PROLOGUE: A Castle

(#1 ORCHESTRA TUNE-UP begins the show, followed immediately by #2 PROLOGUE. A young PRINCE stands in the doorway of a majestic castle. NARRATORS address the audience.)

NARRATOR 1
Once upon a time in a faraway land, a young prince lived in a shining castle.

NARRATOR 2
Although he had everything his heart desired, the Prince was spoiled, selfish and unkind.

(An OLD BEGGAR WOMAN enters.)

NARRATOR 3
But then, one winter’s night, an old beggar woman came to the castle and offered him a single rose in return for shelter from the bitter cold.

(The PRINCE and OLD BEGGAR WOMAN pantomime the following action.)

NARRATOR 4
Repulsed by her haggard appearance, the Prince sneered at the gift and turned the old woman away.

NARRATOR 1
But she warned him not to be deceived by appearances, for beauty is found within.

NARRATOR 3
And when he dismissed her again, the old woman’s ugliness melted away to reveal a beautiful enchantress.
NARRATOR 4
The Prince tried to apologize, but it was too late, for she had seen that there was no love in his heart.

NARRATOR 2
As punishment, she transformed him into a hideous beast and placed a powerful spell on the castle and all who lived there.

(The ENCHANTRESS exits. The PRINCE has been transformed into the BEAST.)

NARRATOR 3
Ashamed of his monstrous form, the Beast concealed himself inside his castle with a magic mirror as his only window to the outside world.

(The rose appears.)

NARRATOR 1
The rose she had offered him was truly an enchanted rose, which would bloom for many years.

(The BEAST covers the rose with a glass dome for protection.)

NARRATOR 4
If he could learn to love another and earn her love in return by the time the last petal fell, then the spell would be broken.

NARRATOR 2
If not... he would be doomed to remain a beast for all time.

(The BEAST gazes at the rose... trapped, forlorn and hopeless.)

NARRATOR 1
As the years passed, he fell into despair and lost all hope.

NARRATORS
For who could ever learn to love a beast?

(The BEAST and the NARRATORS exit.)

SCENE 1: The Village

(A charming, provincial French village. Sunrise. BELLE enters. #3 BELLE.)
Belle:

Little town, it's a quiet village. Every day like the one before. Little town full of little people waking up to say...

(VILLAGERS enter and bustle about their daily business.)

ARISTOCRATIC LADY: BON - jour! BON - jour! BON - jour!

FISH MAN: EGG MAN: BON - jour! BON - jour! BON - jour!

SAUSAGE CURL GIRL: BAKER: BON - jour! BON - jour! BON - jour!
BELLE:

There goes the baker with his tray, like always, the same old bread and rolls to

sell.

Ev'ry morning just the same since the morning that we

came to this poor provincial town. Good morning Belle!

BELLE

Morning, monsieur.

BAKER

Where you off to?

BELLE

The bookshop. I just finished the most wonderful story about a beanstalk and an ogre and—
BAKER:

That's nice. Marie! The baguettes! Hurry up!

(BELLE sighs "never mind" and continues on her way. Various VILLAGERS talk about her as she passes.)

ARISTOCRATIC LADY, LADY WITH CANE:

Look there she goes, the girl is strange, no question. Dazed and distracted, can't you

LADY WITH BABY, SAUSAGE CURL GIRL:

tell? Never part of any

CANDLE MAN, FISH MAN:

crowd, 'cause her head's up on some
SOME VILLAGERS:

cloud. No denying she's a funny girl, that

HAT SELLER:

Belle._________

Bon-jour.

SAUSAGE CURL GIRL: HAT SELLER:

Good-day. How is your family?

SHEPHERD BOY: MILKMAID:

Bonjour. Good-day. How is your

LADY WITH CANE:

wife? I need six eggs!

ARISTOCRATIC LADY: BELLE:

That's too expensive. There must be

more than this provincial life!
(BELLE walks to the book shop.)

BOOKSELLER

Ah, Belle!

