



MURRAY J. RIVETTE

A wacky adaptation of the GRIMM BROTHERS' FAIRYTALE

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

BUMPLED STILTSKIN
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RUMPLED STILTSKIN

CHILDREN'S COMEDY. King Lariat and Queen Querliette must search their 6-block kingdom to find a wife for Prince Moe. The two top contenders include Drizella, who can pull her lower lip over the top of her head, and Prunella, who can burp the national anthem. That leaves Penelope Ann, who is completely talentless. Desperate, Penelope Ann's parents tell the King and Queen that their daughter can spin straw into gold. Doubtful, the King and Queen lock Penelope Ann in the prison tower with a bale of straw and a spinning wheel. All seems lost for Penelope Ann until a bagpipe-playing rap star, Rumpelstiltskin, appears. Besides his impressive musical talent, Rumpel just happens to be able to spin straw into gold...but for a price. All he wants is Penelope Ann's first-born child and a single-family castle on an 18-hole golf course in Boca Raton, Florida!

Performance Time: Approximately 60-75 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(7 m, 7 w)

NARRATOR/PAGE/PRIEST/LADY BEATRICE/BABY GUR-

GLE: Priest wears a black robe and hat; Lady Beatrice wears an ugly gown, blonde wig, flashy slippers, weird glasses, and a cone-shaped hat with veil; Baby Gurgle wears large diapers, large baby bonnet, and carries a large rattle, baby bottle, or pacifier.

KING LARIAT: Rules over the expansive 6-block kingdom of Llabruf.

QUEEN QUERLIETTE: King Lariat's wife and co-ruler.

PRINCE MOE: Never without his yo-yo, and is always trying to do some sort of simple trick but never does it right.

MADDAZ: Hatter.

BARBO: Hatter's wife.

DRIZZELLA: Hatter's daughter.

SHAIVIO: Barber.

GILLETTA: Barber's wife.

PRUNELLA: Barber's daughter.

DENNIS: Miller.

ANNE: Miller's wife.

PENELOPE ANN: Miller's Daughter.

RUMPLED STILTSKIN: Ugly, has a hunchback, and walks with a decided limp, dragging one leg behind him.

Note on costuming for Narrator: In some cases, quick changes are required. The costumes for the Priest and Lady Beatrice need to be very loose so that they can be changed into quickly or slipped over the head.

SETTING

The kingdom of Llabruf.

Palace Throne Room: There are two thrones, one for the King and one for the Queen, a window, three benches, and assorted banners hung around the perimeter for color.

Prison Tower: There is a bale of straw, a small cot, a stool, a spinning wheel, a bar enclosure, and a narrow window.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

SCENE 1: Palace throne room.

SCENE 2: Prison tower.

SCENE 3: Palace throne room.

SCENE 4: Prison tower.

SCENE 5: Palace throne room.

SCENE 6: Palace throne room, one year later.

SCENE 7: Palace throne room, one day before Baby Gurgle's birthday.

SCENE 8: Palace throne room, the next day.

PROPS

Hand mirror	Submarine sandwich
Yo-yo	Can of 7-UP
Pad of paper	Bundle of gold threads
Pencil	Issue of "TV Guide"
Umbrella	Large bath towel
Purse, for Anne	Shower cap
Bale of straw	Flip-flops, for Narrator
Cot	Children's inner tube
Spinning wheel	Cell phone
Stool	Long scroll with names on it
2 Thrones	Official-looking document

SOUNDEFFECTS

People arriving	"Rocky"-type theme music
Evil-sounding music	"Jeopardy!"-type theme
"Original Star Trek" theme	music or clock ticking
music or the like	Game-show music

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: Palace throne room. There are two thrones. Narrator enters.)

NARRATOR: *(To audience.)* This is the throne room in the kingdom of Llabruf – that's "furball" spelled backwards. It's a small kingdom – six city blocks and only four families, counting the royal family. You've heard the old saying, "It's quality, not quantity that counts?" Well, neither one applies here. In our little village, there is the family of the hatter, the family of the barber, the family of the miller, and the royal family – the King, the Queen and the Prince. It's not only a small kingdom, it's a very poor one, too, and King Lariat, Queen Querliette, and Prince Moe have a small dilemma...actually, they had a *big* dilemma, but they traded it in for two small ones. Oh, here they come now. I'll let them tell you all about it.

(Queen enters, always primping in her hand mirror. Prince Moe enters, playing with his yo-yo. King enters and sits on his throne.)

KING: Dear wife, Querliette [*pronounced Curly-ette*], and son, Moe, we have a dilemma.

NARRATOR: *(To audience.)* See? What did I tell you? I'll see you later. *(Starts to exit.)* Oh, the next time you see me, I'll be the Court Page. *(Exits.)*

KING: My dear, we need to find a suitable wife for our son, Prince Moe. Someone whose family is equal in status to ours, someone whose daughter is a fitting match for our handsome son, someone whose...

(Queen sits on her throne.)

QUEEN: Someone whose family has lots of money!

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KING: Yeah, that would be a real plus.

