

AUDITION SCENE 1

AFTER THE BALL: FATHER & CINDERELLA

(Father is seated by the fireplace, Cinderella at his feet. Taking something from his pocket he tenderly drops a sugar plum into her hand)

CINDERELLA. (grasping it eagerly, looking up) Tell me! Tell me!

FATHER. What shall I tell you?

CINDERELLA Everything!

FATHER (scratching his head) Everything?

CINDERELLA Everything, Father.

FATHER. Well...

CINDERELLA Did they announce your name at the door? And did you go in?

FATHER. Oh yes, I went right in - yes, all the way in.

CINDERELLA And was it very gay and grand and bright?

FATHER You'd never believe how grand and bright it was.

CINDERELLA. And were there lots and lots of pretty ladies?

FATHER Pretty enough. Pretty enough.

CINDERELLA. Who was the prettiest?

FATHER It wasn't Thusa, my dear.

CINDERELLA. No?

FATHER And it wasn't Minta, my dear.

CINDERELLA. No?

FATHER. But after supper, such a supper Ella! When we thought everybody had arrived, the Duchesses, the Countesses, the Margravines and all that, the doors were flung open, there came a sudden buzz, a flourish of trumpets - and in came the Princess of Nowhere.

CINDERELLA (clasping her hands tight under her chin) What?

FATHER. The Princess of Nowhere

CINDERELLA. Say it again!

FATHER. The Princess of Nowhere.

CINDERELLA (springs to her feet in a transport of joy) Then it is true. It wasn't a dream!

FATHER. Of course it's true.

CINDERELLA (dancing around him) True. True. True. It's true, true, true.

FATHER. Sh, Sh, Sh

CINDERELLA.(to sleeping stepmother and stepsisters) Sh Sh Sh. (Drops to her knees beside her father) And was she the prettiest?

FATHER. Much the prettiest.

CINDERELLA. The prettiest you ever saw.

FATHER. I may be an old silly, but you know Ella, you yourself have always seemed to me -

CINDERELLA. Oh no, Father! Not as pretty as the Princess from Nowhere. The Princess was the prettiest you ever saw - say it, Father. Wasn't she?

FATHER. The Princess was the prettiest I ever saw.

CINDERELLA. (hugging him) Oh Father! And the Prince...what did the Prince do?

FATHER. He never took his eyes off her.

CINDERELLA. Oh Father! And her dress?

FATHER (scratching his head) Her dress? Let me see... It was all... I'm not much of a hand at describing dresses, Ella, but - yes, it was such a dress as I should like to be able to give you. That describes it exactly. Just such a dress as I should like to give you. And all I have to give you is a sugar-plum.

CINDERELLA. Oh Father...you have given me much more than that.

AUDITION SCENE 2

YOU WON'T BE GOING! CINDERELLA AND STEPMOTHER

STEMMOTHER (holds out hand for invitation) Give it to me. Now! (Cinderella hides hands behind her back) Don't try to hide that card.

CINDERELLA (backing away) I won't give it to you. I won't!

STEMMOTHER Madam.

CINDERELLA I won't give it to you, *Madam*.

STEMMOTHER (turning away, few steps DR) But you know you can't go to the Ball, don't you?

CINDERELLA Why not?

STEPMOTHER (cooing) I should have thought that was clear enough. You don't think they really want a little slattern like you, do you?

CINDERELLA Why not?

STEPMOTHER And you think you could go?

CINDERELLA Why not?

STEPMOTHER (all sympathy) Because you've got nothing to go in. Have YOU? Do you want to stand among the silks and satins with people laughing at you? Do you?
(Turns on her suddenly) Tear up that invitation!

CINDERELLA I won't.

STEPMOTHER You'll be sorry.

CINDERELLA I won't.

STEPMOTHER We'll see about that. (withdrawing something from her pocket, opening her hand) What do you think this is?

CINDERELLA My mother's miniature! Where did you get it? Give it back!

STEPMOTHER (picks up rolling pin) And what do you think this is?

CINDERELLA (tears come with the rage) Give it back to me, give it back! You took it from under my pillow.

STEPMOTHER (flourishing rolling pin) You will tear up that card, or there will be a little smash. Do you want to see your mother's picture smashed?

