

Beauty and the Beast, the Panto!

Written by Thomas O'Leary (Copyright 2016)

Act 1 – Scene 1 – The Village Square

We find ourselves in a small French village. On stage left is Belle's house, a tall old house, with a bench under the window, a clothes line with large sheets hangs up stage. Through a large window in the house we see Belle's father's workshop, all kinds of interesting objects and bits of inventions fill the window, a door leads inside. On stage left is a water feature or fountain to give the impression that this is the village square.

The village square is festooned with bunting and flags as there is a festival happening. As the curtains open the stage is a buzz with villagers celebrating.

Musical Number – Opening Number to be decided.

Billy Hi everybody, you alright mates? I'm Billy, or silly Billy, or Billy no mates as some people call me, but I don't like those people. Will you call me Billy? And be my mate? And every time I come on stage I'll say "you alright mates?" And you guys all shout "Alright Billy mate" That'll show those girls who say I'm not popular, whose popular, I'll show them popular, I'll be more popular than the ice-cream man at a Weight Watcher's meeting. Popular Billy that's me.

Anymahow that's enough about how popular I am, I'm meant to be telling you what's going on, this year we couldn't afford a narrator so they said, sure billy will do that, he might even make some friends. They didn't know I was already so popular. Sorry I'm losing focus again, (*to random person in the audience*) that's your fault, stop talking about how popular I am will you.

So you are the audience, I am Popular Billy and this is the magical tale of Beauty and the Beast. Now before we begin, this is not Disneyland, ok? And this is the Panto version of the story not the Disney one so there will be no talking clocks or teapots. The original story of Beauty and the Beast was written by a lady called Madame Leprince de Beaumont in 1757, that's three minutes to six, and this version, the Panto version is adapted from her original story. So enjoy, as a magical new story develops before your eyes, don't worry mates there are some Disney songs however.

So let's get on with the show and the classic story begins like this..."Once upon a time in a town far away, there lived an old inventor who had three pretty daughters.

There is a large explosion inside Belle's father's workshop and Belle, Bettina and Belinda run out.

Three pretty daughters, Bettina, Belinda and Belle.

Belle's father Bertram staggers out, with a black face.

Their father the inventor, Bertram.

Bertram Confounded contraption! Wait! If that's what happens when I turn the capacitor to seven, then by the law of averages if I turn the nullifier to three, add some more red bull, then it will... it has to... it must work, by Jiminy I think I have it this time Belle.

Belle Oh please be careful Daddy, I can't bear to see you hurt.

Belinda Come on Dad just figure it out, I mean the competition is on today.

Bettina Yes Dad we don't have time for fooling about, we need you to win this competition so you can qualify for the state fair in the city.

Belinda So that you can win the state fair.

Belle And be the greatest inventor of all time.

Bettina And get the prize money!

Belinda Oh the sweet sweet prize money.

Belle Yes but most importantly be the best inventor in the land.

Bettina Be the richest inventor in the land!

Belinda Yes and keep us living in the high standards to which we have become accustomed.

Bertram Well if my girls believe in me, anything is possible.

Belle Anything is possible when you believe.

Belinda And have money.

Bettina Now no more time for jibber jabber, we have an invention to fix.

Bertram Right!

Bertram, Belinda and Bettina head back into the house. Belle walks down stage alone with her book.

Billy Those two sisters of Belle's, they're the ones who call me Billy no mates! They are not very nice, all they care about is their looks and their clothes and

their stinky perfumes and their iphones, the Kardashians have nothing on those two. They're not at all like Belle, she's my best mate. Hi ya Belle.

Belle Hi Billy, how are you today?

Billy I'm having a great day Belle, I mean the sun is shining, the big inventor's festival is on in town and I have just made 550 mates in the last ten minutes. "You Alright Mates?"

Audience "Alright Billy Mate!"

Belle Everyone is very excited about the inventor's competition as part of the Festival. I hope Daddy can win it this year and represent the village at the State Fair. It's his dream and you have to follow your dream don't you Billy?

Billy But where am I going to get a super model, a Batman suit and a bath tub full of custard? No, on second thoughts I better not follow that dream I had last night! Weird!

Belle My head is full of all kinds of wonderful dreams. Like these magical stories I'm always reading. I must have read this book a hundred times.

Billy It's a good book, no Harry Potter and the Cursed Child, but a good book none the less. I keep all my stories in my head. Don't write anything down, avoids copyright threat.

Belle Oh Billy tell me one of your magical tales again.

Billy A fairy story? How about the one about the government that eradicated property tax and Universal social charges?

Belle No, one of the believable ones?

Billy What about the tale of the big hairy creature that hides in the shadows and is very disagreeable?

Belle Mick Wallace? Oh no, the one about the beast. (*To the wing*) Hey guys, Billy is going to tell us a story.