QUEEN: Plus, my patootie! If we don't get some money rolling into the treasury, we'll be shot by our own people! If they knew how much money we spent on non-essentials, they'd be revolting very soon...

PRINCE: Mother, the people are already revolting! Have you taken a good look at them? Yuk! Except for the daughter of the miller...she's kind of nice to look at.

QUEEN: Not that kind of revolting, dear. I'm talking about the kind where the people string you up... (*Demonstrates.*) Urk! Or cut off your head. Whap! Fun stuff like that.

PRINCE: Ooooh! Cut off my head? You can cut off my allowance, but please leave my head where it is, thank you!

QUEEN: So we'd better do something—and fast. I don't know about you, but I'd like to keep my breath, bad as it may be. I'd like it to be there when I need it—like every minute of the day. "It is better to have halitosis than no breath at all!" Shakespeare.

KING: Shakespeare said that?

QUEEN: Oh, yeah. Hamlet, in his soliloquy, says, "To breathe or not to breathe? That is the...uh...congestion."

KING: I thought he said, "To be or not to be? That is the question."

QUEEN: Hey, close enough! (*To Prince.*) Just take it from me, son, bad breath is much better than no breath.

KING: Yes, yes, of course, my dear. But I told you to invest in Beanie Babies or Pokémon Cards [*or insert names of other popular fads*], and *not* hula hoops...that fad was over long ago.

(*Queen smacks him with her hand mirror.*)

QUEEN: Hey, don't blame me. You and your fast cars! Couldn't settle for a nice, little Ford Mustang or a Toyota Corolla [*insert names of economy cars*], you had to have a Porsche. And you didn't even have insurance!

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KING: I hate insurance men...and...well...I *like* Porsches.

QUEEN: Yes, and apparently so do trees. That one that jumped out in front of you and totaled your car must have *loved* Porsches!

(Prince stops playing with his yo-yo.)

PRINCE: Mom, Dad, I hate it when you argue. Please don't argue. *(Martyr.)* If it was anyone's fault that our kingdom is broke, it's mine. I've spent a virtual fortune on video games! Blame me, not yourselves. I take full responsibility!

KING: Now, now, son...

QUEEN: Oh, no, son...

PRINCE: Yes...if I hadn't kept after you both for the latest Nintendo games and Sony Playstations *[or insert names of popular games]*... *(False tears.)* I'm just so sorry...I'm not worthy...I...I...

KING: You're a fine lad, son!

QUEEN: You're a wonderful son, son!

(Prince abruptly stops his fake tears and starts playing with his yo-yo again.)

PRINCE: Okay! Whatever you say.

KING: Okay, here's what we'll do. I'll send a messenger to spread the news that we are looking for a suitable young girl to marry our son, the prince. And if the family happens to have lots of money, then so much the better. *(Calls.)* Page! Where is my court page? I need someone to deliver a message!

(Narrator enters dressed as Court Page.)

NARRATOR/PAGE: *(To audience.)* Okay, here's where I come in again—as the Court Page. *(To King.)* Yes, Sire?

KING: Page, I want you to take a message—

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NARRATOR/PAGE: What else? *(Takes out dictation pad and pencil.)*

KING: This is the message: To all parents of eligible daughters of marrying age... *(At this point, the King's voice lowers and he continues under Page's dialogue, slowly, so that the Page can step forward and deliver his monologue.)* ...be it known that King Lariat and Queen Querliette of Llabruf are looking for a nice girl from a nice family—preferably one with a couple of bucks—to marry their handsome son and heir to the throne, Prince Moe. Stop in at anytime...no appointment necessary...

NARRATOR/PAGE: *(Dialogue over King's monologue. To audience.)* In this play, I get to do a whole bunch of different parts, but I hate being the darn messenger. The King always dictates these looong letters, and quite frankly, my fingers start to cramp up and my whole hand hurts. I have to change hands quite frequently, and I can hardly read my own handwriting because it's so bad when I write lefty, and then I have to soak my hands for days to ease the pain. I still don't know if I'm a right-handed page or a left-handed page!

KING: ...and please use the rear entrance. *(To Page.)* Did you get all that, Page?

NARRATOR/PAGE: Yes, your majesty.

KING: Let me see it. *(Looks it over.)* Good...now I want you to take it to the far-flung reaches of the kingdom...

NARRATOR/PAGE: *(Sarcastic.)* The entire six blocks, your majesty?

KING: Yes, the entire six blocks...hey, I'm sorry I didn't inherit a bigger kingdom, so cut me some slack here.

NARRATOR/PAGE: Sorry, your majesty.

KING: Here... *(Hands him the message.)* ...make sure that every head of household reads this.

NARRATOR/PAGE: *(Sarcastic.)* All three of them, your majesty?

KING: Yes, all three of them! Now get on your horse.

NARRATOR/PAGE: But, sire, I don't have a horse.

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KING: I knew that! Just get going!

NARRATOR/PAGE: Okay, okay, I'm going. *(To audience.)* I'll be back. Just don't wait up. I have so much ground to cover...not! *(Exits.)*

QUEEN: So now all we have to do is sit back and wait for a rich family to show up with an eligible daughter and we are in the money!