CINDERELLA It's the only thing of hers I have.

STEPMOTHER What a pity. Now tear up that card before I've counted three. One! Two!...

CINDERELLA (tears the invitation in half)

STEPMOTHER Little pieces. Half isn't enough. Little pieces.

(Cinderella tears the invitation again and again, into little pieces)

STEPMOTHER (cooing) That's a good sensible little girl. Now put the little pieces in the fire. They'll warm you up nicely. Go on.

CINDERELLA Puts the invitation into the fire.

STEPMOTHER (hands miniature back to Cinderella) You see how I keep my promise? There you are.

(Cinderella clasps the miniature next to her heart, and drops by the fire)

AUDITION SCENE 3

MAGIC IN THE WOODS: CINDERELLA MEETS THE OLD CRONE

CINDERELLA. (shivering as she searches for firewood) Perhaps if I weren't so hungry I would search better. That's it, of course. I haven't had any breakfast. No wonder my eyes can't see anything. (Scanning the area, suddenly taking on airs) Here's a tree-stump I can sit on for a dining-chair. It's covered with the most beautiful snow-white satin, and its legs are of twisted ivory - no queen could sit at breakfast on a more splendid throne.

(Brushing snow off stump she sits regally and removes bread roll from her pocket) Dear Father! A horseshoe - that's for luck. I'm going to be lucky today. (Breaking roll in half and considering the pieces gravely) Now let me see. This half is a slice of game pie. That half is three peaches. No, it isn't, it's four peaches. I am being lucky. It might have only been three. (Looking from one half to the other) I'll begin with the pie. (Nibbling a crumb) How delicious! What tasty pastry! What rich jelly!

CRONE AS BIRD. Tweet-tweet!

CINDERELLA. Oh, Robin, what a feeble Twitter. Pretty Robin. Pretty Jenny. Can't you spy any tidbits for your breakfast. I know breakfast isn't easy when it's as snowy as this.

CRONE AS BIRD. (faintly) Tweet-tweet!

CINDERELLA. All right, if you're as hungry as all that, goodbye pastry pie. (crumbling a roll and scattering the crumbs like a shower of snowflakes)

CRONE AS BIRD (fainter still) Tweet-tweet.

CINDERELLA Goodbye, my four peaches. (crumbles the remaining roll) Aren't you lucky little bird, it might have been three.

(Sudden cackle of laughter from the Crone)

CINDERELLA (spins around) Did anyone speak?

CRONE I'm cold... And I'm old.

CINDERELLA Someone did speak!

CRONE It's bleak... And I'm weak. (emerges from behind the brake)

CINDERELLA It's only a funny old crone.

CRONE (shaking) It's chill, chill and I'm ill,ill. Up, bundle, up. Time to go (Picks up bundle of sticks)

Fuel and fire. Fuel and Fire.
Heat is my comfort and desire.

The burden is bitter, the load is cruel
Will nobody help me to carry my fuel?

(string comes undone and twigs scatter). Oh deary me! Oh deary deary me.

CINDERELLA.(picking up sticks) Don't cry granny. I'll pick up your sticks for you.

CRONE. And who may you be when you're at home?

CINDERELLA. I'm nobody when I'm at home, but when I'm out, I'm whoever I like. A countess, a duchess, a princess!

CRONE. Are you indeed? And what may you be now?

CINDERELLA. Now I'm a good fairy - see, here is my wand! (Picks up long stick and waves it over the scattered sticks). Hey presto, sticks! Be a bundle again.

CINDERELLA. (Sticks reassemble into a bundle) Ooh! Did you see that?

CRONE. Did I see that? Off course I seed that. I got eyes in me head, ain't I? Well, it's a lucky day when one meets a good fairy on the way, hey, hey. Jest hoist the bundle on my back again, and I'll be away.

CINDERELLA. I'll carry it for you granny. My back's younger than yours. Where are you going?

CRONE. Home.

CINDERELLA. And what are you when you're at home?

CRONE. I'm somebody when I'm at home. But when I'm out, I'm anything I like, a wren, a robin, a jay.

CINDERELLA. And what may you be now?

CRONE. Only a funny old crone.

