I love her – fervently. (*Silence*) Yes, ah – what's this?

**BELLE**

It's a book.

**DANIEL**

Yes, I recognize the shape. 'Myths and Legends of the Ancient Greeks'. Have you ever been to Greece?

**BELLE**

No.

**DANIEL**

I have – once in Aegean sea I was sat upon by Pirates.

**BELLE**

Sat upon?

**DANIEL**

Attacked, captured – sat upon and – tortured.

**BELLE**

Torture indeed sir, to be used, as a common chair. A man of your worth could at least expect as a chaise longue.

*Silence.*

**DANIEL**

But I overcame the guard, he was drunk, which gave me the edge. I then dressed in his pirate clothes. I am a master of disguise, and then went up on dock. The pirate captain was there waiting, sword in hand. He had his wonderful black beard as long as a rope, black as coal, and in his beard, were diamonds – diamonds, that shone –

**BELLE**

Fervently, no doubt.

**DANIEL**

I see you're not impressed by my adventures.

**BELLE**

What did you do?

**DANIEL**

I cut off his head – beard – diamonds and all. *(He takes out a ring from his pocket)* This ring contains one of those diamonds, soon it will belong to your sister. Whom I love, indeed most – fervently – but I promise I will never use that word again in your company.

**BELLE**

And these 'diamonds' are they the basis of your wealth?

*Enter Cassandra*

**CASSANDRA**

He's on his way.

*Belle suddenly screams.*

**DANIEL**

What? What?

**BELLE**

A spi – spi – spi –

**CASSANDRA**

Will you stop doing that.

**DANIEL**

What troubles you?

**CASSANDRA**

A spider.

**DANIEL**

Are you scared of spiders?

**CASSANDRA**

She's scared of everything. There, it's gone. It's free – free as a – spider, Belle! it's gone.

*Enter George Goodwin.*

**GODWIN**

Mr. Knightly. What brings you here so early?

**DANIEL**

Last night, sir, your ships were reported three miles off the coast of Dover.

**GODWIN**

Ha, ha! So soon – so soon. Ha Ha! *(He embraces Daniel)* Fortune does indeed favor the brave.

**CASSANDRA**

Belle, by noon we shall be rich, rich beyond our wildest dreams. From this day forward you shall want for nothing. ha ha! Is there something else, Mister Knightly?

**GODWIN**

I did not expect them to arrive from France until Tuesday –

**DANIEL**

If I may ask –

**GODWIN**

Why are you wearing a bedcover? From today, you shall have clothes fit for a princess – my Beauty. You are your Mother's image. If only she were here to share this day.

**CASSANDRA**

Father?

**GODWIN**

Yes.

**DANIEL**

Sir, if I may now ask, beg – please, for you daughter's hand in marriage...

**GODWIN**

Belle? You are a dark horse.

**DANIEL**

No sir, Cassandra.

**GODWIN**

Cassandra?

**CASSANDRA**

Yes!

**DANIEL**

Whom I love most – f-f-f-fervently

**GODWIN**

My dear boy, my sweet things. I've been so taken up with the business of risk – that I – I failed to see this particular ship so near the harbor wall. Is your heart true?

**DANIEL**

Yes sir.

**GODWIN**

And you – love him?

**CASSANDRA**

I do.

**GODWIN**

Be happy then, but be cautious, your combined fortunes will make you the envy of this great, greedy city. Of which I shall shortly be the Merchant King. Ha, ha – Daniel, my son, go down to Tillbury Docks and wait for the news of my ships. I shall – I shall – I shall go and get dressed.

*Exit Godwin.*

**CASSANDRA**

Everything I ever dreamed is coming true.

**DANIEL**

I shall never leave you.

*He goes. Cassandra dances around the room.*

**CASSANDRA**

What's the matter?

**BELLE**

Strange, how they say they'll never leave, then do so immediately.

**CASSANDRA**

Will you be my bridesmaid?

**BELLE**

If you want.

**CASSANDRA**

Of course, I want. Oh, Belle, whatever will we do with you? I know, we'll start with your hair.

**BELLE**

What's wrong with my hair?

**CASSANDRA**

Nothing, you just need to let it down.

**BELLE**

I don't like it down, I like it up.

**CASSANDRA**

You don't want to look pretty?

**BELLE**

No.

**CASSANDRA**

Why not?

**BELLE**

What for?

