

BELLE

Who's done this to you?

(The BEAST appears in the shadows.)

MAURICE

There's no time to explain. You must go... now!

BELLE

I won't leave you here!

(feels a presence and whirls around)

Who's there? I know someone's there. Who are you?

BEAST

The master of this castle.

BELLE

Then, you're the one who's responsible for this! Release my father at once!

BEAST

I am the master of the castle! I do not take orders from anyone. Throw her out!

(The GARGOYLE suddenly springs to life and grabs BELLE.)

BELLE

No! Wait! Forgive me. Please, let him out. Can't you see he's not well?

BEAST

Then he should not have trespassed here.

BELLE

But he's an old man. He could die!

BEAST

He came into my home uninvited and now he'll suffer the consequences.

BELLE

Please... I'll do anything.

MAURICE

Belle!

BEAST

There's nothing you can do!

BELLE

Wait, please!

BEAST

I said there is nothing you can do!

BELLE

Take me instead!

MAURICE

No!

BEAST

What did you say?

BELLE

Take me instead.

MAURICE

Belle, you don't know what you're doing.

BEAST

You would do that? You would take his place?

BELLE

If I did, would you let him go?

BEAST

If you promise to stay here... forever.

MAURICE

No!

BELLE

Forever?

BEAST

Forever! Or he dies in the dungeon!

BELLE

That's not fair...

(considers)

Wait. Come into the light.

(The BEAST steps closer to BELLE, who recoils at the sight of him.)

BEAST

Make your choice!

MAURICE

Belle, listen to me. I'm old... I've lived my life.

BELLE

You have my word.

BEAST

Done!

MRS. POTTS

(to BELLE)

Come along, dearie. Let's get you out of those wet things.

(MRS. POTTS leads BELLE off. As they go, BELLE looks back and indicates that the BEAST should wipe his mouth.)

BEAST

SHE GLANCED THIS WAY, I THOUGHT I SAW
AND WHEN WE TOUCHED, SHE DIDN'T SHUDDER AT MY PAW
NO, IT CAN'T BE... I'LL JUST IGNORE
BUT THEN, SHE'S NEVER LOOKED AT ME THAT WAY BEFORE

(COGSWORTH and LUMIERE approach.)

When she smiles at me... I get all choked up. My heart starts pounding and I can't breathe!

COGSWORTH

Good!

BEAST

That's good?

LUMIERE

Excellent!

BEAST

I've never felt this way about anyone. I want to give her something... but what?

COGSWORTH

Well, there's the usual things: flowers, chocolates, promises you don't intend to keep.

LUMIERE

No, no. This is no ordinary girl. It has to be something special. Something that sparks her interest... something...

(remembers)

Aaah!

(LUMIERE whispers into the BEAST's ear. He drains back, skeptically.)

BEAST

What? Are you sure?

(BELLE comes back in a new dress. COGSWORTH clears his throat and bows in Belle's direction. LUMIERE and the BEAST look at her.)

LUMIERE

(under his breath to the BEAST)

Say something about the dress.

BEAST

(confused)

It's pink.

LUMIERE

A compliment!

BEAST

Oh.

(to BELLE)

What a... nice dress.

BELLE

Thank you!

(The BEAST looks at LUMIERE and COGSWORTH: "How'd I do?" They nod and make "go on" motions.)

BEAST

Belle... I have something to show you.

(leads BELLE upstage)

But first you have to close your eyes. It's a surprise.

(BELLE closes her eyes. The BEAST heads off.)

LUMIERE

Get the girl!

(The BEAST returns and gently leads BELLE through the castle.)

BELLE

Can I open them?

(A beautiful library with stacks and stacks of books appears.)

BEAST

All right... now!

(BELLE opens her eyes and gasps with wonder.)

BELLE

I can't believe it! I've never seen so many books in my whole life!

BEAST

You... like it?

BELLE

It's wonderful!

BEAST

Then... it's yours!

(BELLE runs to look at the books and dashes from stack to stack.)

BELLE

NEW AND A BIT ALARMING

WHO'D HAVE EVER THOUGHT THAT THIS COULD BE?

(BELLE looks back at the BEAST.)

TRUE THAT HE'S NO PRINCE CHARMING

BUT THERE'S SOMETHING IN HIM THAT

THAT I SIMPLY DIDN'T SEE

(BELLE shows a book to the BEAST.)

This is one of my favorites. *King Arthur*. Have you ever read it?

BEAST

No.

BELLE

Then you don't know what you're missing. I'd love to read it again. Wait! You can read it first.

(BELLE offers the book to the BEAST, but he pushes it back.)

BEAST

That's all right.

BELLE

No, really... you read it.

BEAST

No... you.

BELLE

No... you.

BEAST

(finally, in frustration, confesses)

No! I can't.

BELLE

You never learned to read?

BEAST

Only a little, and long ago.

(The BEAST goes to leave.)