PRINCE: In the money!

KING: It may not be that easy. We can't settle for just anyone...she has to be...intelligent...

QUEEN: Yes, intelligent.

PRINCE: In-tel-li-gent!

KING: She has to be...a good cook.

QUEEN: By all means, a good cook.

PRINCE: Good cook!

KING: She has to be...a neat housekeeper.

QUEEN: Oh, yes, she must be tidy.

PRINCE: Neat...house...keeper.

KING: She has to be...

QUEEN: Sweetheart...she just has to be rich!

PRINCE: Rich! Yeah!

KING: Oh, all right...she just has to be rich.

(Page enters, breathless.)

NARRATOR/PAGE: Your majesties, I've done as you asked and delivered the message to all the households in the kingdom. *(Holds up three fingers to audience.)*

KING: The *entire* kingdom?

NARRATOR/PAGE: Yes, and I even went around the block twice!

KING: Please...don't rub it in.

QUEEN: Well, if we're going to have company, we'd better get ready to receive them.

PRINCE: Mom, look around you. We don't get anymore ready than this.

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(Noise from offstage, as villagers arrive.)

NARRATOR/PAGE: *(As he shows them in.)* All right, people, let's line up here. Come on now, let's hold it down. Hold it down. *(Still noisy, shouts.)* At ease! *(All is silent.)* Thank you. Bow down before your king and queen. *(They do. Dennis bumps Page when he bows.)* Oops! Your majesties, these are the townspeople.

KING: Yes, yes. Please introduce yourselves. I don't think I've met any of you before. I don't get out often enough to meet everyone, you know.

NARRATOR/PAGE: *(Aside.)* You mean anyone!

KING: What was that?

NARRATOR/PAGE: Nothing, your majesty, nothing. *(Page indicates Maddaz.)*

MADDAZ: *(Bows.)* Your majesty, I am Maddaz, a hatter. And this is my lovely wife, Barbo.

BARBO: *(Curtseys.)* Yes, that's right, I'm his lovely wife, Barbo. And this is our daughter, Drizella.

DRIZELLA: *(Curtseys, then speaks like a Valley girl.)* I'm just so...like you know...pleased to meetcha! I mean...like, wow! This is like...sooo exciting! Royalty!

(Page indicates Shaivio.)

SHAIVIO: *(Bows.)* Your majesties, I have the distinct honor to be Shaivio the barber, and this is my wife, Gilletta.

(Gilletta hits Shaivio with an umbrella.)

GILLETTA: Hey, the hatter said his wife was lovely. Couldn't you say something nice about me?

NARRATOR/PAGE: Ahem! People!

GILLETTA: *(Curtseys.)* Sorry. And this is our... *(To Shaivio.)* ...lovely daughter, Prunella.

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PRUNELLA: (*Curtsies, and falls over.*) Oops! Hi...and I'm...like she said...Prunella. Sorry!

(*Page indicates Dennis.*)

DENNIS: (*Bows.*) Your majesties, I am Dennis, the miller, and this is my sweet wife, Anne.

(*Gilletta hits Shaivio again with her umbrella, muttering "she's his sweet wife" under her breath.*)

ANNE: Your majesties. (*Curtsies.*) And this is our lovely daughter, Penelope Ann.

PENELOPE ANN: (*Curtsies.*) So pleased to meet you, your majesties.

KING: Yes, yes, of course. Well, now that introductions are over, and we've attended to the little niceties, let's get down to business, shall we?

QUEEN: I thought you'd never get to it. Here, let me! Tell me, hatter, how much is your *net* worth?

MADDAZ: Oh, I'm not a fisherman, your majesty, I don't have a net.

QUEEN: What?

MADDAZ: I just make hats...I don't have any nets.

QUEEN: What I mean is...how much are you worth...in *money!*

MADDAZ: Oh, money! About \$2 million pizasters. In a Swiss bank account, of course.

KING: Why a Swiss bank? Why not here?

PRINCE: Yeah, why there?

MADDAZ: Well, the best reason I guess is because we don't have a bank in the kingdom.

QUEEN: Hah! Details! That's no excuse.

PRINCE: No excuse!

MADDAZ: But, your majesties, you have all the money here in the royal treasury.

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KING: *(To Queen.)* You know, he's right, my dear. We do have all the money.
QUEEN: Oh...right. What little is left of it. In fact, you might say we have a pizaster disaster! Ha, ha, ha! *(Laughs at her own joke, then stops abruptly.)*
KING: And you, Barber. How much are you worth?
SHAIVIO: Oh, about \$6 million pizasters...roughly.
QUEEN: *(Sarcastic.)* Roughly? Ha, ha, ha. Smooth it out for us, will you?
SHAIVIO: Uh...\$8 million pizasters.
QUEEN: Wow!
PRINCE: Wow is right!
KING: Here?
SHAIVIO: In government bonds.
QUEEN: But *we're* the government.
SHAIVIO: Actually... *[insert name of country]* government bonds. Much better interest rates. No interest here...15 percent there.
QUEEN: Wow, again!
PRINCE: Wow is right...again!
KING: And you, miller?
DENNIS: *(Thinking fast.)* Well...you see, uh...I...uh...don't actually have any...cash.
KING/QUEEN/PRINCE: Oh?! No cash?!
DENNIS: No...no...oh, but you see, I can get anything I need. My lovely daughter, Penelope Ann, knows how to spin straw into gold! So my funds are unlimited!
ANNE: Hold it! Family conference!

