

*CURTAIN OPENS: The set has 3 different areas. At stage left is a flower garden with a few trees and lots of roses. Upstage center is a backdrop of a lake with a boat. Stage right are 2 chairs and a table stacked with books. Belle and the Beast are seated at the chairs, and she is reading him a story. A spotlight is on them, and the rest of the stage is dark*

**Belle:** And so the fairy godmother said, “Don’t cry, Cinderella. You shall go to the ball and be the most beautiful girl there.” And she did go to the ball, and met the Prince. Yada, yada, yada, glass slipper; it fit! They got married and lived happily ever...What a lovely story!

**Beast:** Belle, would you marry me if I was a prince?

**Belle:** Don’t talk silliness, Beast. That is just a fairytale!

**Beast:** Sometimes fairytales come true. Have you any affection for me that you would consider marrying me?

**Belle:** I shall always like you as a friend. Be satisfied with that.

*Spotlight goes off, and Belle and Beast exit stage right and reenter upstage at the lake scene. Spotlight is on them, and the rest of the stage is dark. Beast is tangled in a fishing rod and line. Belle is laughing.*

**Belle:** Oh, Beast, this is the best time I have had in the two months I have been here. I never knew you were such an accomplished fisherman! But the funniest thing was when you stood up in the boat, and it almost tipped over!

**Beast:** I’m happy to be such a continuous source of entertainment for you! I hate fishing!

**Belle:** Well, it was fun anyway. Thank you so much for this lovely day on the lake. You are a great companion.

**Beast:** Enough of a companion that you will reconsider and marry me? I would always be good to you, and we would have a great time.

**Belle:** I am sorry, Beast. I can’t marry you. Can’t we just continue as we are?

*The spotlight dims and Belle and Beast exit upstage and reenter stage left. The spotlight is on them at the garden area while the rest of the stage is dark.*

**Beast:** Belle, you have been here three months, and this is the first time you have visited the gardens. I hope you like them.

**Belle:** Oh, Beast, they are so beautiful, and I have never seen such gorgeous roses. They are my favorite flower.

**Beast:** Mine, too. Would you like to cut some to put in your room?

**Belle:** Uh...I am not sure. That is how this whole problem started...

**Beast:** Is that how you think of me? As a problem?

**Belle:** No, not at all. You have become my dearest friend, and I enjoy my time with you.

**Beast:** I am happy to hear that. You are very dear to my heart.

*Belle reaches for a flower, and pricks a finger on a thorn, and jumps back with her hand in the air and her index finger pointed.*

**Belle:** Oh!

**Beast:** What's wrong?

**Belle:** Oh, it's nothing. I just pricked my finger on a thorn.

*Beast takes Belle's hand and kisses the injured finger. Belle giggles.*

**Belle:** That was what my Papa used to do when I was little if I hurt myself. He said the love would make it all better.

**Beast:** Belle, you do know that I love you, don't you? Please marry me!

**Belle:** I am sorry, Beast. I can't.

**Beast:** Then, please at least say you will never leave me. I could not bear to live without you!

*Belle sadly lowers her head.*

**Beast:** Why do you look so sad? Does my love pain you so that you look like you are going to cry?

**Belle:** It is not you. I just miss my family so much, especially my father. The mirror you gave me showed me that he is ill. My sisters are married now, and seldom visit. My brothers have joined the army. Poor Papa is all alone. Please, let me go visit him.

**Beast:** I would rather die myself than to see you unhappy. You may go see your Papa, but please promise me that you will come back.

**Belle:** Oh, thank you so much, Beast! I promise I will return in one week.