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The Fairest in the Land? Eeegh!

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To Justin Bawden

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The Fairest in the Land? Eeegh! was first performed May 21, 2018
at Manti High School, Manti, Utah: Danielle Hatch, director.

WITCH/ESMERALDA: Ellie Christensen

GAEL: Josh Peterson

GUARD: Jordan Olsen

The Fairest in the Land? Eeeegh!

FARCE. Gael and the Princess think they are a perfect match, but the King and Queen won't allow the couple to marry. On the run from the King's guard, Gael hides out in the cottage of a lonely, hideous Witch who is looking for romance. The Witch is instantly enamored with her handsome visitor—there aren't many men in her neck of the woods—but when Gael sees her hideous face, he screams, "Eeegh!" To win Gael's heart, the Witch transforms herself into a pretty young maiden named Esmeralda. When Gael falls in love with "Esmeralda," she turns back into a hideous witch. Eeegh! To show Gael what it's like to be hideous, the Witch turns him into an ugly warlock. When the Princess sees Gael, she screams, "Eegh! Double Eegh!" Suddenly, Gael doesn't think the Princess is so lovely, after all!

Performance Time: Approximately 30 minutes.

Characters

(1 M, 2 F, 1 flexible)

WITCH/ESMERALDA: Lonely witch looking for love who transforms herself into a beautiful young woman to win the heart of Gael; witch is hideous, hunchbacked, and wears a ratty wig and a black robe; Esmeralda is a pretty young lady who wears a beautiful dress; female. (Note: Esmeralda's dress is hidden underneath the Witch's robe.)

GAEL: Handsome, shallow son of the poorest peasant in the kingdom; thinks he's the fairest in the land; loves with his eyes instead of his heart; male.

PRINCESS: Beautiful, shallow princess in love with Gael; female.

GUARD: King's royal guard; flexible.

NOTE: The characters wear necklaces to symbolize their hearts.

Setting

Once upon a time at a witch's cottage...

Sets

The stage can be split into two different areas: one for the Princess's bedroom and the other for the witch's cottage. The sets can be as simple or elaborate as your budget allows.

Princess's bedroom. There is a chair. A backdrop may be used, opt.

Witch's cottage. There is a door SL, a table and chair center, and a small table SR.

Synopsis of Scenes

Scene 1: Princess's bedroom.

Scene 2: The Witch's cottage.

Props

Hairbrush

Neck chain with a heart on it, for Gael

Necklace with a heart on it, for Princess

Necklace with a grotesque heart on it, for Witch

Key

Large stirring spoon

Cauldron

"Potion"

Hand mirror

Special Effects

Crash

Sound of Guards approaching

Sound of hound dogs barking

Romantic music

Witch transforming into a beautiful woman. Witch can crouch down with her back to the audience and remove her witch's wig and robe to reveal a beautiful dress. She then stands straight from her hunched Witch's position, undistorts her face, and reveals herself to the audience.

**“Eeegh!
What kind of witchcraft
is going on here?”**

—Gael

Scene 1

(AT RISE: The Princess's bedroom. The Princess is brushing her hair. A crash is heard offstage.)

PRINCESS: (Calls.) Who's there?

GAEL: (Offstage.) Pssst! Princess?

PRINCESS: Who is it?

GAEL: It's me.

PRINCESS: Who?

GAEL: Me. Are you alone?

PRINCESS: Yes. (Gael enters.) Gael! What are you doing here?

GAEL: I couldn't wait to talk to you, Princess.

PRINCESS: But if my father finds you here, he will surely kill you.

GAEL: It doesn't matter. I'd rather die than not be able to see you.

PRINCESS: But we barely know each other. You'd really die for me?

GAEL: Of course! Your beauty has cast a spell upon me!

PRINCESS: Oh, Gael!

GAEL: You are the most beautiful girl I've ever seen.

PRINCESS: Surely, there is someone more beautiful than me.

GAEL: I assure you there is not.

PRINCESS: Oh, you talk as if we could be together.

GAEL: We can!

PRINCESS: I wish it could be so, but...

GAEL: But what?

