

Beauty & The Beast

A pantomime written by Bob Bishop

Spotlight Publications

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Beauty & The Beast

CAST (in order of appearance)

The Minstrel

Gilbert Cornwallis, a merchant

Beauty)

Patience) Gilbert's daughters

Charity)

Willie & Wally, the bailiffs

Aggie Bending, a widow

Simon, her son

Reuben Dwile, a countryman

The Beast

Mrs Fester, his servant

Minor characters

Fifi, a French maid

Penny, Belinda, Emma & Sophie, country girls

Milly & Molly, town girls

Captain Claude Legge, 2nd French Maid, Beautician, Old Sarah, The Beggar, Ghost, Headless Ghost, Young Gilbert.

Townfolk, Rustics, Guests, Beggars, Dancers.

Place - Cornwallis's house, the market square, Castle Beastly, a rose garden

Time - 18th Century England

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT 1

Scene One: The interior of the house of Gilbert Cornwallis, a once-wealthy English merchant

Scene Two: The market square of a small town somewhere in England

Scene Three: A country road

Scene Four: An English village green

Scene Five: Outside the gates of Castle Beastly

Scene Six: The banqueting hall of Castle Beastly

ACT 2

Scene One: The banqueting hall

Scene Two: The village green

Scene Three: A guest room in Castle Beastly

Scene Four: A meadow

Scene Five: The rose garden of Castle Beastly

Scene Six: The village green

Scene Seven: The castle guest room

Scene Eight: The village green

Scene Nine: (composite) Inside the cottage/the rose garden

Scene Ten: The village green

Scene Eleven: The rose garden

Scene Twelve: The village green

LIST OF MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT 1

- No 1: Overture, Act I - Band
- No 2: Minstrel's song A - Minstrel
- No 3: This Old House - Chorus
- No 4: Minstrel's song B - Minstrel
- No 5: Bad Guys - Willy, Wally and Aggie
- No 6: Street Urchin's Dance - Band
- No 7: Minstrel's song C - Minstrel
- No 8: I won't Ask Why - Beauty
- No 9: Minstrel's song D - Minstrel
- No 10: Song of the Moneylenders - Simon, Willy, Wally
- No 11: Scarecrows' dance - Band
- No 12/12a/12b: Minstrel's song E - Minstrel
- No 13: Why don't You - Gilbert, Aggie
- No 14: Minstrel's song F - Minstrel
- No 15: Mister Softy - Gilbert, Willy, Wally
- No 16: The Time Warp - Chorus

ACT 2

- No 17: Overture, Act 2 - Band
- No 18: Salute the Beast - Chorus
- No 19: Minstrel's song F - Minstrel
- No 20: Maypole Dance - Band
- No 21: Happy Family - Patience, Charity
- No 22: The Corduroy Breeks Me Father Used To Wear - Reuben
- No 23: The Merryman & His Maid (Gilbert & Sullivan) - Minstrel, Beauty
- No 24: Audience participation song - Willy, Wally, Audience
- No 25: Minstrel's song G - Minstrel
- No 26: Oh, Simon! - Chorus of Girls
- No 27: The Wedding March (Snatch) - Band
- No 28: Minstrel's song H - Minstrel
- No 29: Soldier, Soldier - Minstrel
- No 30: Country Dance - Band
- No 31: Step in Time (Mary Poppins) - Chorus
- No 32/32a: A Night to Remember (Finale) - Chorus
- No 33: Play out - Band

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For details of the original score by Bob McNeil Watson, please apply to Spotlight. The lyrics by the author are contained in a separate song booklet.

ACT 1

Music No 1

The Minstrel enters, front of curtain. He is a gaily-attired figure with a lute strung over his shoulder, upon which he strums merrily as he sings:

Music No 2

Scene 1

The curtains open to reveal the interior of Gilbert Cornwallis's house. The house has simple furnishings which should include a grandfather clock and at least one picture on the wall – an ancestral portrait. Gilbert is a well-to-do merchant. He sits on an expensively-upholstered chair, with his three daughters, Beauty, Patience and Charity surrounding him

Music No 2 (contd.)

The minstrel skips off

Patience steps forward. She is a dark, sultry child, with a slightly haughty demeanour

Patience My name is Patience. I love my daddy awfully much, because he buys me everything I want, don't you, Papsy?

Gilbert I have always tried to, dearest.

Patience goes back to her father's side. He takes her hand and looks up at her lovingly, as Charity steps forward. She also is beautiful, with a somewhat worldly look about her. Her voice is alluringly husky...

Charity My name is Charity. I love my father heaps and heaps because he lets me do anything I want, don't you, Daddy?

Gilbert I like to see you happy, my Precious.