BELLE

Good morning. I've come to return the book I borrowed.

BOOKSELLER

Finished already?

BELLE

Oh, I couldn't put it down. Have you got anything new?

BOOKSELLER

(chuckles)
Not since yesterday.

BELLE

That's all right.
(points to a book on the shelf)
I'll borrow this one!

BOOKSELLER

That one? But you've read it twice!

BELLE

Well, it's my favorite. Far-off places, daring sword fights, magic spells, a prince in disguise...

BOOKSELLER

If you like it all that much... it's yours.

BELLE

But sir!

BOOKSELLER

I insist.

BELLE

Well, thank you. Thank you very much!
VILLAGERS:

Look, there she goes. That girl is so peculiar. I wonder if she's feeling well.

With a dreamy, far-off look and her nose stuck in a book, what a puzzle to the rest of us is Belle.

(BELLE reads her book.)

BELLE:

Oh... isn't
this amazing?

It's my fav'rite part

because... you'll see.

Here's

where she meets Prince

Charming... but she

won't discover that it's him 'til

chapter three.
ARISTOCRATIC
LADY:

Now, it's no wonder that her name means "beauty." Her looks have

HAT SELLER:

got no parallel. But behind that fair façade I'm afraid she's rather

EGG MAN:

odd. Very different from the rest of us. She's

MORE VILLAGERS:

nothing like the rest of us. Yes,

VILLAGERS:

Yes,
(GASTON enters carrying a rifle. He is a very handsome, rude, self-centered hunter who goes to great lengths to get what he wants. His dim-witted sidekick, LEFOU, follows carrying a sack of Gaston’s game.)

LEFOU

You didn’t miss a shot, Gaston. You’re the greatest hunter in the whole world!

GASTON

I know.

LEFOU

No beast alive stands a chance against you! And no girl, for that matter.

GASTON

It’s true, Lefou.

(points to BELLE)

And I’ve got my sights set on that one.

LEFOU

The inventor’s daughter?
GASTON

She’s the lucky girl I’m going to marry.

LEFOU

But, she’s—

GASTON

The most beautiful girl in town.

LEFOU

I know, but—

GASTON

And don’t I deserve the best?

LEFOU

Well, of course you do!

GASTON:

202 Right from the moment when I met her,

205 saw her, I said she’s gorgeous and I

208 fell. Here in town there’s only

211 she who is beautiful as me, so I’m

214 making plans to woo and marry Belle.
SILLY GIRLS:

\[\text{mp Look there he goes!}\]

\[\text{Isn't he dreamy? Monsieur}\]

\[\text{Gaston! Oh, he's so cute!}\]

\[\text{Be still my heart! I'm hardly}\]

\[\text{Breathing! He's such a tall, dark,}\]

GASTON:

\[\text{Strong and handsome brute! LADY WITH BABY:}\]

\[\text{Bonjour!}\]
LADY WITH CANE:

don. Mais oui!

BELLE:

ARISTOCRATIC LADY:

Good day. You call this

MILKMAID:

What lovely grapes! Ten

BAKER:

bacon? Some cheese.

GASTON:

yards. 'Scuse me!

FISH MAN:

BUTCHER:

One pound. I'll get the

SAUSAGE CURL GIRL:

Please let me through! Those

LADY WITH BABY:

knife. This bread...
MALE VILLAGERS:

fish... they smell! Madame's mis-

...it's stale!

BELLE:

taken! There must be more than this pro-

FEMALE VILLAGERS:

Well may-be so. pp Good

GASTON:

vin-cial life! Just watch, I'm

VILLAGERS:

morn-ing. Oh,

251

going to make Belle my wife!

good morn-ing.
ALL:

Look there she goes, a girl who's strange but special. A most peculiar mademoiselle.

FEMALE VILLAGERS:

It's a pity and a sin. She doesn't quite fit

MALE VILLAGERS:

in 'cause she really is a funny girl, a

FEMALE VILLAGERS:

'cause she really is a funny girl, a
beauty but a funny girl. She

real-ly is a funny girl,

that Belle!