**CASSANDRA**

For fun, Belle – to feel the wind rushing through it – the rain soaking every strand and the sun baking it dry until the wind starts to blow through it again and again.

*She dances.*

**BELLE**

I'm going to get dressed. *(Cassandra grabs both her arms and forces her to dance)*  
Cassandra, please stop.

**CASSANDRA**

Never.

*They dance and laugh, until both are dizzy and they fall over. Enter Daniel.*

**CASSANDRA**

Daniel, what is it? What's the matter?

**DANIEL**

Call your Father.

**CASSANDRA**

Father!

*Exit Cassandra.*

**BELLE**

What has happened, Mr. Knightly? Why do you look so grim.

*Enter Godwin.*

**GODWIN**

Daniel? Back so soon? What news?

**DANIEL**

A crowd of men, who say you owe them money, are marching from the docks. They have sticks and stones and are in a grim mood Mr. Godwin.

**GODWIN**

My ships - ?

**DANIEL**

Last night, your ships –

**BELLE**

A storm at sea?

**DANIEL**

You know?

**BELLE**

No – I –

**GODWIN**

For pity's sake, man, what kind of storm? What has happened to my ships?

**DANIEL**

Lost, sir.

**GODWIN**

Lost? How many Lost?

**DANIEL**

All – sir.

**GODWIN**

All? All my ships are lost?

**DANIEL**

It took them by surprise, a storm out of nothing. Waves as high as hills –

*Godwin collapses.*

**CASSANDRA**

Father?

The men? **GODWIN**

Sixteen are saved – **DANIEL**

Thank God for that, at least – **GODWIN**

**CASSANDRA**  
Father, surely you have money put by, in case of such an accident.

No. **GODWIN**

You are insured? **CASSANDRA**

**GODWIN**  
The insurers said the risk was too high. But still I borrowed money. I borrowed, I took the risk. The men I borrowed from want it back – they're marching down upon us now.

**CASSANDRA**  
We have nothing left?

**GODWIN**  
Nothing.

*There is a sudden banging on the door.*

**BELLE**  
Thunder. Lighting.

**CASSANDRA**  
Be quiet.

*There is more banging, which now can become unrealistic, a threatening sound.*

**GODWIN**  
God have mercy on us.

**BELLE**  
My dream, my dream.

**CASSANDRA**

Stop it! Mr. Knightly and I, are to be married. His fortune can save us. Daniel, you have money, come to our rescue – you can get rid of these men, Daniel?

**DANIEL**

Cassandra...

**CASSANDRA**

What is it?

**GODWIN**

A little money is all I need, to give me time. I beg you – I will repay you, I swear. On my daughter's love, I swear.

*Another knocking sound. Belle covers her ears.*

**CASSANDRA**

Daniel?

**DANIEL**

I am not – I am not wealthy.

**CASSANDRA**

The diamonds?

**DANIEL**

They – are not real.

**CASSANDRA**

Not real? But you have money, you said, you had money.

**DANIEL**

Everyone says they have money, but I do not.

**CASSANDRA**

You lied?

**DANIEL**

No – yes, because I love you and you would not look at me, if I were not –

**CASSANDRA**

You are – worthless then.

**DANIEL**

Yes – no, I am – I have nothing, but you also have nothing.

**CASSANDRA**

You were going to marry me for my fortune, now it's gone.

**DANIEL**

I will still marry you, I love you.

*The noise outside increases. belle starts to dance as if she were not in the scene at all.*

**BELLE**

Thunder, lightning.

**CASSANDRA**

Stop it, stop, stop.

**GODWIN**

I'm lost, I'm lost.

**DANIEL**

Cassandra?

**CASSANDRA**

Go away, go away. I never wish to see your face again.

**GODWIN**

My heart, my heart.

**CASSANDRA**

Father?

*The knocking on the door reaches a climax. There now follows a dream like change, involving sound and movement, as the scene changes to a poor cottage in Devon. The interior is visible, as is the outside yard. Throughout this change, Belle dances as the items signifying their wealth drift away, all around her.*

**CASSANDRA**

Wake up! Belle! Belle! *(She shakes Belle)* Wake up.

**BELLE**

Help me, help me.

**CASSANDRA**

Belle!

**BELLE**

Cassandra? *(She hugs her sister)*

**CASSANDRA**

It's morning and there's work to do – no time for dreaming here, we have logs to cut, a fire to light.