CINDERELLA. (Embarrassed, she turns away) Oh granny, please forgive me - please do.

CRONE. (backing away into the woods, in the sweetest voice in Fairyland) What for, child?

CINDERELLA. (Glances up, but the Crone is gone) Oh, oh, where are you?

CRONE AS BIRD. Tweet-tweet.

CINDERELLA. Granny, was it you tweeting all the time? Oh granny, come back! You've forgotten your bundle.

CRONE. (off-stage) Tweet it! Tweet it! Keep it and eat it.

CINDERELLA. Keep it? Oh thank you! Thank you! Now I shall have plenty of wood to take home. (Laughs) But eat it? How can I? (Stoops to lift heavy bundle, amazed). How funny. It doesn't feel only like sticks. There's something inside it. (Kneeling, she peaks into the bundle, then sticks her hand inside). There is something inside! (Amazed, she brings out four peaches, and a game pie). Granny! You've forgotten your breakfast!

CRONE (offstage) Keep it and eat it. Keep it and eat it. Tweet it, tweet it. Keep it and eat it.

CINDERELLA. Thank you, thank you, thank you.
(Kneeling down, she begins to eat to the swell of birdsong)

AUDITION SCENE 4

THE STEPSISTERS PREPARE FOR THE BALL

ARAMINTA: Fingers, fingers! That's my dressing table, thank you! Leave my pots and pomatums alone.

ARATHUSA: I was only...

ARAMINTA: (mimicking) "I was only, I was only" - You was only, you was only!

ARATHUSA: Don't snatch!

ARAMINTA: Don't snatch! You can go to prison for snitching.

ARATHUSA: If it comes to snitching, who snutch my Circassian cream?

ARAMINTA: Who snutch my Essence of Ispahan?

ARETHUSA: Who snutch my Milk of Morocco?

ARAMINTA: Who's got a face like a turnip?

ARETHUSA: (Turning) That's not an argument.

ARAMINTA: What's not an argument

ARETHUSA: That isn't!

ARAMINTA: Well, what is an argument?

ARETHUSA: What do you mean, what IS an argument?

ARAMINTA: Oh, shut up!

ARETHUSA: Shut up yourself! Come on Cinders, hurry up!

ARAMINTA: Look sharp!

ARETHUSA: Do come and dress me, for goodness sake.

ARAMINTA: Me first, me first.

ARETHUSA: I'm oldest!

ARAMINTA: I'm first alphabetically!

ARETHUSA: (Preening) There's no doubt about it, I really am going to be rather a dazzle tonight...What a boon is beauty! Don't you rather dote on droopy eyes?... The dear prince will never be able to resist them...I'm afraid Minty, *your* eyes aren't a bit droopy.

ARAMINTA: Nor my mouth darling. No...not droopy...Mine is what I would call a mysterious allure. What is it, what IS it about me? That's the question the dear Prince will keep asking himself...There certainly is a hidden something.

ARETHUSA: Completely hidden.

ARAMINTA: How do you do, dear prince?

ARATHUSA: Dear Prince, how do you do? Oh, but how sweet of you - I dote on roses!

ARAMINTA: (at Arathusa) So much prettier than wallflowers.

ARATHUSA: Who's a wallflower?

ARAMINTA: I know who's a wallflower.

ARETHUSA: Oh, shut up.

ARAMINTA: Shut up yourself! Music? Yes, indeed...I dote on music... I know it backwards.

ARETHUSA: Backwards?

ARAMINTA: Backwards.

ARETHUSA: Ice cream? Ice cream? What is ice cream when I can feed on your face?

ARAMINTA: Feed on his face?

ARETHUSA: Feed on his face...Where's my pink ribbon?

ARAMINTA: Where's my beauty spot?

ARETHUSA: Where's my feather

ARAMINTA: Where's my fan? Cinderella's such a slowcoach!

ARETHUSA: Oh dear, oh dear, my feather's all crooked.

ARAMINTA: My beauty spot's on the wrong side. I knew it was.

ARETHUSA: (to Cinderella) Clumsy! Clumsy!

AUDITION SCENE 5

COURT MANNERS: STEPMOTHER & STEPSISTERS

Reading from a book of COURT MANNERS

STEPMOTHER. This is important, girls. "Directions for Behaviour in the Presence of Kings, Queens and Peers of the Realm".