(Feeling the VILLAGERS’ eyes on her, BELLE whirls around. They go back to their activities then exit. #4 BELLE - PLAYOFF. BELLE heads for home. GASTON runs in front of her and strikes a pose.)
GASTON

Hello... Belle.

BELLE

Bonjour, Gaston.

(GASTON blocks BELLE's way.)

Excuse me.

(GASTON snatches Belle's book.)

Gaston. May I have my book, please?

GASTON

(flipping through the book)
How can you read this? There's no pictures.

BELLE

Well some people use their imagination!

GASTON

Belle, it's about time you got your head out of these books and paid attention to more important things.

(GASTON strikes a handsome pose.)

LEFOU

Hint... hint.

BELLE

Like you? Gaston, please! I have to get inside to help my father.

LEFOU

That crazy old fool. He needs all the help he can get!

(GASTON and LEFOU laugh heartily.)

BELLE

Don't talk about my father that way!

(GASTON thunks LEFOU on the head.)

GASTON

(to LEFOU)
Yeah! Don't talk about her father that way!
BELLE
My father's not crazy! He's a genius!

(#5 MAURICE'S ENTRANCE. Belle's slightly addled genius father, MAURICE, brings his colorful and noisy invention onstage. As he waves merrily, part of the invention breaks. GASTON and LEFOU laugh and exit.)

Papa! Papa, are you all right?

MAURICE
Oh, I'll never get this bone-headed contraption to work!

BELLE
Yes, you will! And you'll win first prize at the fair tomorrow.

MAURICE
Well... we'd better get cracking then! Now let me see, where did I put that dog-legged clencher?

BELLE
(holds out a funny-looking tool)
Papa...

MAURICE
Oh... thank you, dear!
(takes the tool and starts tinkering)
So... did you have a good time in town today?

BELLE
I got a new book.

MAURICE
You do love those books.

(MAURICE ducks behind the invention.)

BELLE
Papa... do you think I'm... odd?

MAURICE
My daughter! Odd?
(re-appears with silly-looking goggles)
Now where would you get an idea like that?
BELLE
I don’t know. It’s just... I’m not sure I fit in here. There’s no one I can really talk to.

MAURICE
What about Gaston? He’s a handsome fellow.

BELLE
He’s handsome all right... and rude and conceited and— oh Papa, he’s not for me!

MAURICE
Well, don’t you worry, ’cause this invention’s going to be the start of a new life for us.

(MAURICE pulls a lever. The invention chugs to life.)

BELLE
It works!

MAURICE
It does? It does!

BELLE
Papa, you did it! You really did it!
(puts a scarf around MAURICE’s neck)
Here, I made you a scarf for good luck at the fair.

MAURICE
Now I know I’ll win. And then, we’ll get out of this town and travel to all those places you’ve read about in your books!

BELLE
Goodbye, Papa.

MAURICE
Bye bye, Belle.

BELLE
Be careful!

(#6 INTO THE FOREST. MAURICE heads toward the forest. BELLE exits.)
SCENE 2: The Forest

(The NARRATORS enter.)

NARRATOR 1
On his way to the fair to show off his new invention, Maurice entered a dark forest.

MAURICE
Now let's see, is it this way... or this way...

(MAURICE becomes nervous. He looks around, concerned. A wolf howls.)

Oh, dear!

(Another howl.)

Wolves!

(WOLVES enter and pantomime the following action with MAURICE.)

NARRATOR 2
Suddenly, a pack of hungry wolves appeared and began to circle Maurice.

MAURICE
Stay back... back! Help! Someone help me! Get back! Help!

NARRATOR 3
Fearing for his life, Maurice raced toward a nearby castle.

NARRATOR 4
A wolf lunged for Maurice... and grabbed the scarf right off his neck!

(MAURICE approaches and knocks on the castle door. The NARRATORS exit.)