**BELLE**

I dreamt we were in London, on that dreadful day.

**CASSANDRA**

Well, we're not in London any more, we're in – Devon.

**BELLE**

It all seemed so real. You were there, I was there –

**CASSANDRA**

Well, you're not there, you're here, in – Devon.

**BELLE**

And Father was there and Daniel...

**CASSANDRA**

I told you not to mention his name ever again. Why do you keep tormenting me? Will you please help?

*They work for a moment, then Cassandra stops.*

**CASSANDRA**

Oh, Belle, how did it come to this? Look at my hands, red with work, my eyes red with crying. It's as if some evil spirit took against us.

**BELLE**

No, it was just misfortune, that's all.

**CASSANDRA**

More than that. How else can I explain it? One moment, I'm in love about to be married – to be wealthy – and the next moment love and wealth have gone. With a wave of some malicious wand we are transported to this hovel in – Devon. Where there were streets and people, there is moorland, dark, bleak and cheerless. I hate this place, I have it with all my heart.

**BELLE**

My sister...

**CASSANDRA**

He broke my heart...he had no right to do that. And yet, I miss him, for all his lies.

**BELLE**

I know.

**CASSANDRA**

He told me, he'd been captured by pirates. I believed him.

**BELLE**

He told me that also.

**CASSANDRA**

That he cut off the pirate's beard, which was studded with diamonds?

**BELLE**

Yes.

**CASSANDRA**

That he escaped on the back of a dolphin?

**BELLE**

On a dolphin?

**CASSANDRA**

Who spoke to him – in French. And I believed him.

**BELLE**

You were in love.

**CASSANDRA**

What a foolish state to be in. I shall never go there again. I'm better off in – Devon.

*She is half-laughing, half crying.*

**BELLE**

Cassandra. I know this cottage is small, but that's its beauty. We can be happy here, I'm sure of it. Come to the window, come and look again. Look – what trees we have – oak ash, blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel...

**CASSANDRA**

There's a difference?

**BELLE**

And the moor itself...open, free and full of wild creatures – rabbits, hares foxes, stags and wolves...

**CASSANDRA**

Wolves? There are no wolves left in England? Are there?

**BELLE**

You could ride across it and not see a single soul.

**CASSANDRA**

Exactly – there are no people and the people there are, just grunt and speak in that terrible accent.

**BELLE**

You mean Master Stewer?

**CASSANDRA**

He is the stupidest person I ever met, apart from myself – for falling in love with a penniless storyteller.

**BELLE**

Without Master Stewer, we'd be thin indeed.

**CASSANDRA**

He smells.

**BELLE**

That isn't true.

**CASSANDRA**

He smells of pig and whatever pigs leave behind.

**BELLE**

Oh Cassandra!

*Enter Godwin.*

**GODWIN**

Surely, my misfortunes are hard enough to bear without these arguments.

**BELLE**

Are you well, Father?

**GODWIN**

I feel Stronger by the day. It's the good country air.

**CASSANDRA**

Your health is assured then. I've never seen a place with so much air. Belle seems to have swallowed a sky full.

**GODWIN**

Cassandra!

**BELLE**

It's alright, Father.

**CASSANDRA**

No doubt, she'll ride up to the moor and bring you back a nice bag of air – for breakfast. Oh, I forgot you're scared of horses, and going too fast, and falling off and getting lost, and spiders and mice and heights and – better just read all about it in a big fat safe book.

*Silence. They stare at her.*

**CASSANDRA**

I'm sorry I'm being so horrible...it's just – I don't want this life, I don't want it.

*She exits.*

**GODWIN**

Poor Cassandra, what have I done? What have I done?

**BELLE**

At least we have a roof above us, a fire –

**GODWIN**

It's strange to be here again. I used to sit here when I was a lad, and Mother used to tell me stories, wonderful stories about the moor. They were good people, your grandparents – but I was like Cassandra. I wanted the excitement of the city – the thrill of trade, so I left. I never thought I would return.

*Enter Jan, outside*

**JAN**

Hello there –

**GODWIN**

Who's there?

**BELLE**

It's Master Stewer

**GODWIN**

Oh Lord, go and speak with him.

**JAN**

Mornin', Miss Belle

**BELLE**

Good morning, what's that you have?

**JAN**

What?

**BELLE**

That.