(Anne pulls Dennis and Penelope Ann aside and they discuss the issue in the background while the other families show off their daughters.)

MADDAZ: Your majesty, my daughter can pull her lower lip over the top of her head!
BARBO: Yes, yes...show them, Drizella, dear.

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(Drizella starts to pull her lower lip up.)

KING: I'd rather not see—

SHAIVIO: Wait! My daughter can burp the entire national anthem...

GILLETTA: Yes, yes! She is so talented. Go ahead, Prunella, dear.

(Prunella starts to gulp air.)

QUEEN: I don't think I want to hear that...

PRINCE: Yuck! Me neither!

(Others mutter "Gross," "Me neither," "Yuck," etc. as Anne, Penelope Ann, and Dennis, continue to discuss Penelope Anne's gold-spinning capabilities.)

ANNE: *(To Dennis.)* What are you saying?

DENNIS: I just want to get a foot in the door. We'll worry about the details later!

PENELOPE ANN: But I can't spin straw into gold. That's crazy!

DENNIS: But *they* don't know that! And you two wonderful kids will be married before anyone realizes that it isn't true!

KING: *(Shouts.)* Hold it! Hold it! Just hold it there! *(Everything quiets down.)* Now then, I don't want to see anyone's lower lip pulled over the top of their heads and no one wants to hear someone burp the national anthem! Especially ours...it's got more high notes than a Celine Dion *[insert name of pop singer]* song!

QUEEN: Absolutely right. Now, miller, you say your daughter can spin straw into gold?

DENNIS: Yes, she can.

QUEEN: And we just happen to be the straw capital of the world!

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PRINCE: What dumb luck!

KING: Then I think that these two lovebirds should be married right away! I hate long engagements, don't you?

QUEEN: Wait a minute. Not so fast. The miller *says* his daughter can spin straw into gold, but I think I'd like to see it with my own eyes before my son marries her.

PRINCE: Most definitely!

ANNE: (*Whispers, to Dennis.*) Okay, sport, so what's plan B?

(*Anne hits Dennis with her purse.*)

KING: Sounds good to me. We'll put her to the test. Here's what we'll do...Miller, we will place your daughter in the prison tower tonight with a bale of straw, and in the morning, we'll see how well she has done the task that you claim she can do. To wit: Spin the straw into gold. If she can do what you say she can, then tomorrow we'll have a huge wedding celebration! Right?

(*Everyone, except Penelope Ann, shouts "Right!"*)

PENELOPE ANN: Help!

(*Blackout.*)

SCENE 2

(AT RISE: The prison tower. Penelope Ann is seated on a bale of straw, crying. There is a small cot in the corner, a spinning wheel, a stool, and a narrow window.)

PENELOPE ANN: Oh woe, oh woe, oh woe, oh woe is me!
What will happen to me? What shall I do? Oh, someone please hear me and tell me, what shall I do? Here I am, all alone, in the prison tower, nothing to eat, nothing to drink...except for this skimpy, little, foot-long roast beef submarine sandwich and an ice-cold 7-Up.

(She takes the sandwich and can of soda out of her pockets and is about to unwrap the sandwich when Rumples appears at her side.)

RUMPLED: Hey, toots!

(Penelope Ann screams and falls off the hay bale, dropping her sandwich and soda.)

PENELOPE ANN: Aaaaaaahhhhh!

RUMPLED: Whoa! Did I frighten you?

PENELOPE ANN: Oh, no, I always scream and fall down like that...I do it all the time. *(Yells.)* Of course, you frightened me, you silly person! *(Starts to chase him, swinging sandwich at him.)* What's the big idea, scaring me half to death like that?

RUMPLED: Sorry. *(Trying to avoid the blows.)* Hey, cut that out! You could hurt someone with that thing!

PENELOPE ANN: That's the idea, dummy! That's exactly why I'm doing it! You nearly gave me a heart attack, you overgrown munchkin!

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RUMPLED: Hey, hey! This isn't the "Jerry Springer Show"!
[Or insert name of another TV show.] Please give me a chance
to explain.

PENELOPE ANN: Explain? Like how you got into a locked
room 10 stories above the ground and scared me half to
death?

RUMPLED: Hold it! Hold it! Time out! I'm pooped already!
(Sits.) I really didn't mean to scare you...I just like to make a
big entrance! Makes me look good. But I came to *help*
you...honest.

(She stops chasing him.)

PENELOPE ANN: Help me? How can you help me? And
who are you anyway? (Holds sandwich and soda close,
suspicious.) Answer me! Who are you, and what do you
want?