ARETHUSA. You've read us so many directions already, Ma, that my poor head's all of a fluster.

STEPMOTHER. Do you wish to be a success at Court, or do you not? Very well, then! We now come to "Rules about Coughing: To fought at a party is to indicate that either you are ill and should not have come, or bored, and head better go home. It is better to choke than to cough".

ARETHUSA (*coughing*) What for?

ARAMINTA She's coughing on purpose, Ma.

STEPMOTHER. Choke it down.

ARETHUSA (*tries to stop cough*)

ARAMINTA. I think it's better to cough than look like a boiled beetroot.

ARETHUSA. Who's a boiled beetroot?

ARAMINTA. You're a boiled beetroot.

ARETHUSA. Ma! Ma! Minta's calling me a boiled beetroot.

STEPMOTHER. I dare say the Prince is very partial to boiled beetroot. (*Reading from book*). Next comes 'Rules about Sneezing: Sneezing, even more than coughing, should be suppressed in the Presence of Royalty. If you feel one coming --'

ARAMINTA. Oh Ma! I feel one coming!

STEPMOTHER. 'Hold your breath

ARAMINTA holds her breath.

STEPMOTHER. Grit your teeth--

Araminta into grits her teeth.

STEPMOTHER. Clench your fists, and subdue it at all costs. It is better to break a blood vessel than to sneeze'.

ARAMINTA (*stops gritting and clenching and sneezing*) I'm not going to break no blood vessel.

ARETHUSA. I hope the Prince is partial to water-spouting whales.

ARAMINTA. Who's a water spouting whale?

ARETHUSA. You're a water spouting whale.

ARAMINTA Ma! Ma! Thusa's calling me a water spouting whale.

STEPMOTHER. Shall I ever teach you manners? (*Reading from book*). 'Staring: Never stare. Contradicting: Don't contradict. Yawning. Stile if. Scratching - grapple with it. Second helpings--

ARETHUSA. Second helpings of what?

STEPMOTHER. "second helpings of anything must be refused". (*Reading*) Ah, this is what I was looking for - Curtseying: Curtseying should be swanlike. Everything depends on the dip". Let me see you dip, girls.

(Stepsisters get up from chairs and flop on the floor, like buckets bumping down a well)

STEPMOTHER. More swanlike. One, two, three - dip! You *must* think of swans.

ARETHUSA. I was thinks of them.

ARAMINTA. So was I.

STEPMOTHER. And I was thinking of geese. Do you want to be wallflowers?

ARETHUSA. What's a wallflower?

STEPMOTHER. A wallflower is a young lady who sits all night with her back to the wall because nobody will ask her to dance. Dip, girls, dip! One, two, three- *swans* not wallflowers.

(Stepsisters prance around practicing curtseying)

ARETHUSA. I'm not going to be a wallflower.

ARAMINTA. Nobody's not going to ask me not to dance, so there!

ARETHUSA. Nobody's going to neglect *me*.

ARAMINTA. Nobody's going to reject me. I'm going to be the most beautiful bloom in the whole of the room, so there!

ARETHUSA. Excepting for me! People will pass the remark: 'She's just like a hothouse rose'- so there!

ARAMINTA. If I don't get lots of introductions, look out for ructions!

ARETHUSA. If I don't get first prize for airs and graces, I'll smack their great big ugly faces. I'm not going to be a wallflower!

ARAMINTA. No more am I not going to be a a wallflower!

ARAMINTA & ARETHUSA. So there!

(Stepsisters flop on the floor in a heap, not a Curtseying left between them)

AUDITION SCENE 6

HERALD/TRUMPETTER/TOASTMASTER/FOOTMAN

Grandfather clock strikes 8.

HERALD (*flittering about the stage, flustered*) Oh dear, oh dear oh dear! I've been up and about and in and out, hence and thence and whence, hither and thither, and all of a dither, performing since long before daybreak, the various, multifarious, unaccountable, insurmountable, unprecedented... One might almost say the deliberately invented duties, which have accumulated ever since the Prince's order to have all the ladies back in the throne room by 9 o'clock to try on the glass slipper that the Zany found in the snow.