*He looks over his shoulder and sees the dead bird, gives himself a shock.*

**JAN**

Lor' I forgot all about 'im – tis a goose – dead, for you and –

**BELLE**

Cassandra

**JAN**

And yer vather.

**BELLE**

That's very kind of you.

**JAN**

Shall I pluck'un vor ee?

**BELLE**

I'm sorry what was that?

**JAN**

Shall – I pluck – un vor – ee?

**BELLE**

No, I can do that.

**JAN**

What about the gizzards?

**BELLE**

I can do it.

*Enter Cassandra with axe.*

**JAN**

I'll chop er ed awf is wee wants me to. Not you Missus. You got sich a purty ed.

**BELLE**

Master Stewer has brought us a goose.

**JAN**

I'll chop some logs and all.

**CASSANDRA**

We have no money to pay you Master Stewer.

**JAN**

No matter.

**CASSANDRA**

All our wealth lies at the bottom of the sea.

**JAN**

That as I heard, still, money id'n everything. I'll chop ee a few logs all the same.

**CASSANDRA**

Why? What do you want?

**JAN**

Nothin.

**CASSANDRA**

Yes you do – everyone wants something. Life is trade – trade is life. What are you trading, apart from odours?

**BELLE**

Cassandra, please.

**JAN**

No, I can rightly say I want nothing at all.

**CASSANDRA**

I don't trust you, not one inch. Nor you, Sister..in London, you wouldn't say boo to a goose, now you can't wait to cut its head off.

*Exit Cassandra with goose.*

**BELLE**

Please forgive my sister.

**JAN**

Tis done.

**BELLE**

She has suffered a loss and is very angry.

*Enter Cassandra with a bucket for water.*

**CASSANDRA**

Don't mince your words, Belle. I fell in love with a man who looked like a man, spoke like a man, declared his love like a man, but the moment my money vanished, so did he.

**JAN**

A villain then.

**BELLE**

No, I don't believe so, not really.

**CASSANDRA**

And what would you know of men, Sister?

**BELLE**

You told him to go and never come back. He implored you, but you sent him away.

*Silence. The two sisters stare at each other.*

**JAN**

That's it, that's what I come for. A letter come for yer vather, by coach. I said I'd drop it by, like. Since you be so far from other folk.

*Cassandra grabs the letter.*

**CASSANDRA**

Father, father.

**GODWIN**

What's this?

**JAN**

That's a letter sir.

**GODWIN**

I can see that Master Stewer.

**CASSANDRA**

Well..

**GODWIN**

Praise the lord.

**CASSANDRA**

Please tell us – what?

**GODWIN**

One ship. One ship did not sink, but was blown down the channel and has run aground near Kingsbridge. That means my goods lie scattered on the beach. They could be stolen, I must hurry and make good my claim.

**CASSANDRA**

Are we saved from Devon father?

**GODWIN**

One ship full of brandy and tobacco, at today's prices will put me back in business.

**CASSANDRA**

Then we will return to London?

**GODWIN**

As fast as wheels can turn. Fetch my cloak and hat.

**JAN**

Knightsbridge you say?

**GODWIN**

I'll go straight across the moor- two days ride.

**BELLE**

Don't go father..

**CASSANDRA**

Go, go –

**JAN**

I advise ee to go round sir, the moor is full of bogs.

**GODWIN**

I have no time. My cloak, my hat, my horse. I have no horse.

**CASSANDRA**

He has a horse.

**GODWIN**

I will repay you, twice what the horse is worth, is that not a risk worth taking?

**JAN**

I want nothing from you, sir. Take the horse, but go 'round the moor

**GODWIN**

Sire...*(takes him aside)* I must go directly and throw caution to the wind. This is my nature and I will ride the more swiftly, if I know my daughters are looked after. Good man. Now what shall I bring you on my return?

**CASSANDRA**

A golden dress, made of silk, satin.

**GODWIN**

You shall have it, and you Belle?

**BELLE**

Your safe return is all I want.

**CASSANDRA**

For Pity's sake.

**GODWIN**

Nonsense Belle, I shall bring you a gift.

**BELLE**

Wait and see Father. You don't know what lies ahead, we may yet be poor.

**GODWIN**

Don't test my patience child. Name a gift. As I am your father, I will bring it to you.

**BELLE**

Then bring home a rose – a red rose.

**CASSANDRA**

A rose?

**GODWIN**

Your mother's favorite flower. I shall do my best. Thank you Master Stewer – I shall repay you handsomely.

