

SLEEPING BEAUTY STAYS AWAKE

A Modern Fairy Tale

Steph DeFerie
Box 8
Harwich, MA 02645
508-240-0193
bunrabbit99@gmail.com

CAST

NARRATOR
SPEAKER (non-speaking)
DANCER (non-speaking)
READER (non-speaking)
SCIENTIST (non-speaking)
FLYER (non-speaking)
KING
QUEEN
GEORGIE
TINTIGAL
ZOOTIE
BUNNY
FLUMMOX
JANITOR
ROYAL PHYSICIAN
MYSTERIOUS FIGURE
PRINCE RUPPRECHT
WALT
BUTTERCUP

A castle
A forest

The play may be staged with as few as nine performers with doubling.

SLEEPING BEAUTY STAYS AWAKE

A castle on one side, a forest on the other.

Lights up on our humble NARRATOR.

NARRATOR

We live in a world of wonders, a world of magic. We speak with people beyond the horizon.

SPEAKER enters with a cell phone, has an animated, silent conversation. Perhaps we hear faint, unintelligible words. SPEAKER freezes.

NARRATOR

We hear music where there are no performers playing.

Enter DANCER who adjusts earbuds or headphones, dances expressively. Perhaps we hear faint music. DANCER freezes.

NARRATOR

People who have been gone for many years still tell us their stories.

Enter a READER with a book that THEY are engrossed in. Perhaps we hear faint narration.

NARRATOR

We make light by the simple flick of a finger.

READER finds it hard to see, snaps fingers. A bright spotlight appears on them. READER freezes.

NARRATOR

We can see invisible things.

ENTER a SCIENTIST with a telescope, looks through it, makes a discovery. Perhaps we hear faint acclaim. SCIENTIST freezes.

NARRATOR

We fly like birds through the air to faraway lands.

Enter FLYER with a toy airplane, flies the plane about. Perhaps we hear droning engines. FLYER freezes.

NARRATOR

We live in a fairy tale...

SPEAKER, DANCER, READER, SCIENTIST, FLYER all do their thing for several beats.

NARRATOR

...and all fairy tales contain...a curse, do they not?

EVERYONE stops, turns toward NARRATOR.

NARRATOR

But. They also hold the promise that the curse may be broken...if we believe it can...and if we are very smart...and very, very brave.

SPEAKER, DANCER, READER, SCIENTIST, FLYER fade back into the shadows and exit.

NARRATOR

Once upon a time, as all good tales begin, a king and a queen announced that they had been blessed with a beautiful baby daughter.

Enter KING and QUEEN, the QUEEN holding a baby. THEY smile and wave. Perhaps we hear trumpets and a faint, cheering crowd.

Enter JANITOR with broom and dust pan. HE tosses some confetti.

KING

She is positively gorgeous and so that is what she shall be named! Gorgeous!

QUEEN

Princess Gorgeous.

KING

But that's a bit pretentious so we shall call her...Georgie!

QUEEN

Princess Georgie.

JANITOR sweeps up confetti, exits.

NARRATOR

As she grew, her indulgent parents, knowing that she would one day rule the kingdom, encouraged Georgie in her independence and confidence, which was not always so charming in one so young. On her seventh birthday, as was the tradition in that kingdom, the Four Wise Women of the Forest came to bestow their most precious blessings upon her.

Enter GEORGIE, age seven, carrying a bouquet of foxglove flowers. SHE stands center, defiantly.

Enter WISE WOMEN - TINTIGAL, ZOOTIE, BUNNY and FLUMMOX.

QUEEN

Blessings from the Wise Women for our future queen!

KING

She shall want for nothing!

GEORGIE

I should hope not.

NARRATOR

The eldest of the Wise Women was Tintigal. She was the most powerful and the most fierce. You crossed her at your peril. The others were Zootie, Bunny and Flummox. They were silly and easily confused but all had good hearts.

KING

Welcome, Wise Women. We are humbled by your attendance and generosity.

QUEEN

We bow to your wisdom and power.

KING and QUEEN bow slightly to the WISE WOMEN. WISE WOMEN bow back.