Charity takes her father's other free hand, and he regards her proudly. The remaining daughter, Beauty steps forward. She is a delicately beautiful creature with no obvious attitude problem like her sisters. She has long flowing hair, which she pushes away from her face rather charmingly

Beauty My name is...

Patience Oh, shut up, Beauty! Nobody wants to hear any more of this yucky dialogue!

Gilbert Charity, Patience, charity!

Charity Come on, Patience, let's go and try on our new dresses for the military ball!

Gilbert Patience, Charity, patience! Let Beauty have her say.

Beauty I was only going to say that I love Daddy because he is so kind to us all.

Gilbert Bless you, my dear. How lucky I am to have three such loving daughters to care for me in my old age! What a comfort you have all been to me since your poor dear mother died. But listen, children - you must all be brave and strong, for I have some terrible news...

Patience Terrible news?

Charity Brave and strong?

Beauty Oh! What can have happened?

Gilbert We have lost all of our money.

Patience Lost..!

Charity All..!

Patience & Charity: ...of our MONEY????!!

Gilbert I'm afraid so.

Patience What, every little bit of it?

Gilbert Every last farthing.

Charity Is there nothing left *at all*?

Gilbert Not a penny.

Patience Oh!

Charity Oh!!

Patience & Charity Oh!!!

Gilbert We must dismiss all of our servants, and go and live in a cottage in the country.

Patience *A cottage?*

Charity In the *country*?

Gilbert Yes.

Patience Eugh!

Charity Yuk!

Patience & Charity Pah!!!

Gilbert The Widow Bending has kindly offered us the use of her holiday home, rent free, until we can earn a little money growing vegetables in the garden. Isn't that kind of her?

Beauty Oh, yes!

Patience But it's so *boring* in the country!

Charity Nothing to do at all!

Patience No military gentlemen!

Charity No balls!

Beauty I've always wanted to live in the country – amongst the woods and flowers and the fields...

Charity ...and the cow pats.

There is a brief pause. All look at each other

Patience Oh, a knock at the door.

Charity I didn't hear one.

Patience My name is Patience. I love my daddy awfully much, because he buys me everything I want, don't you, Papsy?

Gilbert I have always tried to, dearest.

Patience goes back to her father's side. He takes her hand and looks up at her lovingly, as Charity steps forward. She also is beautiful, with a somewhat worldly look about her. Her voice is alluringly husky...

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Patience Terrible news?

Charity Brave and strong?

Beauty Oh! What can have happened?

Gilbert We have lost all of our money.

Patience Lost..!

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Patience & Charity: ...of our MONEY???!!!

Gilbert I'm afraid so.

Patience What, every little bit of it?

Gilbert Every last farthing.

Charity Is there nothing left *at all*?

Gilbert Not a penny.

Patience Oh!

Charity Oh!!

Patience & Charity Oh!!!

Gilbert We must dismiss all of our servants, and go and live in a cottage in the country.

Patience A *cottage*?

Charity In the *country*?

Gilbert Yes.

Patience Eugh!

Charity Yuk!

Patience & Charity Pah!!!

Gilbert The Widow Bending has kindly offered us the use of her holiday home, rent free, until we can earn a little money growing vegetables in the garden. Isn't that kind of her?

Beauty Oh, yes!

Patience But it's so *boring* in the country!

Charity Nothing to do at all!

Patience No military gentlemen!

Charity No balls!

Beauty I've always wanted to live in the country – amongst the woods and flowers and the fields...

Charity ...and the cow pats.

There is a brief pause. All look at each other

Patience Oh, a knock at the door.

Charity I didn't hear one.

Patience Neither did I, but it's my next line.

There is a knock at the door

Patience Oh, a knock at the door. I wonder who it can be?

Charity Yes, I wonder? This dialogue is rubbish.

Gilbert Shh, children.

Charity Well, it is.

Beauty I will go and see who it is. *(She crosses to window.)*

Gilbert There is no need, my dear - I know only too well who it will be...

Beauty The bailiffs!

Gilbert Yes, the bailiffs. Let them in, child, before they break down the door.

The Bailiffs break down the door. Willy enters with it in his hand. Wally enters with him

Gilbert You have broken my door.

Willy It came off in my hand. I'll put it back.

Wally Don't put it back! It's on the list!

Patience What list?

Charity How dare you defile our father's house? *(Takes Gilbert's arm, protectively)*

Wally Your name is Seed-Wallace, and you are a corn-merchant of this town?

Gilbert No. My name is Cornwallis, and I am a seed-merchant of this town.

Willy We've got the wrong house, Wally!