**BELLE**

Don't forget Father.

**CASSANDRA**

Go, go go, throw caution to the wind.

*Exit Godwin.*

**CASSANDRA**

Why do you look so worried? Things are on the mend.

**BELLE**

I don't know, I fell so...as if something is about to happen. Something bad.

**CASSANDRA**

Strange, I feel exactly the opposite. Who's feelings should we trust? And what are you staring at?

**JAN**

Nort.

**CASSANDRA**

Nort? What kind of word is nort? Don't you know the King's English?

**JAN**

Well, I – I just presumed he was, like.

**CASSANDRA**

You are well-meaning, but deeply stupid.

*Belle screams*

**JAN**

What's the trouble, miss?

**BELLE**

A sp-spi-spi-spi-

**CASSANDRA**

A spider. There it's gone – gone.

**JAN**

No harm in a little spider, Miss Belle. No harm at all.

*Cassandra starts to dance with her arms outstretched as if holding an imaginary person.*

**CASSANDRA**

Thank you for those kind words Master Stewer, you can go now.

**BELLE**

Stay.

**CASSANDRA**

GO, go.

**BELLE**

Please stay.

**CASSANDRA**

Are you frightened of Belle? I thought you liked it here.

**BELLE**

It seems different now.

**CASSANDRA**

Now father's gone? He will go one day you know, forever and ever.

**JAN**

I shall stay –

**CASSANDRA**

*(Still Dancing)*

What do I care, we'll be away soon – da da da

**BELLE**

What are you doing?

**CASSANDRA**

I'm dancing...

**BELLE**

Who with?

**CASSANDRA**

Oh, I don't know, but it's not Mister Knightly. Its – a Prince. He's very handsome.

*She dances and picks up Jan and forces him round and round.*

**BELLE**

Please stop - my head.

**CASSANDRA**

No, I won't.

*Cassandra lets Jan go and grabs Belle, forcing her to dance.*

**BELLE**

Please stop, please stop.

**CASSANDRA**

Never.

**JAN**

Miss Godwin!

*Suddenly Cassandra stops.*

**CASSANDRA**

Oh, Belle, can't you even dance without getting a headache.

**JAN**

She's dizzy that's all. You alright miss?

**BELLE**

Sounds in my head. Pictures.

**JAN**

Pichers? What kind of pichers?

**CASSANDRA**

Have no fear, Master Stewer, my sister is always seeing things.

**JAN**

Oh, aye, what do ee see now them?

**BELLE**

I see the moor, little trees, bent over by the wind.

*As she says this the scene begins to change around her. She is entering a trance. A silhouette of the moor appears behind her, though it is not visible to Cassandra or Jan.*

**BELLE**

I see a huge sky red at sunset.

**CASSANDRA**

She's dreaming, that's all.

**JAN**

She be awake.

**CASSANDRA**

Are you sure? With Belle, it's not easy to tell.

*We hear the sound of hooves faintly.*

**BELLE**

I see Father on horseback.

**CASSANDRA**

Wake up.

**JAN**

Don't, it could hurt her.

**BELLE**

The skies are darkening and he rides so swiftly pushing the horse forward but the horse is too tired. He take no heed of stones.

*Now we hear the thunder of hooves and see a large silhouette of the rider and horse across the skyline.*

**BELLE**

Father, father.

*Suddenly there is a crash of thunder, a streak of lightening, the horse rears and the rider falls.*

**BELLE**

Father!

**CASSANDRA**

Belle, Belle, wake up, wake up.

**JAN**

Can you hear me Miss Belle?

**CASSANDRA**

Belle, Belle...

*Cassandra and Jan retreat, their voices fading away. Belle stands alone, seeing in her mind what we continue to see in shadow play. There is a deep sound – a growl of foreboding. Wolves then approach the body of the fallen rider. They howl at the moon. Belle begins to dance, as if under the influence of the moon and the music of the wolves. Then the shadow of a large gate with magnificent whorls of iron appears and as it gets larger, the wolves exit. Belle dances, while the set changes to the interior of a castle. For Belle, this is like a dream in which the walls of a room are getting smaller and one can't get out. As it nears completion she is defeated and flees into a deep sleep as it were, and exits.*

*The Castle of the Beast.*

*Godwin wakes up in the castle. His head hurts.*

**GODWIN**

Hello, is anyone there? Hello...