PRINCESS: You know...

GAEL: Why? Because I'm the son of the poorest peasant in the kingdom?

PRINCESS: Well, yes.

GAEL: That shouldn't matter! You're beautiful, and I'm handsome!

PRINCESS: But my father would never allow it. Never.

GAEL: Then we can run away together!

PRINCESS: But—

GAEL: I will take care of you, cherish you, provide for your every need.

PRINCESS: But—

GAEL: No “buts.” I promise we’ll be happy together...

(Dreamily.) ...just looking at each other.

GUARD: *(Offstage, shouts.)* I saw him in the castle! Where is he?

PRINCESS: Gael, you must leave!

GAEL: Not before we exchange hearts.

(Gael removes a neck chain with a heart on it from around his neck. The Princess hesitates but then removes her heart necklace from around her neck and hands it to Gael. Gael is about to give his necklace to the Princess, but he is interrupted by the Guard.)

GUARD: *(Offstage, shouts.)* I’ll check the princess’s room!
(Rushes in.)

PRINCESS: Gael!

GUARD: *(To Gael, shouts.)* Stop right there!

GAEL: No!

PRINCESS: Gael, run!

(Guard tries to catch Gael, but Gael escapes with both heart necklaces.)

GUARD: Darn it! *(To Princess.)* Are you all right, Princess?

PRINCESS: I’m fine. I—

GUARD: *(Notices that the Princess’s heart necklace is missing.)*
Your heart! *(Shouts to where Gael excited.)* Stop, thief! *(To Princess.)* He will pay for this! *(Shouts.)* That man stole the heart of the Princess! Search every inch of the kingdom!
(Runs off.)

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PRINCESS: *(Calls.)* No! Please! *(To herself.)* I must find him
before they do.

(Princess rushes off. Blackout.)

Scene 2

(AT RISE: The Witch's cottage. The sound of hound dogs barking and approaching Guards is heard offstage. Gael enters, out of breath.)

GAEL: (Holding up the Princess's heart necklace) All this for the heart of the princess! (Sees the Witch's cottage and knocks on the door. Calls.) Hello? Open please, help a stranger in need! (Knocks on the door. Calls.) Hello? (The sounds of the Guards and hound dogs are louder.) Please help! I need shelter! (Witch cracks open the door and peeks out. To Witch.) Kind soul, please help a desperate man.

WITCH: Not many people seek shelter here.

GAEL: Be that as it may, I am seeking shelter.

WITCH: (Indicating the Princess's heart necklace.) What is that you have there?

GAEL: It is the heart of the Princess.

WITCH: Intriguing...

GAEL: Please let me in. I only need to hide here for a little while.

WITCH: And why should I help you when no one has ever bothered to care about me?

GAEL: Because you are a kind and beautiful soul.

WITCH: (Surprised.) Beautiful?

GAEL: I'm sure you are. The shadows are hiding your face a bit, but everyone is beautiful.

WITCH: Like you?

GAEL: (Chuckles.) Well...

WITCH: You are a very handsome man.

GAEL: (Posing, proudly.) Some say the fairest in the land. Will you let me in?

WITCH: And you say I am beautiful?

GUARD: (Offstage, shouts.) Which way did he go?!

GAEL: *(To Witch.)* If it gets you to open the door, then, yes, of course.

WITCH: Then come in.

(Witch opens the door, concealing her face for a moment. Gael quickly enters. Witch shuts the door, locks it, and puts the key into her pocket. Guard enters and looks around for Gael. Not seeing Gael, the Guard exits. The Witch, now standing in front of the door, reveals her face to Gael.)

GAEL: *(Seeing the Witch's face, screams.)* Eeegh!

WITCH: What's the matter?

GAEL: Oh...um...nothing.

WITCH: Nothing? Then why did you scream?

GAEL: What? I screamed?

WITCH: Yes.

GAEL: I'm sure I didn't.

WITCH: You did. Like this..."Eeegh!"

GAEL: An exclamation of joy. I am just so glad to be safe.

WITCH: Are you sure it had nothing to do...with my face?

GAEL: *(Looking at his feet.)* I didn't even notice your face.