MAURICE
Let me in! Let me in!

(The door opens.)
SCENE 3: The Castle

(MAURICE steps inside. The castle appears hollow, lifeless and empty, like a deserted cathedral.)

MAURICE

Hello?

(his voice echoes in the vastness)

Hello!

(#7 STRANGER IN THE HOUSE. MAURICE proceeds cautiously, looking around. Two figures appear in the shadows. LUMIERE, a candelabra, is a charming, very French maître d'. COGSWORTH, a mantle clock, is an officious English major-domo. They stand side-by-side, motionless but whispering as MAURICE wanders past.)

COGSWORTH

What? Who is that?

LUMIERE

He must have lost his way in the woods.

MAURICE

(ventures further into the castle)

Is anyone home?

COGSWORTH

If we keep quiet, maybe he'll go away.

MAURICE

(hears something, moves to investigate)

I don't mean to intrude, but I'm lost and need a place to stay for the night.

LUMIERE

Poor fellow.

(pauses, weighs options)

Oh, Cogsworth, have a heart.

(steps out, to MAURICE)

Monsieur, you are welcome here!

MAURICE

(startled, jumps back)

Ah!
And good-bye!

(COGSWORTH pushes MAURICE toward the door.)

MAURICE

Wait... wait... wait! You’re a clock!
(pokes and prods COGSWORTH curiously)
And you’re talking!

COGSWORTH

Really sir... hee-hee... stop it, I say!

MAURICE

(stops poking and scratches his head)
I don’t mean to be rude. It’s just that I’ve never seen a... aaaaachoo!

LUMIERE

You’re chilled to the bone, Monsieur.
(leads MAURICE to a large chair)
Come... warm yourself by the fire.

COGSWORTH

Not the Master’s chair! I’m not seeing this. I’m not seeing this!

(BABETTE, a feather duster, enters.)

BABETTE

Oooh la la... what have we here? Do my eyes deceive me or is this a man?

MAURICE

(embarrassed)
Oh! Well! Hello!

COGSWORTH

All right! This has gone far enough!

MRS. POTTs

(offstage)
Coming through!

(MRS. POTTs, a kind-hearted teapot, enters, followed by her son CHIP, a teacup.)

How would you like a nice spot of tea, sir? It will warm you up in no time.
MAURICE
Oh, yes please!

(MRS. POTTS pours into CHIP. MAURICE gasps.)

CHIP
I think I scared him, Mama.

MAURICE
Hey there, little fella! What's your name?

CHIP
Chip.

BABETTE
Care for a blanket, monsieur?

(BABETTE throws a blanket over MAURICE's shoulders.)

COGSWORTH
We've got to get him out of here! Do you have any idea what the Master will do if he finds out we let a stranger in—

LUMIERE
Calm yourself, Cogsworth. The Master will never have to know.

(Suddenly, a loud roar echoes through the castle. EVERYONE gasps. The BEAST enters. #8 MAURICE AND THE BEAST.)

BEAST
There's a stranger here!

LUMIERE
Master, allow me to explain—

BEAST
Who let him in?

COGSWORTH
(quaking in fear)
M— Master... May I take this opportunity to say, I was against it from the start!

BEAST
You have all betrayed me!
MRS. POTTS

Oh dear!

BEAST

(to MAURICE)
Who are you?

MAURICE

(frozen with fear in the chair)
M— Maurice.

BEAST

What are you doing in my castle?

MAURICE

I lost my way in the woods...

BEAST

You’re not welcome here!

MAURICE

I’m sorry. I... I’ll just be on my way.

(MAURICE looks up and gets a good look at the BEAST’s face. MAURICE gasps with horror.)

BEAST

It’s hideous, isn’t it? You’ve come to stare at the Beast, haven’t you?

MAURICE

No, no! I meant no harm! I was merely looking for a place to stay!

BEAST

I’ll give you a place to stay.

(The BEAST grabs MAURICE and exits. The SERVANTS follow.)