RUMPLED: Like I said, I came here to help you! Honest! So
just back off...I'm not going to hurt you. I'm here to make
you a *very* special business proposition.

PENELOPE ANN: No junk bonds...I'm not into E-bay...and I
absolutely, positively do not want to subscribe to MCI... [Or
insert the name of another service.]

RUMPLED: No, no, no...nothing like that.

PENELOPE ANN: (Suspicious.) Oh, no? Then what?

RUMPLED: Well, how about if I could...by some sort of
magic...

PENELOPE ANN: (Very excited.) Magic? Oh, I love magic!
Can you make a bunny rabbit appear? I love bunny rabbits!
Soft, little, cuddly bunny rabbits!

RUMPLED: Nothing like that...you see, what I had in mind...

PENELOPE ANN: (Even more excited.) You're gonna make me
float! You're gonna pull a David Copperfield on me and
make me float in the air! Whee! Oh boy!

RUMPLED: No, no, *no!* No rabbits, no floating...nothing like
that.

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PENELOPE ANN: (*Totally blasé.*) No rabbits? No floating? Sheesh...you're no fun. Okay, then *what*?

RUMPLED: (*Like TV show emcee.*) Yes, my dear, Penelope Ann, the miller's daughter, this is your lucky day...the chance of a lifetime...a one in a million proposition. How would *you* like to be...queen for a day?

PENELOPE ANN: Queen for a what?

RUMPLED: Just kidding! But seriously, how would *you*...like *me*...to spin this whole bale of straw...into *gold*?

PENELOPE ANN: (*Laughing.*) Yeah, right! And how would *you*...like *me*...to fly to the moon and back!

RUMPLED: Hey, hey, hey, cut it out! I'm not kidding!

PENELOPE ANN: (*Laughing even harder.*) Right! Oh, sure! You can spin straw into gold! And I'm a rocket scientist, sending all sorts of spaceships to distant planets and beyond... (*Star Trek theme music.*) ...to boldly go where no man has gone before...

RUMPLED: (*Shouts.*) Hey, I told you I wasn't kidding! (*Music stops.*) When I say I can spin straw into gold, you better darn well believe me!

(*Penelope Ann stops laughing and calms down slowly.*)

PENELOPE ANN: Hey, you're really not kidding, are you?

RUMPLED: No, I am *not* kidding. A little family secret...it's a very special recipe passed down through my family tree by my great aunt Julietta La Child.

PENELOPE ANN: Ohmigosh! Would you do that for me? Would you spin this straw into gold?

RUMPLED: Of course, but...there's a small price.

PENELOPE ANN: Oh, sure, I knew it. Okay, what is it? You wanna hot fudge sundae or something like that, huh?

RUMPLED: Nah, I want my own home.

PENELOPE ANN: I beg your pardon? Your own home?

RUMPLED: Darn right! I'm living in a refrigerator carton in an alley. I got evicted from my last apartment when it went

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condo, and I haven't found a suitable place to live. I want a single-family...castle! All my own!

PENELOPE ANN: Oh, yeah, right...like I can get that for you?!

RUMPLED: Sure you can!

PENELOPE ANN: I can?

RUMPLED: Absolutely! Once you show these royal pains that you can spin straw into gold, you get to marry the Prince. Then, once you're a member of the royal family, all you got to do is just ask for a small summer home...preferably in some nice warm climate, like...well, I was thinking...Boca Raton, Florida.

PENELOPE ANN: But why would you want a home all by yourself? Why not someone to share it with?

RUMPLED: Are you kidding? Who would want to share a home with me? Look at me. What do you see?

PENELOPE ANN: A kind of...well...strange-looking man.

RUMPLED: Strange? By "strange," do you mean...*ugly*?

PENELOPE ANN: Okay, if you say so. But there's plenty of ugly girls out there. All you got to do is look for them!

RUMPLED: Go look out the window.

PENELOPE ANN: What?

RUMPLED: Come, walk this way.

(He limps to the window. She follows, imitating his limp.)

PENELOPE ANN: Okay, what now?

RUMPLED: Just look out there.

(Penelope Ann can't get to the level of the window. It's too high.)

PENELOPE ANN: Uh...I can't...oh, darn! I can't get up high enough...

RUMPLED: Here, let me give you a boost. *(He cups his hands and she steps in them; she has no balance and the two of them fall down in a heap, together.)*

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PENELOPE ANN/RUMPLED: Owwwwwww!

PENELOPE ANN: I'm sorry...I lost my balance.

RUMPLED: Oh, never mind. Let's see... *(Looks around room.)*
...ah! *(Sees stool and drags it to the window.)* Here. This should do it.

(Penelope Ann stands on the stool and looks out the window.)

PENELOPE ANN: Ooooooh! Nice view!

RUMPLED: Never mind that. What do you see?

PENELOPE ANN: Oh, wow...look at all the pretty clouds and beautiful blue sky...

RUMPLED: Hey! Look *down!*

PENELOPE ANN: Oh. *(She does.)* Okay. Now what?