Belinda and Bettina enter from the house, some chorus members also gather.

Belinda Not one of Silly Billy's stupid stories.

Bettina Oh great, how exciting let's hear it then Billy no mates.

Belle Be nice Belinda, Bettina. I love Billy's stories.

Belinda Sure they're just like Game of Thrones.

Belle Go on Billy.

Billy I will! Ok here goes, (*To some of the chorus*) can you guys give me a hand with this?

He runs to a clothes line and pulls a large sheet across, behind the sheet he acts out the story with the help of some of the chorus using shadow puppets.

Billy Once upon a time in a deep and dark forest there lived a young prince. Though he was rich and wanted for nothing he was selfish and conceited.

One day an old woman called to his castle looking for shelter all she had to offer the Prince was a single red rose. Appalled by her hideous appearance he turned her away.

Suddenly there was a flash and a beautiful sorcerous stood in her place. The Prince begged for mercy but it was too late. She put a spell on him transforming him into a horrible beast and putting a curse upon him so that he or any of his servants could not leave the castle grounds again. Suddenly the trees and bushes grew high up around his castle hiding it away from sight and his gardens were filled with the most beautiful roses you can imagine to remind him of what he had done.

And they say the hideous Beast still waits in his castle and cries and Roooaaaarrrrrrs!

Billy bursts through the sheets frightening everyone.

So the moral of the story is don't judge a book by its cover or don't mess with old ladies maybe, or never answer the door to strangers, something like that. Thanks for your help guys.

The chorus exit.

Bettina Well that was rubbish.

Belinda Ya there is ten minutes of my life I'm never getting back.

Bettina I think from now on we'll call you Boring Billy.

Belinda Ha good one Bettina, let's go watch Geordie Shore.

Bettina Good luck Boring Billy no mates!

The girls head back inside

Belle It was a nice story Billy, but it doesn't have a very happy ending.

Billy No but it teaches a lesson.

Belle I prefer a story with a happy ending. I hope my Dad can win this competition today that would be a happy ending.

Billy I'm sure he can Belle, he's the best inventor in town.

Belle He's the only inventor in town Billy apart from that nasty Baron.

Billy Baron Badass, him and his scary wife. Those two give me the creeps, did you ever notice how just before he shows up, the lights go all dark, the music goes all creepy and there is thunder.

As he says this these things they happen.

Belle Uh oh! Hide!

Belle and Billy hide as Baron Badass and his Wife sweep onto the stage and up to the window of Belle's father's workshop.

Baroness Well can you see anything?

Baron Just his two stupid daughters! Oh their watching Geordie Shore, I haven't seen this one.

Baroness Focus Barnaby, we have to focus, we must find out what he is inventing in there.

Baron Don't worry my dear it can't be as good as my invention this year.

Baroness It better not be, I want that prize money.

Baron And we'll have it, one way or the other, ha ha ha ha ha.

Baroness Focus, bah, with money we can own this whole village, then we can put up the rents and evict the goodie two shoe peasants, and especially the children. Bah I hate children, going around eating sweets and playing games, bah! Snotty little toe rags. A village without children now that would be wonderful.

Baron Oh I think you're going to love my invention so. Come my dear we must away and prepare for victory bah haaaa haa.

Baroness Focus! This invention had better be good.

Baron It's better than good, it's amazing, no it's better than amazing it's mediocre. No wait not mediocre, I mean, what do I mean? Darling wait....Mundane! No not Mundane.....

They Exit and Belle and Billy come out of hiding.

Billy Bad eggs that pair that's for sure.

Belle We can't worry about them now it's time for the festival to start.

Billy Yes! Com'n everyone it's festival day!

Musical Number – Topsy Turvy

Billy Ok ladies and gentlemen settle down please, can I have the very best of order for his worship the Mayor.

The mayor steps forward to address the crowd.

Mayor Citizens, neighbours, it is my honour to welcome you to this year's festival, which is very kindly sponsored by the good people at Sam Mc Cauley's Chemist's and The Riverbank House Hotel. It is time for the highlight of the festival, the inventor's competition. As you know the finalists have been cut down to just two. In the blue corner and weighting in as one of the country's best inventors, the one, the only Professor Bertram Horacio Benton and his amazing invention The Popcorn Rapid Popper 2000.

Everyone cheers

Professor please tell us about the P. R. P. 2000.

Bertram Well, it's really quite simple, using the magic of science and physics the P.R.P. 2000, can turn regular cobs of corn into ready buttered delicious popcorn faster than the speed of light. This can revolutionise the world of popcorn making greater than you can believe!

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Bettina And after Daddy wins the state fair these little beauties will be available to you for a mere €49.95

Belinda Plus postage and packaging.

Bertram What's that?