WITCH: That's because you haven't looked at it.

GAEL: Oh, I looked at it, all right. Please don't make me look again.

(Witch grabs Gael's face and forces him to look at her.)

WITCH: So, am I beautiful? You said *everyone* was.

GAEL: I'm sure everyone is...humans, anyway.

WITCH: *(Insulted.)* Maybe I should let you go. What's out there must be better than what you find in here, obviously.

(Gael ponders this.)

GAEL: No...it's slightly better in here. At least, I'm alive.

WITCH: Then, I would suggest you don't offend your host.

GAEL: Yes. Of course.

WITCH: Tell me I'm beautiful, and I'll forgive you.

GAEL: Fine. *(With difficulty.)* You're ba...beau...beauti—

(Witch "slaps" Gael.)

WITCH: *(Shouts.)* Spit it out!

GAEL: *(Eyes closed.)* You're beautiful.

WITCH: Ah! That's so nice of you to say! Take a seat. *(Shoves Gael into a chair.)* So, tell me about the trouble you find yourself in.

GAEL: I stole the heart of the Princess. *(Holds out the Princess's necklace to show her. Witch tries to take the necklace from Gael, but he pulls it back.)* It's mine.

WITCH: *(Pointing to Gael's heart necklace, which is around his neck.)* But I see you still have yours...

GAEL: I didn't have time to give her my heart.

WITCH: Unrequited love? I know how that goes!

GAEL: Not unrequited. The Princess and I secretly fell in love. I snuck into her chamber to exchange hearts. She gave me hers, but before I could give her mine, the King's guard caught us. Luckily, I escaped before he captured me.

WITCH: But why not just tell the King and Queen that you are in love with their daughter?

GAEL: Because I am the son of the poorest peasant in the kingdom.

WITCH: With such a handsome face?

GAEL: Yes. But the King and Queen would never allow their daughter to marry me without a birthright, no matter how handsome I may be.

WITCH: Such a sad story. You must be devastated not to have given your heart to the Princess.

GAEL: Quite.

WITCH: *(Hinting.)* You know, I've never given my heart to any man...

GAEL: *(Under his breath.)* That's not surprising.

WITCH: What was that?

GAEL: I said... *(Thinks.)* ..."How surprising!"

WITCH: *(Pointedly.)* Is it?

GAEL: Yes. I mean, with your beauty and all, I thought your heart would have been stolen long ago.

WITCH: Yes, well, it hasn't.

GAEL: Too bad.

WITCH: *(Hinting.)* Yes, but you're a man...

GAEL: Yes...?

WITCH: *(Hinting.)* And I am here...

GAEL: Yes...?

WITCH: *(Hinting.)* And you are there...

GAEL: Unfortunately.

WITCH: You could take *my* heart! *(Pulls a heart necklace out. It has a grotesque heart on it.)*

GAEL: You're joking.

WITCH: No, I would never joke about true love...

(Witch advances toward Gael with a romantic look in her eye. Gael looks horrified.)

GAEL: *(Choking, coughing.)* True love?

WITCH: *(Romantically.)* You said I was beautiful...

GAEL: 'Cause you made me!

WITCH: *(Romantically.)* Can't you feel the attraction... between you and me?

GAEL: I do feel something.

WITCH: *(Romantically.)* A burning feeling...?

GAEL: Maybe like acid burning in my stomach.

WITCH: *(Excited.)* Yes!

GAEL: Yes...and like puking when I see your face.

WITCH: *(Excited.)* That must be love!

GAEL: Not even close to that, no.

WITCH: *(Insulted.)* No? What do you mean *no*?

GAEL: It's very hard to explain.

WITCH: *(Angry.)* Is it?

GAEL: Well...not really. I don't love you and could never love you. You're hideous, and I can't stand the sight of you.

WITCH: (*Infuriated.*) How dare you?!

(*Gael stands to exit.*)

GAEL: (*Awkwardly.*) I best be going...I'm sure the guards are gone by now...

WITCH: Going so soon?

GAEL: I'm relieved to say...yes.