WISE WOMEN

(In unison) We acknowledge your gratitude. We wish only to serve.

TINTIGAL

Is this the child?

ZOOTIE

What a perfect little girl!

BUNNY

There has never been so delightful a princess!

FLUMMOX

So beautiful and regal!

TINTIGAL.

Hmph. Pretty and delightful do not a good ruler make. Wisdom and good sound judgement are what's needed.

ZOOTIE

Which is what we shall bestow!

BUNNY

And so...our gifts!

FLUMMOX

Sister, will you lead us?

ZOOTIE, BUNNY and FLUMMOX bow a bit
to TINTIGAL who moves forward.

QUEEN urges GEORGIE on.

QUEEN

Go ahead, my dear, just as we rehearsed it. Don't be afraid.

GEORGIE

I'm not afraid.

TINTIGAL

Perhaps you should be.

QUEEN

Present your flowers as a token of your gratitude.

GEORGIE

But they're mine...

QUEEN

...which is what makes it so special when you give them away. We talked about this, remember?

GEORGIE reluctantly begins to hold out the bouquet but snatches it back.

GEORGIE
But I want them!

QUEEN
You know a princess must put her subjects' needs before her own.

GEORGIE
What's the fun of being a princess if you can't get what you want?!

KING
Come, Georgie. You're a big girl now - seven years old, after all. We've taught you better than this. Don't embarrass us.

QUEEN
We'll get you even nicer flowers later on if you like. But we picked these special for the Wise Women because they are the ones Mistress Tintigal likes best, did we not? And you're getting so much more in return.

KING
Make us proud, my dear.

With some prodding, GEORGIE steps to TINTIGAL and holds out the flowers.

TINTIGAL
Hmph. You might show just a modicum of enthusiasm, girl.

GEORGIE suddenly throws the flowers at TINTIGAL.

GEORGIE
Go on, take them, then! Stupid old flowers!

TINTIGAL
Excuse me?!

GEORGIE
I don't even like them! They're ugly, just like you!

TINTIGAL
What?!

KING

Georgie! Be polite!

QUEEN

Remember your breeding, You're a princess. Pray continue, Mistress Tintigal.

TINTIGAL

The digitalis flower happens to be my favorite!

GEORGIE

They're ugly and they smell like dead possums!

TINTIGAL

Dead...possums?!

GEORGIE

And you do, too! You even look like a dead possum!

QUEEN

Georgie, that's rude! (To TINTIGAL) We're so sorry, Mistress Tintigal. She's tired.

TINTIGAL

This is...unacceptable!

KING

Pray forgive her, oh, Wise Woman. It's been a very long day for such a very little girl. Please don't take it personally!

TINTIGAL

(Drawing herself up in a fury) How else can I possibly take it but personally! Dead possums?! The little brat doesn't like me or my lovely purple flowers, does she? Here's my gift to her, then:

Because you cannot hold your tongue,
 (It's no excuse that you are young),
 Here's a curse from me to you
 That even / may ne're undo!
 From the day of your coronation,
 It will not be all adoration.
 Digitalis flowers will be your bane!
 One scratch from them will end your reign!
 For you shall sleep for a thousand years
 And no amount of prayers or tears
 Will wake you from your infernal rest
 'Til the wrong you've done has been redressed.

Some dramatic lighting and sound effects.

TINTIGAL exits. A pause.

GEORGIE

(Blowing a raspberry at TINTIGAL)

KING

That's quite enough out of you, young lady! I'm ashamed to be your father.

QUEEN

A curse! Oh, dear, a curse! Whatever shall we do?!

KING

Surely such powerful Wise Women as yourselves can easily remove a curse...(snaps his fingers)... like that!

ZOOTIE, BUNNY and FLUMMOX murmur to each other.

KING

Mistress Zootie? (SHE shakes her head) Mistress Bunny? (SHE shakes her head) Mistress Flummox? (SHE shakes her head)

QUEEN

Then, my poor darling daughter is doomed!

KING

I do not understand.

FLUMMOX

Ordinarily, it might be possible...

ZOOTIE

...all things being equal...

FLUMMOX

We might undo our *own* magic spells...

BUNNY

...but you heard our sister...