RUMPLED: What do you see now?

PENELOPE ANN: The whole kingdom!

RUMPLED: All six blocks!

PENELOPE ANN: Yeah, so what?

RUMPLED: So how many houses do you see out there?

PENELOPE ANN: Three...there's the hatter's house...and there's the barber's house...and there's *my* house! *(Waves.)*
Yoo-hoo! Hi, Mom and Dad! Yoo-hoo!

RUMPLED: Okay, that's enough. Come on down from there before you hurt yourself.

PENELOPE ANN: Sure...whatever you say.

(Penelope Ann gets down.)

RUMPLED: So...there are three houses out there. In one of them is that ditzy Drizella...and in another one is that ever-burping, Prunella. And in the last one...

(Penelope Ann raises her hand.)

PENELOPE ANN: Ooh! Ooh! I know! Me!

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RUMPLED: Right! And you are about to marry the Prince...so who does that leave for me?

PENELOPE ANN: Oh...oh, yeah. Not much to choose from, huh?

RUMPLED: Practically zip...zilch...nada...nothing. So if I *have* to live alone somewhere, it sure as heck ain't gonna be here! And I just *love* a big, roomy house! Especially if it's on a golf course...oh, I forgot, I want my castle on an 18-hole golf course!

PENELOPE ANN: Hmm. You know something, if you can spin this worthless straw into gold, there will be plenty of money in the royal treasury, and I'll just bet I can do it for you. In fact, I *know* I can do it! You got a deal! (*They shake hands.*) You'll get your castle! But I'll tell you right now...you'll probably be sorry.

RUMPLED: Oh, why?

PENELOPE ANN: Think of all the housework. It's bad enough around my house, we've only got eight rooms, but a castle? Gotta have a minimum of 16 rooms to qualify as a castle.

RUMPLED: Sez who?

PENELOPE ANN: "Better Homes and Gardens," silly!

RUMPLED: Really?

PENELOPE ANN: Of course. Come on, it's a well-known fact! Everybody knows it. And the taxes on a castle will kill you...even with the homestead exemption.

RUMPLED: Oh. (*Pause.*) Okay, a nice little 6-room cottage should suit me fine. But I want two bathrooms! In case company drops in.

PENELOPE ANN: Yeah, right. Like you're gonna get visitors!

RUMPLED: Hey, watch the bad mouthing. It could happen...

PENELOPE ANN: All right then, a 6-room cottage it will be. You got it!

RUMPLED: Oh, happy day! All right, now to get to work. Go take a nap, kiddo. Rest up for the long night...I've got a little work to do here. (*Starts to pull straw bale CS.*)

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(Blackout.)

SCENE 3

(AT RISE: Palace throne room. King, Queen, Prince, Dennis, and Anne are waiting anxiously for Penelope Ann to appear.)

KING: Bring in the girl!

QUEEN: Bring in the girl!

PRINCE: Bring in the girl!

(Page escorts Penelope in. She is carrying a bundle of gold threads.)

ALL: Oooh! Gold!

KING: Come forward, young lady, and let us see what you have done. Bring it to me.

(Penelope Ann hands the King the gold threads. He and the Queen and Prince gather around "ooohing" and "aaahing." Dennis and Anne pull Penelope Ann aside.)

DENNIS: *(To Penelope Ann.)* Hey, have you been holding out on us?

PENELOPE ANN: But—

ANNE: Yeah, why didn't you tell us you could actually do this?

PENELOPE ANN: But—

DENNIS: We could have used your talent long ago...

PENELOPE ANN: But—

ANNE: We've been so poor all our lives...

PENELOPE ANN: But—

DENNIS: And all this time, we could have been rich...

PENELOPE ANN: But—

ANNE: We could have been society....I coulda been a contender!

PENELOPE ANN: But—

DENNIS: Hey, cut that out! You sound like a motorboat!

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KING: Summon all the villagers! Call for the priest! These two shall be married at once!

NARRATOR/PAGE: Yes, your majesty. (*Pokes head out of castle window.*) Hey, everyone! Come to the wedding! Hurry up! Check out the bride! Come one, come all! Let's shake a leg, people! The miller's kid did it! We got gold!

KING: And Page, call for the priest! We're going to have a wedding! We got gold!

PRINCE: We got gold!

NARRATOR/PAGE: (*Aside.*) Call for the priest...call for the priest...call for the priest. (*He exits and yells.*) Send in the priest...don't send in the clowns...send in the priest!

KING: I hate when he yells like that! Why is he always yelling? Day in, day out, there's always yelling around here!

(Offstage, Narrator dons a priest's robe and hat and re-enters immediately as the Priest.)

NARRATOR/PRIEST: (*To audience.*) Okay, so it's me again...what can I tell you...it's a low-budget show! (*To King.*) Yes, your royal highness?

KING: Priest, I want you to marry these two.

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Oh, I can't do that, your majesty. I'm already married and that would be bigamy! Just kidding. (*Laughs at his own joke.*) In fact, if I married *both* of them, I'm sure it would be...trigonometry...at least! (*Laughs again.*)

KING: No! I don't want *you* to marry them! I want you to marry *them*, to each *other*!