*His voice echoes down the halls. 'Hello, hello, hello'*

**GODWIN**

Is anyone there? *(he looks around and sees that torches are burning. Then we hear a low growl, deep, not distinctly an animal.)* Hello, come out...am I alone?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

No sir. *(He turns shocked and is face to face with the Housekeeper who has entered silently behind him.)* Would we leave a guest alone? Of course, we would not.

**GODWIN**

Forgive me, I didn't hear you.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Soft shoes, soft shoes.

**GODWIN**

How relieved I am..i was beginning to think – where am i? What place is - ?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

A lucky place for you, sir. You were thrown from your horse.

**GODWIN**

My horse?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Is lost, sir somewhere on the moor – but no doubt, it will find its way home again. My master found you and brought you here. A rare honor. You are the first visitor we've had in – well, longer than I care to think.

**GODWIN**

Strange, I remember nothing.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

You have a nasty lump on the forehead, sir. I will dress it for you.

**GODWIN**

Thank you. I would like to present myself to your master and thank him for saving me. I could have been robbed, killed.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

That won't be necessary. The master wishes you to eat, sleep and return safely home. I will fetch some water and a cloth. In the meantime, please, tuck in.

*He turns to follow her and she is gone. When he turns back food has appeared out of nowhere.*

**GODWIN**

God help me. Hello! Such food. *(He can not help but laugh)* Perhaps I'm sick, such a knock would unsettle one. *(He starts to eat.)*

*The Housekeeper returns with a bowl and a cloth.*

**GODWIN**

The food is – well, I turned and –

**HOUSEKEEPER**

I hope you like it. I prepared it myself.

**GODWIN**

And you are?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

The master's housekeeper. Who else, sir would fetch and carry as I do.

**GODWIN**

Of course, my name is Godwin. I am a merchant. I was – I would so like to see your master and –

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Please don't think us rude, but he does not wish to be seen.

**GODWIN**

Then please convey my thanks and – and tell him I think his house most – handsome.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Built in his own image.

*Low growl from off. Godwin stands.*

**GODWIN**

What was that sound?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Sound?

**GODWIN**

I heard a sound.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

The castle, sir, has a sound all of its own. It creaks and speaks, and on occasion, leaks – think nothing of it. Please finish your meal.

**GODWIN**

Yes, would you – care to join me?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Indeed, it's sad to eat alone.

**GODWIN**

I did not know of this house – it's most strange.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Yes, I found it strange at first, but now I'm used to it. We are friends this house and I.

**GODWIN**

How long have you worked here?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Oh, centuries.

**GODWIN**

What is the master's name?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

You were on your way to Kingsbridge, I understand.

**GODWIN**

Yes, how did you know?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

You were dreaming, you spoke a lot. Do you like the wine?

**GODWIN**

Yes, that's strange too. It's my favorite wine – indeed all this food is the food I would have chosen myself, every dish, as if you knew my likes and dislikes.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

I'm a good judge of men, sire. Will you go on to Kingsbridge?

**GODWIN**

No, I shall return home. I can't salvage what I lost. Which is everything. *(He feels dizzy, as if the wine has gone to his head)* We came from London.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Are you well?

**GODWIN**

The wine – this place – I feel so...

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Out of place. I know exactly how you feel, sir. You are in another world down here.

**GODWIN**

Yes. Everything seems so – so far away.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Did you leave a wife in London, sir?

**GODWIN**

Yes, she died, many years ago.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

I knew as much.

**GODWIN**

A good judge indeed.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

And whatever happened...I am sure, was not your fault. A good man like you.

*She bathes his head. He closes his eyes.*

**GODWIN**

She died, giving birth, to my youngest daughter. I forced a long journey upon her – and the road was so – so full of holes and she begged me to stop but – but I – felt that I must reach the city and make our fortune.

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Hush now. *(When he opens his eyes, the food has gone)*You must sleep. *(A bed appears)* In the morning, touch nothing, take nothing and go home. Forget what happened here and no harm will come to you.

*Godwin sleeps. The moon rises. There is the distant howl of a wolf. As he sleeps, the scene changes around him, as ever in dream-like fashion. Morning comes and roses appear all around him, so that he can step from his bed straight into the garden.*

**GODWIN**

What new wonder is this? Hello? Good morning – anyone? Roses, white and red. A red rose for Belle, that much at least, I can give her.

*He takes a rose, then there is a lone roar and the Beast jumps down in front of him.*

**BEAST**

Ungrateful man.