WITCH: (*Sweetly.*) But, surely, you must be thirsty after your long jaunt in the forest. Perhaps I could at least get you a glass of my special brew? It will give you strength for your journey.

GAEL: I suppose. I am a bit parched, thank you. But I would like to try and get back to the Princess before it's too late.

WITCH: This won't take but a moment.

GAEL: She is so beautiful that I could never love anyone else. I would die for her beauty.

WITCH: Most beautiful girl you've ever seen?

GAEL: Yes.

WITCH: How wonderful. If you wouldn't mind getting a cup from that table over there, I will finish mixing this potion—

(*Realizes.*) ...I mean *brew!*

GAEL: All right.

(*Gael crosses to SL. While Gael's back is turned, the Witch "hits" him over the head with a large stirring spoon from her cauldron and knocks him out. The Witch drags Gael to a chair and sits him in it. The Witch takes the Princess's heart necklace, throws it into her cauldron, stirs it with her spoon, and takes a taste of the "brew." Immediately, the Witch wriggles and writhes about as she transforms into a beautiful young woman, Esmeralda. Note: See Special Effects. The Witch approaches Gael and "slaps" him to wake him up. Gael slowly gains consciousness.*)

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda, sweetly.)* Oh, why, hello there. I was wondering when you were going to wake up.

GAEL: *(Blurry-eyed, confused.)* Wha...where am I?

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* The witch's cottage. Do you not remember?

GAEL: Vaguely...

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Ooops! I must have— *(Realizes.)* ...she must have hit you harder than expected.

GAEL: *(Rubbing his head.)* Oh, my head...

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Sorry about that. The Witch has a tendency to lose her temper.

GAEL: Where is she?

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* She left. She couldn't stand another man not wanting her heart. She'll return, though. Always does...

GAEL: And who are you?

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda. Obviously lying.)* I...I am...her... daughter...

(Gael rubs his eyes and clearly sees her.)

GAEL: *(Mesmerized by her beauty.)* Oh my!

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda, coyly.)* What is it?

GAEL: You!

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* What's wrong with me?

GAEL: Absolutely nothing!

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Then why so dazed?

GAEL: Your beauty has me befuddled.

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* My beauty?

GAEL: Yes. You are the most beautiful girl I have ever seen in my life.

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Oh, surely, there is someone more beautiful than me...

GAEL: I assure you, there is not.

WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Not even...the Princess? I hear she is stunning...worth dying for, even.

GAEL: Princess? Not sure if I know any princesses.
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Really? A man as handsome as you must be in love with a princess.
GAEL: No. Look... *(Indicating heart neck chain.)* ...I even have my heart.
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Intriguing...
GAEL: And you still have your heart.
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Yes. One doesn't see many men in these woods.
GAEL: *(Romantically.)* We could exchange hearts...
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* But you don't even know me.
GAEL: *(Excited.)* So?! I want you to be mine forever!
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* You want me only because of my beauty.
GAEL: Of course... *(Realizes.)* ...*not!* I'm sure you're a lovely person as well. *(Romantically.)* Can't you feel the attraction between you and me?
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* I do feel something...
GAEL: A burning feeling?
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Maybe like acid burning in my stomach.
GAEL: *(Excited.)* Yes!
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Yes. And like puking when I see your face.
GAEL: *(Excited.)* That must be love!
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Not even close to that, no.
GAEL: No? What do you mean *no*?
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* I am no more beautiful than the witch, yet you love me for my beauty.
GAEL: That old hag?! Eeeeeew! She was not nearly the goddess you are!
WITCH: *(As Esmeralda.)* Beauty is only in the eye of the beholder.
GAEL: Yes, and I am beholding it right now, and what a sight to behold, which is why I am beholding it!

WITCH: (*As Esmeralda.*) I see. So, I am beautiful, and she is not?

GAEL: Yes, truly!

WITCH: (*As Esmeralda.*) Interesting...

GAEL: Let's run away! I'll take you away from this putrid place and that hideous hag, and I will love you forever!

WITCH: (*As Esmeralda.*) Promise?

GAEL: With all of my heart.

[END OF FREEVIEW]