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Aha! Well, why didn't you say so in the first place?

QUEEN: Oooh, I love a daughter-in-law who spins straw into gold! Let's get on with it, shall we?

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Right. No problem. All right, Prince Moe, you stand here. (*Arranges wedding party.*) Okay, golden girl, you stand here. King Lariat, you over here, Queen Querliette, over there. Father of the bride, here, and mother

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of the bride, over there. There...looking good. (*Villagers enter.*) Ah, here's everyone now. (*To Maddaz.*) Are you from the bride's side or the groom's side?

MADDAZ: Are you kidding?

BARBO: Do we look like royalty to you?

DRIZELLA: My goodness, how silly!

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Sorry. (*To Shaivio.*) Bride's side or groom's side?

SHAIVIO: We're villagers, for crying out loud!

GILLETTA: How could you mistake us as related to...them?

PRUNELLA: It's ridiculous!

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Of course. What was I thinking? Well, looks like everyone's here, so I'd like to say... (*Reads from "TV Guide."*) ...to "All My Children," remember that "As the World Turns," love is "The Guiding Light" throughout the "Dark Shadows" and "The Days of Our Lives," and as we only have "One Life to Live," even those of you who are "The Young and the Restless"...

PRINCE: Hey, put down that "TV Guide" and let's get on with this!

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Sorry...scratch that. Prince Moe, do you take this...

PRINCE: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

NARRATOR/PRIEST: And you're Penelope Ann, right?

PENELOPE ANN: Yep, that's me.

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Do you have any I.D.?

QUEEN: Never *mind* the I.D. Just get on with it!

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Okay, okay. Do you, Penelope Ann, the miller's daughter, take...?

PENELOPE ANN: (*Blasé.*) Yeah, sure, why not?

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Ooooh...such enthusiasm...not! Okay, anyone here who doesn't want this marriage to take place, speak now or forever hold your tongue!

(*Silence.*)

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PRINCE: Wait a minute! I just thought...what if what she did last night was just a fluke? Suppose she could only do it once...and never again? I don't know if I can marry someone like that...someone who is just a...one-shot deal!

KING: The Prince is right!

PENELOPE ANN: But...

PRINCE: Show me the money! I mean...show me the gold!

PENELOPE ANN: But...

QUEEN: How true...we don't know if this was a one-time occurrence or not, so we'd better make sure. Let's put her to the test again tonight.

PENELOPE ANN: But—

ANNE: *(To Penelope Ann.)* Okay, sweetie, make those fingers fly again!

PENELOPE ANN: But—

DENNIS: Bring on the gold!

PENELOPE ANN: But—

DENNIS: There you go again! A motorboat!

KING: *(To Priest.)* Summon the Page for me.

NARRATOR/PRIEST: Sure...be right back. *(Exits, yelling.)*
Oh, Page...yoo-hoo, Page? Oh, Page...

KING: There he goes again! Why is it that every time I need someone, there's always this yelling and shouting in the hallways? Don't they have pagers or cell phones? It's so noisy! Yelling and shouting all the time! I am getting headaches from all the noise! Migraines! *(To audience.)*
Does anyone have a Tylenol?

QUEEN: Oh, calm down, dear. This goes on all the time around here.

(King tries to get Tylenol from audience members. Ad-libs until Page appears. Narrator comes back on as Page, minus Priest's robe and hat. Page is wrapped in very large towel, with shower cap on head, flip-flops, and child's inner tube.)

NARRATOR/PAGE: You sent for me, your majesty?

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KING: *(To Page.)* Yes, I did. Take this girl to the prison tower!
NARRATOR/PAGE: *(Sarcastic.)* Sure! Why not? I got
nothing else to do! I was only getting ready to take a bath!
Come on, sweetheart...let's go.

(Takes her by the arm and escorts her to the exit.)

PENELOPE ANN: But—
ALL: Quiet!

(Blackout.)

SCENE 4

(AT RISE: *The prison tower. Penelope Ann is seated on a bale of straw.*)

PENELOPE ANN: How do I get into these things? I've been a good person all my life and now look at me. Just because I try to be a good daughter to my dear parents, I'm stuck here trying again to do what I didn't do in the *first* place and couldn't do in the *second* place...and in the *third* place, I shouldn't have to do...

(*Suddenly Rumpeld appears.*)

RUMPLED: Heeeeeeeere's Johnny! And I'm here in the *fourth* place!

(*Penelope Ann falls off the bale.*)

PENELOPE ANN: Aaaaaaahhhhh!

RUMPLED: You are so jumpy! Did I scare you again?

PENELOPE ANN: Oh, no, I told you, I always scream and fall down like that. Yes, you frightened me again, you straw-spinning nut! But it looks like I'll be needing your help again.

RUMPLED: Hey, no problemo! But this time, the stakes will be a little higher.

PENELOPE ANN: Steaks? You got steaks? I'm starved! T-bones? Sirloin?