Now it is one thing to be a personage on the spot, but another thing altogether to expect that personage to be a hundred persons in a hundred places at one and the same moment. It is... Considered as such, a touch too much! Where is that passel of pasty-faced, pathetic pinheads?

(Herald blows trumpet to summon Trumpeter, Footman and Toastmaster. The trio enters from various points and dash on stage, tear frantically around the stage, culminating in a collision down centre)

HERALD (*clears his throat*) Is everything prepared.

TOASTMASTER. Everything.

HERALD. Nothing has been overlooked?

TRUMPETER. Nothing

HERALD. The golden footstool is ready to be placed exactly in position?

FOOTMAN. Exactly.

HERALD. The army has been scrupulously mounting guard over the glass slipper.

TOASTMASTER, TRUMPETER, FOOTMAN. Scrupulously!

HERALD (*pacing up and down*) Ha! These functions! These receptions! These ceremonies! These *grandes assemblies!* One on top of the other. Helter-skelter! Holus-bolus! Scramble! Jumble! I have not been to bed, I am worn to a shred! My nerves are tattered, my *esprit* is shattered! I seem to have been fated when created to be irritated, exasperated, frustrated and

prostrated! And the whole Countryside is in the same condition. When I made my round this morning - like any milk-man - everybody was still up - nobody had had time to sleep a wink, to change a rag, or to sponge a little finger. And now, scramble-jumble, holus-bolus, helter-skelter, back they all flock with their fate in their feet, only, mark my words, to be sent packing again with their hearts in their boots.

(DOORBELL CLANGS)

HERALD. There! It begins already! Ladies at the Far East gate. (*Waves Footman away*) Let them in!

Footman exits up-left. Second DOORBELL CLANGS.

HERALD. Ladies at the West Gate (*flourishes hand at Trumpeter*) Admit them.

(Trumpeter exits quickly up-right. TWO MORE BELLS CLANG)

HERALD. Ladies at the North Gate and at the South Gate. (*Waves both hands at Toastmaster*) Divide yourself in two, my friend, and depart! (*Toastmaster exits up-centre*)

HERALD (*wearily, to audience*) As for me, I shall resign, abdicate, relinquish my office, and give a year's notice!

Footman enters up-left, panting.

HERALD. Do they surge? Do they throng?

FOOTMAN. Like bees.

Trumpeter flies in from up-right.

HERALD. Do they stream? Do they swarm?

TRUMPETER. Like ants.

HERALD (*disdainfully*) And all, all because somebody left a slipper behind at a party! People are always leaving things behind at parties - fans, bangles, muffs, puffs, gardenias, carnations, decorations, reputations...

Toastmaster reels in from up-centre.

HERALD. What is it now?

TOASTMASTER. A royal command.

HERALD. To what effect?

TOASTMASTER. No shoe horns!

HERALD. No shoe horns?

FOOTMAN & TRUMPETER. No shoe horns?

TOASTMASTER. No shoe horns. A further royal command.

HERALD. Proceed.

TOASTMASTER. No soaped heels.

HERALD. No soaped heels?

FOOTMAN & TRUMPETER (*turning to each other*) No soaped heels?

TOASTMASTER. No soaped heels. And now a final royal command.

HERALD (*exasperated*) Give tongue?

TOASTMASTER. The Prince proclaims that, to make assurance doubly sure, it is his intention to try the glass slipper on the ladies himself.

HERALD. Himself?

FOOTMAN. Him... (*Stops himself*)

TRUMPETER. H'm!

TOASTMASTER. The Prince will try the glass slipper on the ladies himself.

HERALD. Himself? So be it! Authority must be obeyed. Royalty must be humoured. But really... *Himself?* I must say, it sounds more menial than hymeneal to me.

HUBBUB OF BELLS CLANGING INCESSANTLY. Chattering of ladies becoming louder and louder.

HERALD. You hear them? Last night's excitement was nothing to this. (*To the Footman*) Hustle! (*To Trumpeter*) Bustle! (*To all three*) You have your duties - perform them.

Trumpeter, Footman and Toastmaster tear frantically around the stage, running into each other.

FOOTMAN. What a morning!

TRUMPETER. What a morning!