FLUMMOX

She pronounced it a curse which even she herself can never undo.

KING

Then there is no magical way around it?

BUNNY

It seems not.

FLUMMOX

Poor, dear child.

ZOOTIE

Around it! We can't get rid of it but perhaps we might go around it!

FLUMMOX

Yes! If we cannot stop the curse or get rid of it...

BUNNY

...perhaps we can modify its effects!

ZOOTIE

Think, sisters, think!

ZOOTIE, BUNNY and FLUMMOX twirl about and wave their arms and cast their spells simultaneously. Some dramatic lighting and sound effects.

ZOOTIE

To keep her safe from flowers sweet, let no person come within six feet!

What did you say?

That doesn't make any sense!

BUNNY

(Simultaneously)

To save our pretty little miss, She may break the curse With her true love's kiss!

What did you say?

That doesn't make any sense!

FLUMMOX

To launch a little counter-attack, I proclaim this curse to be "wards-back!"

What did you say?

That doesn't make any sense!

GEORGIE

I feel funny.

KING

What have you done?!

QUEEN

Whatever do they mean?

KING

One at a time, please, one at a time!

ZOOTIE

"To keep her safe from flowers sweet, let no one come within six feet!" I have spun a protection spell. After Georgie is crowned Princess, no person will be able to get near her and scratch her with those horrible flowers. As long as she does not pick the flowers herself, It will be as if she is living safely inside a protective bubble.

GEORGIE

Is there ice cream in the bubble?

QUEEN

Oh, but that is terrible! Who could live like that with no touching? No hugs? No holding hands? That is as bad as the curse itself!

BUNNY

You silly, silly, thing! What have you done? "To save our pretty little miss, she may break the curse with her true love's kiss!" My protection spell is that if she is scratched and does fall asleep, she may be awakened when her true love gives her a kiss...but he can't do that now if he can't get near her!

GEORGIE

I don't want to kiss anyone!

KING

This all seems rather foolish...

FLUMMOX

Never you mind about any of that silliness! I have solved everything with my protection spell! "To launch a little counter-attack, I proclaim this curse to be "wards-back!"

QUEEN

"Wards-back?" Whatever does that mean?

FLUMMOX

(Turning around in a circle) It is the word "backwards" turned backwards!

GEORGIE

(Spinning around) Wards-back, wards-back, wards-back! Weeee!

FLUMMOX

It means if Georgie is scratched, the curse will bounce backwards off Georgie and hit Tintigal instead! Georgie will be safe and Tintigal will get a taste of her own medicine, the haughty, old thing. (To herself) At least, I think that's what it does...

KING

I don't understand any of this at all! You seem to be making things worse, not better! I am beginning to think that you Wise Women are not quite as wise as I was led to believe.

BUNNY

No, no! We're very wise! (Looking at FLUMMOX) Some of us, anyway. Wards-back, indeed.

FLUMMOX

It's as good an idea as either of yours!

ZOOTIE

You haven't had a good idea since you magicked the kitchen into cleaning itself after dinner every night and that was 500 years ago.

FLUMMOX

Well, that's one more good idea than either of you've ever had!

QUEEN

Ladies, ladies, please...

BUNNY

If only you two had kept quiet, my solution of breaking the curse with a kiss would've solved everything very neatly.

FLUMMOX

Oh, so it's all our fault, now is it?

ZOOTIE

Why don't you put the blame where it really belongs - on Tintigal? Oh, but mustn't get mad at her, she's so smart and important, isn't she, she might do something to you!

FLUMMOX

Yes, stop defending her!

BUNNY

I didn't!

QUEEN

Please, please, I know you are trying very hard to make things right and I thank you all very much but...is that really the best you can do?

KING

No, no! Don't do anything else! We don't need things to get any worse! I believe I have a much simpler solution. Let the word go forth from this day forward that there are to be no more digitalis flowers allowed anywhere in the kingdom! Root them out, burn them to ashes and destroy the seeds so that none may ever grow here again! Problem solved. Now, you may remove your silly spells and we shall be done with all this nonsense.

GEORGIE

Stupid ugly flowers. I won't miss them one bit.