**GODWIN**

God save me, what are you?

**BEAST**

I am a beast – and you are a thief. *(He roars)*

**GODWIN**

Kepp back. Keep back.

**BEAST**

I saved your life, opened the door of my house to you, gave you food and bed to sleep in, and you thank me by stealing the only thing I still hold dear.

**GODWIN**

One rose is all I took.

**BEAST**

One rose of mien – mine. Only death can pay for such a crime.

**GODWIN**

Whatever you are, I'm not afraid of you.

**BEAST**

Thief and a liar.

*(Godwin draws his sword and the Beast leaps upon him, knocking the sword free. He kneels wolf-like on Godwin's chest. His jaws close to Godwin's face.*

**BEAST**

Now you are afraid. I can smell it. I give you one hour to pray for your soul, then you shall die.

**GODWIN**

In the name of good reason, how could I know a rose was so precious to you, whom I had never met. I beg of you sir.

**BEAST**

No one calls me sir anymore – my name is Beast. *(He stands and becomes more human)* Why do you stare – do you think me ugly?

**GODWIN**

No.

**BEAST**

Twice you lie to me. I'm fortunate not to have known you so long – your lies would poison the air.

**GODWIN**

Let me live, I beg you. Take pity on me...I have lost everything in these past few months.

**BEAST**

I do not care.

**GODWIN**

What crime is it to pick a rose, for one of my daughters? *(The Beast pauses)* If I die, what will become of them? They will be lost forever. I beg you spare my life.

**BEAST**

You have daughters?

**GODWIN**

Two.

**BEAST**

Two? You are a lucky man. Do you love them?

**GODWIN**

Yes.

**BEAST**

This is the first word you have spoken truly. Sire. How much do you love them?

**GODWIN**

One can not put a price on such a thing.

**BEAST**

You are a merchant. Everything has its price. Your life, mine, your daughters.

**GODWIN**

I don't understand, what do you want.

**BEAST**

There might be a way of saving – your skin. We beasts are so attached to them. Are we not?

**GODWIN**

I will do anything.

**BEAST**

Good. In return for your life, give me one of your daughters.

**GODWIN**

What?

**BEAST**

Give me one of your daughters.

**GODWIN**

I can not.

**BEAST**

Then die here, now.

**GODWIN**

It's an evil thing you ask.

**BEAST**

Evil – sir, you have no notion of the word.

**GODWIN**

There is evil in this house. I have felt it. I feel it now.

**BEAST**

Give me one of your daughters, and live. Life for you is surely a most precious gift, since there is no profit in the grave.

**GODWIN**

God forgive me.

**BEAST**

Do not force her. She must come to me on her own free will. If one of your daughters does not come here within three days, you will die most certainly.

*He exits, enter housekeeper.*

**GODWIN**

Who are you?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Have you forgotten, sir – the master's housekeeper? *(She puts down his bag)*

**GODWIN**

Where am I? Am I awake? Am I sick? Am I - ?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Hold steady sir.

**GODWIN**

What have I done?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Here is the path home. *(She takes him to one side)* When your mind clears, you will know what you have done, and I urge you, for the sake of your daughter, do not send her here.

**GODWIN**

What have I done?

**HOUSEKEEPER**

A terrible dream.

**GODWIN**

But you, this house...

**HOUSEKEEPER**

Go home, sir. Go home. *(She touches his face, he closes his eyes)* You dreamt of Beast and a lost garden.

*The scene changes around him. Enter Cassandra and Belle.*

**CASSANDRA**

Father?

**GODWIN**

Cassandra? Where am I?

**BELLE**

Are you alright? What's the matter?

**GODWIN**

I don't know, but – a few moments ago, I was somewhere else.

**CASSANDRA**

You're tired after your journey, that's all. Sit down, Fetch him a drink.

**BELLE**

Wherever have you been? What's happened?

**CASSANDRA**

Fetch him a drink! *(Belle does so)* Was your journey a success? Are we 'back in business'? Can we return to London?

**GODWIN**

No, I – I fell from my horse.

**BELLE**

And knocked your head?

**CASSANDRA**

What happened to our ship?

**GODWIN**

I never reached – the ship. I –

**CASSANDRA**

But, you promised.

**GODWIN**

I know. I hoped – but – our return to London, is delayed, that's all – I –

**BELLE**

Leave him for a moment

**CASSANDRA**

Even so...where is the dress you promised me?