TOASTMASTER. What a morning!

HERALD. What a morning!

Herald exits down right.

AUDITION SCENE 7

PRINCE & ZANY AT THE BALL

Setting: Ladies bedecked in their finery cluster in small groups around the edge of the ballroom, eyes downcast and whispering, with the exception of Araminta and Arethusa, who are ogling the Prince.

PRINCE (*slumped in throne down-left, whispers*) Zany!

ZANY (*head pops out from behind throne, fixes his round questioning eyes on Prince*)

PRINCE (*sadly*) She is not here.

ZANY (*emerging from behind throne, hangs his head sadly*)

PRINCE. She has not come.

ZANY (*beats his unhappy chest*)

PRINCE. She does not exist.

ZANY (*collapses in despair*)

PRINCE. Yet tonight, I must make my choice. What can I do, Zany, what can I do? As each lady entered, I looked at her and listened to my heart expectantly.

ZANY (*looks up expectantly*)

PRINCE. But each time my heart said only; "it is not she."

ZANY (*droops*)

PRINCE. "It is not she, not she."

ZANY (*collapses and dies at Prince's feet*)

PRINCE (*looking round the room from one face to another*) Everyone of them is too much something, or not enough something else.

ZANY (*coming to life a little and winking at the Prince*)

PRINCE. Get up, you Zany. What do you think you are for? I thought Fools were supposed to be so wise. Why don't you help me?

ZANY (*sitting up on his heels, and pointing to one of the Ladies at random*)

PRINCE. Too sweet.

ZANY (*continues to point to other Ladies*)

PRINCE. Too sour. (*As Zany continues to point around the room*) Too conventional. Too bizarre. Too prim and proper. Too bold-and-brazen.

ZANY (*grinning, beckons at Arathusa, who half-starts from her seat*)

PRINCE (*chuckling*) Ha-ha! That one!

ZANY (*waves Arathusa down, and beckons to Araminta, who half-rises*)

PRINCE Ha-ha! That one!

(*Music dies out, ladies clap demurely*)

PRINCE. Hark, the entertainment is over, the musicians are tuning up again, our dance is about to begin.

ZANY (*begins to dance*)

PRINCE (*reaches out and stops him*)

PRINCE. Which one to ask? My first choice seals my fate (glancing wildly around the room) I cannot, I will not choose!

AUDITION SCENE 8

CINDERELLA & GRANDFATHER CLOCK

CINDERELLA (Buries her face in her hands, sobbing) I want to be upstairs like I used to be.

G. CLOCK: I used to be upstairs too.

CINDERELLA: (without turning around) Did you, grandpa?

G. CLOCK: You wouldn't remember. You couldn't so much as walk when your father brought back that gilt clock from Paris. So downstairs I came. I think I've had a sort of pain in my pendulum ever since.

CINDERELLA: (turning to him) Oh dear!

G. CLOCK: And it *was* oh-dear, I can tell you. The maids used to treat me without any respect. Yes, yes, it *was* oh-dear till you came downstairs too.

CINDERELLA: Me, grandpa?

G. CLOCK: It's horrid for you in the kitchen, I know; but if it isn't nice for you, it *is* for me.

CINDERELLA: Nice for you?

G. CLOCK: Much nicer than what I might have. Your hands are so gentle when you polish me. Your eyes are so bright when you look at my face. You're kind to things. I like having you about. I like *you*.

CINDERELLA: I like you too.

G. CLOCK: And I'm sorry you're not going to the Ball, very, very sorry.

CINDERELLA: Don't remind me! Don't remind me! I did want to go to the Ball like my sisters.
(turning again to face him) Oh grandpa, ten o'clock! Just ten o'clock! It's beginning, and I'm not there.

G. CLOCK: Steady...I'm going to strike.

CINDERELLA: Don't strike, grandpa, don't!

G. CLOCK: My dear, I can't help it.

CINDERELLA: Can't you? Please! Couldn't you hold in?

G. CLOCK: It would hurt.

CINDERELLA: Badly?

G. CLOCK: Very badly. And then – they wouldn't even let me be in the kitchen.

CINDERELLA: Go on, then. STRIKE!

(Grandfather clock begins striking ten)