Wally No we haven't, Willy, it's just a misprint. Gilbert Reginald Cornwallis, we are Crown Agents, and we are authorised to seize your choods and gattles.

Gilbert I don't have any gattles.

Wally I don't mean that. I mean your...

Willy Goods and chattels.

Wally What he said.

Gilbert Has your friend got an impediment?

Willy No. We aren't allowed pets.

Wally Willy, shut it. This is business.

Willy Business.

Wally You are to hand over your...thingies...to the value of these debts.

Charity What debts?

Wally These debts. *(He unfurls a long list)*

Patience All these, father?

Gilbert My luck was out last night.

Wally And it's not back yet. Come on, Willy - to work.

The Bailiffs start to collect goods and chattels. They take down a picture from the wall...

Charity You can't take that - it's great uncle Ebenezer!

Wally Sorry. On the list.

Wally takes off picture. Willy struggles with the grandfather clock

Willy This one's heavy!

Patience Leave that alone! It's a family heirloom!

Willy Sorry. It's on the list.

Willy takes out the clock. Wally returns and tips Gilbert out of his chair

Beauty Not father's chair!

Wally Sorry...

Wally, Beauty, Charity & Patience ...it's on the list!

Beauty Stop them, Father! You've got to stop them!

Gilbert I can't, my dear. They are within their rights.

Patience *(to Willy)* Leave that alone, you little squirt!

Willy Sorry, Miss. Everything's gotta go.

Girls Everything?

Wally This whole house!

Girls This whole house?

The neighbours enter and start to demolish the house, i.e. change the scene, singing as they do so to help pass the time...

Music No 3

When the song is over there is no trace of the merchant's house. We are either now already in the market place, or playing to black tabs. Patience and Charity are alone onstage

Charity Everything! They've taken everything!

Patience Yes. All we have left are the clothes we stand up in.

Willy and Wally rush in from either side and snatch the skirts from their expensive dresses. The Bailiffs

rush off again, L & R, leaving the girls in their drawers

Charity You and your big mouth.

Blackout & curtain

The Minstrel enters, front of curtain, and sings to his banjo:

Music No 4

Scene 2

The square of a quaint English market town. Lots of quirky houses, cobbles, perhaps a market cross. The Bailiffs enter and confront the Minstrel

Wally Come on, come on - no buskers.

The Minstrel bows and skips off

Well, that was a nice little job we did this morning, Willy.

Willy It certainly was, Wally.

Wally Always a pleasure to throw a decent family out into the street.

Willy Yes, indeed. Did you see the way those little girls were crying?

Wally Yes, I did. I love to make little girls cry, don't you, Willy?

Willy I certainly do, Wally.

Wally Oh look - there are some little girls and boys down there!

Willy So there are!

Wally Shall we see if we can make them cry?

Willy Jolly good idea! What shall we do to 'em?

Wally Tread on their Wii remotes?

Willy I know - let's take their shoes and socks off and tickle their feet until they beg for mercy.

Wally You got it! Bags I the little one in pink on the third row.

They are about to leap into the audience when the Widow Aggie Bending enters

Aggie Oi! Oi! Oi!

Wally Oh, no!

Willy It's the Widow Bending!

Wally We're for it now, Willy.

Aggie And just what do you think you're doing?

Wally Nothing.

Willy Nothing at all.

Aggie Oh yes, you were - you were about to do something mean when I came in. *(To audience)* Weren't they up to something just now?

Audience Yes!

Aggie I thought so! You were about to make those little children cry, weren't you?

Wally and Willy Oh no, we weren't! *(Usual business)*

Aggie Shall I tell you something?

Willy No, thank you.

Aggie You are two of the nastiest little men it has ever been my misfortune to meet in my entire life.

Wally And what a long life it has been.

Willy It certainly has.

Aggie It certainly has not. I'd like you to know I'm still in the first flush of youth.

Wally Someone must have pulled your chain, then.

Aggie We are not discussing me. We are discussing you. I want to know why you two are always being nasty to other people.

Wally Because we like it.

Aggie You like it?

Wally Yes. Being bad is fun.

Music No 5

Willy and Wally exeunt. Enter Gilbert, wearing only a barrel

Aggie Those two have definitely got it coming to them. Oh dear. Good morning, Gilbert. You must give me the name of your tailor.

Gilbert I'm so embarrassed, Aggie. I don't know which way to turn.

Aggie Well, don't turn that way, dear - you forgot to put your bung in.

Gilbert Oh, my goodness!

Aggie Tell me - is this the latest fashion, or are you trying to pickle something?

Gilbert It's too awful, Aggie. I've lost everything!

Aggie (*peering into the barrel*) You managed to hold onto a little something.