SCENE 4: Belle’s Cottage

(GASTON enters with three sobbing SILLY GIRLS.)

SILLY GIRL 1

It can’t be true! I don’t believe it.

SILLY GIRL 2

Why would you go and do a thing like that?
I simply can’t bear it!

Oh Gaston, say it isn’t so.

It’s so.

Waaaaaaaaaahhh!

Girls... I’m just getting married. Don’t tell me a little thing like that’s going to change your feelings for me?

Oh no!

No!

Never!

Good. Well... if we’re going to have a wedding, I guess I’d better propose to the bride!

Waaaaaaaaaahhh!

(The SILLY GIRLS go off sobbing. GASTON turns to BELLE’s cottage. BELLE enters carrying a flowerpot and sees GASTON. There’s nowhere to hide!)

(BELLE sets the flowerpot down.)

Isn’t it, though? I’m just full of surprises.

(With BELLE’s back turned, GASTON plucks the flowers from the pot and hands them to her.)
(GASTON)

For you... mademoiselle.

BELLE

(taking the flowers)
Oh, Gaston...
(looks at the pot, sighs)
... you shouldn’t have.

GASTON

Don’t mention it. Belle, this is the day your dreams come true!

BELLE

What could you possibly know about my dreams, Gaston?

GASTON

Plenty! Picture this. A rustic hunting lodge. My little wife massaging my feet while the strapping boys play on the floor with the dogs. We’ll have six or seven.

BELLE

Dogs?

GASTON

No, boys!

BELLE

Imagine that!

GASTON

So Belle, what’ll it be?

BELLE

I just don’t deserve you.

GASTON

Who does?

BELLE

But thanks for asking!

(BELLE enters the cottage. The SILLY GIRLS return. #9 BELLE -- REPRISE.)

SILLY GIRL 1

So... how’d it go?
GASTON
You know that Belle... always playing hard-to-get.

SILLY GIRLS
She turned you down?!!

GASTON
For now. But I'll have Belle for my wife. Make no mistake about that!

(GASTON exits. The SILLY GIRLS laugh at the idea.)

Belle (Reprise)

SILLY GIRLS:

"Ma-dame Gas-ton!" Can't you just see it? "Ma-dame Gas-ton!"

SILLY GIRL #1:

His "lit-tle wife." No, sir.

SILLY GIRL #2:  SILLY GIRL #3:  SILLY GIRLS:

(mimicking BELLE) Not her! I guar-an-tee it! She

wants "much more than this pro-vin-cial
life."

SILLY GIRLS
(pursuing Gaston offstage, variously)
Oh, Gaston! Oh no, you don’t! He’s mine!

BELLE
(peek out of the cottage, to herself)
Is he gone? Can you imagine... he asked me to marry him! Me, the wife of that boorish, brainless...

BELLE:
I want adventure in the great wide

I want it more than I can

tell!

And for once it might be
great to have someone understand. I want

so much more than they’ve got planned.
(LEFOU hurries in looking for Gaston. He wears Maurice's scarf.)

LEFOU
Hey, Belle! Have you seen Gaston?

BELLE
You just missed him. Wait a minute, where did you get that scarf?

LEFOU
This? At the crossroads in the woods. Pretty nice, huh?

BELLE
It belongs to my father. Something must have happened to him!

LEFOU
Yeah, well, finders-keepers.

(LEFOU runs off toward town.)

BELLE
Oh, Papa!

(#10 OH, PAPA! BELLE runs off toward the forest.)

SCENE 5: The Castle

(COGSWORTH and LUMIERE enter.)

COGSWORTH
Couldn't keep quiet... just had to invite him to stay—

LUMIERE
I was trying to be hospitable!

COGSWORTH
Rubbish!

LUMIERE
Ah, Cogsworth... can you blame me for trying to maintain what's left of our humanity? Look at us. Look at you!

COGSWORTH
What about me?

(looks at pendulum)

Oh... right.