RUMPLED: What are you babbling on about? Not *meat* steaks...stakes, as in gambling.

PENELOPE ANN: Ah! Those kinds of stakes. Okay, so what is it this time? New car? A yacht? You sure don't need any money with the talent you got.

RUMPLED: Nah, none of those. This time, I want...your *child*!

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(Evil music, minor chord.)

PENELOPE ANN: My child? But I don't have a child.

RUMPLED: Not now you don't, but maybe in one year's time...then I want your child for my own.

PENELOPE ANN: You gotta be kidding! I think you're a few clowns short of a circus!

RUMPLED: Hey, you're in a bind here. No gold, no wedding. No wedding, no Prince. No Prince, no castle. No castle, no kid. No—

PENELOPE ANN: Okay, okay, I get the point. But why would you want a child? You'd be a single parent trying to raise a kid who wasn't even your own.

RUMPLED: I guess I'm just a nurturing kind of guy. I won't ever have to watch "Barney" by myself anymore, and that's good enough for me!

PENELOPE ANN: Oh, brother. Look, let me think about it. This is a tough decision.

RUMPLED: Tell you what. I'll make a deal with you...you get to keep the kid for the entire first year, and then I get him for the rest of his life. How's that?

PENELOPE ANN: I still have to think about it. Wait a minute, I'll call my parents and ask their advice. *(Pulls cell phone out of pocket and dials.)*

RUMPLED: What's that thing?

PENELOPE ANN: What thing?

RUMPLED: That thing you're holding.

PENELOPE ANN: It's my phone.

RUMPLED: *(Incredulous.)* A phone?

PENELOPE ANN: Yes, a phone!

RUMPLED: There's no way you have a phone in here!

PENELOPE ANN: Oh, no? Look, where am I?

RUMPLED: You're in the tower.

PENELOPE ANN: And what *is* the tower?

RUMPLED: It's a...it's a prison.

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PENELOPE ANN: And am I in a prison *cell*? See? This is a cell phone. (*Into phone.*) Hello, Ma? It's me. No, I'm still in the tower...yes, I'm hungry and could really use a little nosh...I only had some lobster tails and a couple of lamb chops today...and a baked potato with sour cream...that's it...practically starving here...no, I haven't spun the straw yet. That's what I need to talk to you about. Listen, I have a major problem...it's just that I need to make more gold, right? And the problem is that if I make more gold, I have to give up my first-born child. (*Pause.*) No...no...I don't think it makes a difference...boy or girl...uh-huh...uh-huh...uh-huh...

RUMPLED: What did she say?

PENELOPE ANN: She's thinking...she's thinking...what? Okay, thanks, Ma. What? No, I don't want to switch to MCI! [*Or insert another cell phone company.*] Tell them to stop bugging me. (*Puts phone away.*) Ma says, "Go for the gold!"

("Chariots of Fire," "Rocky," or Olympics theme music is heard. Both Penelope Ann and Rumpled look around, wondering where the music is coming from.)

RUMPLED: Nice touch. Muzak in the prison. Cool.

PENELOPE ANN: Whatever.

RUMPLED: Hey, let me borrow your cell phone, will you?

PENELOPE ANN: Sure. (*Hands over cell phone.*) Who are you calling?

RUMPLED: My broker... Hello? Harry? Listen, what's the going rate on gold these days? Aha...aha...aha. (*Gives her back the cell phone.*) Yeah, that's the deal...the kid for the gold. The price of gold is going through the roof! Okay, is it time to hit the old spinning wheel again? We got a deal or not?

PENELOPE ANN: Yeah, I guess. So...I get the kid for a year, and then he's yours?

RUMPLED: Yep.

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PENELOPE ANN: I don't know...I mean...it just doesn't seem right somehow.

RUMPLED: All right, tell you what. Let's play a little game. I'll give you a chance to get off the hook, okay?

PENELOPE ANN: Okay, what kind of game?

RUMPLED: When I come to claim the...*my* kid, if you can guess my name, you can keep him or her. How's that sound?

PENELOPE ANN: You mean, if I can guess your name, I get to keep the...*my* kid?

RUMPLED: What did I just say? Do you have a hearing problem?

PENELOPE ANN: No, it just seems *too* easy.

RUMPLED: Easy? I should say not. If you think that guessing my name is going to be easy, then you are wrong! Because it's a toughy!

PENELOPE ANN: Ha! So that's your name! A-tuffy! That wasn't so hard at all! You shouldn't have given it away like that! Too easy! Cute name! I love this game!

RUMPLED: What? A-tuff...no, no, no...what I mean is...it's a tough one. A toughy!

PENELOPE ANN: Oh.

RUMPLED: So don't get your hopes up. That's the deal. You wanna shake on it?

PENELOPE ANN: Okay. *(She starts to shimmy.)*

RUMPLED: No, no, no...I mean, shake *hands*!

PENELOPE ANN: Like this? *(She shakes both hands.)*

RUMPLED: Never mind. Go to sleep! *(Mumbles to himself.)*
I'm dealing with idiots!

(Blackout.)

[End of Freeview]