Gilbert pulls out a locket on a chain

Gilbert Yes, I managed to keep this. It's the locket my dear wife, Margaret, gave me on our wedding anniversary. It is the last thing we have left in the world, my girls and I.

Aggie Aahh. Where are your girls at the moment?

Enter Charity dressed in The Sun, and Patience in The Financial Times

Ah, here they are. You'll want to be by yourselves at a time like this. I'll see you later, Gilly. Toodle-bye. (*Exit*)

Patience I've never been so embarrassed in my entire life!

Charity At least you've got *The Financial Times*. I could only get *The Sun*. It's tiny!

Patience Yes dear. And I think you might have positioned page three more carefully. But then, you always did like to be the centre of attention, didn't you?

Charity You can talk. That man in the park took a magnifying glass to your business section.

Patience He was looking for his investments.

Charity I think he found them. He tore the page out.

Gilbert Girls, girls! Where is your sister, Beauty?

Patience She's still in the park, letting some children read her *Beano*. Honestly, father, you've got to do something. We're ready to die of shame!

Gilbert I have some good news for you, children: I have been able to save something from the bailiffs! See - here it is - your mother's locket!

Charity That's your good news?

Gilbert Yes.

Charity But father, we can't eat a locket!

Patience We can't wear a locket!

Gilbert No - but we can *sell* a locket. It's made of solid gold, you know. You stay here and wait for your sister. I am going to raise some money.

Exit Gilbert

Patience He's going to raise some money, Charity.

Charity I heard, Patience, I heard.

Patience He'll get all of two shillings for that locket.

Charity If he's lucky.

Patience Oh, my goodness! Here come Millie and Molly with Captain Legge!

Milly and Molly, two well-dressed girls enter, arm in arm with a soldier

Charity I'm going to die! I'm just going to die!

Milly Oh, look - there are the Cornwallis girls.

Legge I say! Look what they're wearing!

Molly I heard they'd lost all their money.

Milly What all of it?

Molly Every last penny. So they say.

Legge I think I'll just look up my shares...

Milly Claude! You don't want to be seen with paupers, do you?

Legge Rather not!

Milly Well, come along, then.

Exeunt Millie, Molly and Legge

Patience Did you hear that?

Charity Now the whole world knows we've lost our money!

The street fills up with urchins, who snatch at the girls' paper dresses until they run off

Music No 6

A handsome youth in military uniform sends the urchins scurrying off. It is Simon Bending, newly returned from the wars, his pockets stuffed with gold

Simon How good it is to return to the town of my youth!

The Minstrel enters, and strums on a small guitar

Music No 7

Simon Thank you, my good fellow.

Simon gives the Minstrel a gold coin. He bows and exits. A beggar enters

Beggar Alms! I beg you - alms!

Simon You poor man. Here - this is for you.

Simon gives the Beggar a coin

Beggar Bless you sir, for your goodness. Oi! There's a geezer 'ere wot's givin' away money!

Simon is suddenly besieged by beggars

Beggars Me! Me! Give us some dosh, Captain! (*Etc.*)

Simon Hey! Steady on! Easy there! Woa!

Simon throws some coins onto the ground. There is a mad scrabble for them

I had no idea there were so many people desperate for money..
Beggar You can tell he's been abroad.

Enter Aggie. She prostrates herself before Simon

Aggie Alms! I beg you, alms!

Simon Here you are, old woman - plenty for all.

Aggie Bless you, guv'nor...glory be! Simon!

Simon Mother!

Aggie Son!

Simon I never thought to see my own mother begging in the street! What brought things so low, Mother?

Aggie It's not for myself I beg, Simon. I won't say times have not been hard since you went away, but we can still make ends meet. No, when I heard there was a wealthy gent throwing his money about, I thought to help out an old friend, down on his luck. 'Twas an honest deception.

Simon I have made my fortune, Mother. There is enough coin in my pockets to see us comfortable until the end of our days, and enough left over to help our friends besides. Come - let us return to the house. I can't wait to see the old place again. I shall tell you of my adventures as I go.

Simon and Aggie exeunt. Beauty enters, dressed in rags. Clouds obscure the sun

Music No 8

Simon enters at the end of the song. He presses a coin into her hand

Beauty What's this?

Simon For you. For the singing.

Beauty No thank you. *(Gives the coin back)* I'm not a busker.

Simon Keep it. I insist. *(Gives it back)*

Beauty Or a beggar. I don't want your money. I don't need charity. *(Throws down the coin and exits)*

Simon What fire! What spirit! What beauty! And with a voice like an angel! What a match she would be for a soldier of fortune! If money be not the key to her heart, then I shall offer an alternative, for I am a young lad richly endowed with Nature's attributes, and one of them shall surely please her!