Belinda Don't worry Daddio leave it to the marketing (*Points to herself*) and Sales (*Points to Bettina*) departments.

Belle What a wonderful invention Dad. Well done.

Bertram Thank you my dear.

Billy Man I love the smell of Popcorn!

Mayor Thank you professor an excellent invention indeed. Now introducing in the red corner, the ever so unpopular richest man in the village, Baron Barnaby Bad ass. (*Pronounces it as Bad ass*)

- Everyone** Boooo!
- Baron** It's Badass. (*Pronounces it as Ba dass as if it were a French second name*)
- Mayor** And his invention the "Child hood eradicator device?????" Baron what the dickens is this?
- Baron** Thank you Mayor! Ladies and gentlemen, if you are like me and you hate children then this is the invention for you. You point this machine at an annoying little snot nosed brat, set it to adult and pull this trigger here and the child will immediately be transformed into a fully grown adult. Eradicate, childhood, puberty and all the hassle they entail with this magical invention. I thank you.
- There is shocked silence.*
- Baroness** Bravo, genius, amazing. Now may we have a volunteer?
- Screams of shock from the villagers.*
- Baron** Perhaps one of the lovely children in the audience would like to volunteer?
- More screams of shock.*
- Mayor** Stop everything! Baron Bad ass!
- Baron** It's Badass
- Mayor** My word, you are truly insane. That is a ridiculous invention that probably doesn't work anyway.
- Baron** How dare you insult me of course it works. All I need is a volunteer.
- Mayor** Well you won't be getting one here today. Baron you are disqualified from the competition. And I suggest sir yourself and your wife seek psychiatric help!
- Baroness** How dare you speak to my husband like that you washed up political pile of poo. You can stick your competition, and your village we are too good for you all anyway.
- Baron** Yes you can keep your competition but, do not fear we will have revenge and someday this town will be mine and then it will be child free. Bah haaaa haaaa
- The Baroness and Baron leave the stage with their invention.*
- Mayor** Every town has its share of freaks but boy we got the motherlode. Well now people let's try to put this ugly business behind us and get on with the festival. And so it gives me great pleasure to announce the winner of this

year's inventor's competition, Professor Bertram Horacio Benton and his Popcorn Popper 2000.

Everyone cheers.

Belle Oh Daddy well done.

Bertram Great Scott!

Belinda Yes yes yes!

Bettina We are going to be so so so rich.

Mayor Professor Benton will now represent our village at the State Fair tomorrow.

Everyone cheers.

Mayor Professor would you like to say a few words?

Bertram Well yes, emmmm sausages, carburettor, window.

Billy Ha! He said a few words.

Belle I think Daddy is speechless.

Billy We know a word for when you are speechless don't we Belle.

Belle Oh yes Billy I believe we do.

Billy Tell them what it is Belle.

Belle It's Supercalifragilistcexpialidocious

Musical Number – Supercalifragilistcexpialidocious

Mayor Well Bertram you better get organised and set out for the state fair in Capital City.

Exit the Mayor

Belinda Capital city? Isn't that the city in the Simpsons?

Bettina At least he didn't call it Yabby Creak!

Bertram My word yes there is much to do!

Billy Yes and the road to Capital City is long.

Bertram Roads? Where we're going we don't need roads.

Billy Nice!

Bertram Billy saddle my horse for time is against me and I must away.

Billy Right!

Billy exits

Belle Papa you will be careful won't you?

Bertram Of course my Belle do not worry. I love you. Bettina, Belinda don't you have anything to say before I head into the great unknown?

Bettina/Belinda We love you Daddy.....will you bring us back something?

Bertram What, yes of course if I have time.

Belinda Excellent here's just a little list. (*She hands him a phone book size pile of pages.*)

Bettina Ok we love you, bye!

They exit into the house.

Bertram And what about you Belle, can I get you something nice on my travels?

Belle No I'm fine papa, once you come back safe.

Bertram Belle you must have something, isn't there anything you want?

Belle Maybe just a pretty rose then. I do love roses.

Bertram Then by Jinkies you will have the finest rose on the planet!

Billy returns with Sherbet the Horse.

Bertram Ah Sherbet my gallant stead, he's Shergars first cousin.

Billy It's an improvement on last year's horse anyway, I think?

Bertram rubs Sherbets ear and he stamps his back foot.

Belle Sherbet you will look after Daddy won't you?

Sherbet shakes his head happily.

Bertram Right we are away. Wish us luck.

Billy Where you're going you don't need luck! Just kidding best of luck Professor.

Belle Good luck Daddy, do be careful.

Belle Good bye Belle, Billy see you tomorrow night.

Sherbet and Bertram exit

Belle Oh Billy I hope he'll be ok.

Billy Course he will Belle, don't worry. What could go wrong?

End of Scene 1.