**BELLE**

What does it matter?

**CASSANDRA**

It matters to me, what's this?

**GODWIN**

The rose?

**CASSANDRA**

You managed, then, to get Belle what she wanted.

**BELLE**

You have it.

**CASSANDRA**

I don't want it. It cannot be worn, eaten...its as useless – as you are...*(She screws it up onto the floor)*. I'm sorry – I'm sorry.

**GODWIN**

*(Muttering)*

Forgive me, forgive me.

**BELLE**

What are you talking about, Father? Forgive you what?

**GODWIN**

I – I made a promise.

**BELLE**

What promise? To whom?

**GODWIN**

He said –

**BELLE**

Who said?

**GODWIN**

That I would die – because I took the rose.

**CASSANDRA**

He's deranged – we must fetch a doctor.

**BELLE**

Tell us what happened to you, Father...slowly, clearly.

**GODWIN**

I am no father to you. I'm a coward...all I have ever done in my life, is search for riches. I have taken terrible risks – at your expense...your mother... I ...

**BELLE**

What have you promised?

**CASSANDRA**

Tell us.

**GODWIN**

HE said that I could leave this house, if one of you would return in my place, of your own free will.

**BELLE**

Who?

**GODWIN**

A beast.

**CASSANDRA**

This isn't real.

**BELLE**

Yes, it is.

**CASSANDRA**

Will you stop contradicting me? Father is sick, he's fallen from his horse and knocked his head.

**GODWIN**

A beast, a beast.

**CASSANDRA**

You see, he's raving. Father, forgive me – outbreak. I don't care about the dress. I was upset, that's all. I'm over it you see...that's how I am, storm in a tea cup – now you must go to bed, rest...rest...

**GODWIN**

I forbid either of you to leave this house. You will not go. You will not go. (*He collapses.*)

**CASSANDRA**

There, you see. We need a doctor.

**BELLE**

We don't need a doctor.

**CASSANDRA**

Stop that – stop it! Master Stewer? Jan?

**BELLE**

A doctor cannot help him.

*Enter Jan*

**CASSANDRA**

Jan, go and fetch a doctor. Any doctor.

**BELLE**

Stay.

**CASSANDRA**

Go.

**BELLE**

Stay.

**CASSANDRA**

Why are you doing this?

**BELLE**

Father is going to die, unless one of goes –

**CASSANDRA**

Where? To a beast – in a castle? Are you insane? It does not exist.

**BELLE**

If it does not exist, what harm is there in going?

**CASSANDRA**

You will not take one step from this house, as your older sister I forbid it. Jan, you will stop her.

**JAN**

Yes, mam.

**BELLE**

No, you will not.

**JAN**

No man.

**CASSANDRA**

You are so – useless.

**JAN**

Yes mam.

*She catches Belle's coat and pulls her back.*

**BELLE**

Cassandra?

**CASSANDRA**

This is your fault, because you and to ask for a rose. Why couldn't yu be normal and want something expensive?

**BELLE**

Yes, my fault...I admit.

**CASSANDRA**

No, no. Oh, you will stop her.

**JAN**

Yes mam.

**BELLE**

You will not.

**JAN**

No mam.

**CASSANDRA**

Please, my sister, I beg you –

**BELLE**

I know things – see things.

**CASSANDRA**

No! How can you see things the rest of us, don't? You only say you do to make yourself feel special, because – because you feel inadequate next to me. I understand. Please don't leave me here, alone.

**BELLE**

Get out of my way Jan.

**JAN**

Yes, mam.

*He moves aside. Cassandra, in a rage, hits him once. To her surprise, he falls over, unconscious.*

**CASSANDRA**

You see, Sister. I'm not like you. I have real strength.

**BELLE**

You want to fight, like we used to when we were little?

**CASSANDRA**

Yes. Yes. Yes. *(They fight, Belle gets free)* It isn't safe it isn't safe!

**BELLE**

I know...don't you understand, Cassandra? I want to go – of my own free will.

*A sudden crack of thunder. The whole scene is sent into a whirl, as if the girls are at the bottom of a tornado. They dance around each other. It's very like the opening storm, and when it comes to a rest, Belle is standing with her bag, at the silhouette of the iron gates to the Beast's Castle. There is a moment's stillness, as she takes in this 'reality', and then we see a silhouette of a wolf. The wolf howls.*