THE EVER AFTER

By Nathan Hartswick

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**THE EVER AFTER**

By NATHAN HARTSWICK

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th># of lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOST</td>
<td>talk show host (“Monterey Jack Chesterfield Williamson” or “Sally Lizzie Jesse Donatello-Griffin”)</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE GUESTS</td>
<td>(Of course, all 20 years older than we remember them!)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEPSISTER #1</td>
<td>Cinderella’s now middle-aged ugly stepsister</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STEPSISTER #2</td>
<td>also still “beauty-impaired”</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINDERELLA</td>
<td>traditional fairy tale character, but not as young as she used to be</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNOW WHITE</td>
<td>still wearing that same high collar</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QUEEN</td>
<td>Snow White’s nemesis</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIRROR</td>
<td>human face that protrudes from the queen’s large wall mirror</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIMINY CRICKET</td>
<td>now an occupational therapist</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMMETT MANTELLA</td>
<td>frog—er, man—with a problem</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE ADVERTISERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAT</td>
<td>advertiser; spokesperson for various products</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETH</td>
<td>another</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>another</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDIO AUDIENCE MEMBERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIRHEAD</td>
<td>not too bright</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOUDMOUTH</td>
<td>loud and obnoxious</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD WEEPING LADY #1</td>
<td>elderly woman; finds everything touching</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD WEEPING LADY #2</td>
<td>another</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDIO AUDIENCE EXTRAS</td>
<td>if desired, as many as you wish</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

TIME: The present.
PLACE: The set of a popular TV talk show.
Scene One: The talk show. Guests: Cinderella’s two ugly stepsisters.
Scene Two: A TV commercial. The Practical Princess Crown.
Scene Three: The talk show. Guest: Cinderella.
Scene Four: TV commercial. MoneyCard.
Scene Five: The talk show. Guests: Snow White, the Evil Queen, her mirror and Jiminy Cricket.
Scene Seven: The talk show. Guest: Emmett Mantella.

SETTING
The set of a popular talk show. The STUDIO AUDIENCE sits on bleachers at RIGHT, angled DOWN RIGHT towards UP CENTER. (See PRODUCTION NOTES.) At LEFT, eight empty chairs are arranged for the GUESTS, angled DOWN LEFT to UP CENTER. LEFT CENTER is a comfortable chair for the HOST. DOWN LEFT is an ENTRANCE for the HOST and GUESTS; UP CENTER is a second ENTRANCE for the show’s STAFF and ADVERTISERS. Commercials are played UP CENTER between the STUDIO AUDIENCE and the show's GUESTS. A table, perhaps draped with a white cloth, is set up there.

See page 18 for set design.
THE EVER AFTER

Scene One

LIGHTS UP: The STUDIO AUDIENCE sits on bleachers or chairs at RIGHT. PAT, one of three ADVERTISERS, runs IN UP CENTER with an “Applause” sign, and the STUDIO AUDIENCE claps (the first of many times this happens). CHEESY MUSIC PLAYS. The egotistical HOST ENTERS DOWN LEFT with a cordless microphone. PAT makes hand motions for the STUDIO AUDIENCE to clap more energetically, which they do.

HOST: Thank you, thank you. (MUSIC FADES OUT. PAT lowers the sign and stands quietly at the ready UP CENTER. The STUDIO AUDIENCE quiets. HOST crosses to comfortable chair and sits.)

I’m Monterey Jack Chesterfield Williamson (OR: Sally Lizzie Jesse Donatello-Griffin). The third. Today on “Totally Live with Monty” (OR: “Totally Live with Sal”) our theme is Reconciliation. Everyone loses friends. Everyone has enemies. Except me, of course. Everyone loves me. (PAT holds up “Applause” sign; STUDIO AUDIENCE claps.) Thank you. But I’m sure the rest of you have lost friends and made enemies. And that’s why, on today’s show, we are trying to get people to make up with each other. I’m sure you all remember my first guests. Years ago, these hideous-looking girls were rivals for the heart of Cinderella’s princely husband. Now they work in a coal mine and have stepchildren of their own. Please welcome the two ugly stepsisters! (PAT holds up “Applause” sign; STUDIO AUDIENCE claps. STEPSISTERS ONE and TWO ENTER DOWN LEFT and sit.)

HOST: Thanks for being here, ugly sisters.

STEPSISTER #1: Hey, who you callin’ ugly, anyway?

HOST: I’m sorry—I thought that’s what everyone called you.

STEPSISTER #1: Times have changed. Get with the picture, Jack.

STEPSISTER #2: We prefer to be known as “beauty-impaired family figures.”

HOST: All right, beauty-impaired it is. Now, ladies. Who is it that you’d like to set things right with?

STEPSISTER #2: (Transparent and insincere.) Why, Cinderella, of course!

STEPSISTER #1: We’ve done some soul-searching.

STEPSISTER #2: We realized we had some jealousy issues.

HOST: And what prompted this realization?
STEPSISTER #1: Well, it all started when our mother—You remember her? Screechy voice, big hair, too much makeup? One day she wandered over the river and through the woods, and she got eaten by some wolf who said that he was on his way to Grandmother’s house to sneak into her room and dress up in her clothes.

STEPSISTER #2: Talk about issues.

STEPSISTER #1: We didn’t have any other family left, and we thought, why not contact Cinderella and try to—

STEPSISTER #2: —mooch off her for awhile—I mean—

STEPSISTER #1: Quiet! Ha, ha… No, no, we thought, why not get back in touch with our roots?

STEPSISTER #2: (Plays with her hair and smacks her gum.) You can’t even see my roots. I just dyed my hair. Ya like it?

HOST: It certainly enhances your… beauty-impairedness. But listen, this is fantastic. All these years of bitterness, and now you’re ready to let bygones be bygones. (To STUDIO AUDIENCE.) So, should we bring her out or what?

STUDIO AUDIENCE: Yeah!

HOST: Okay! She doesn’t even know why she’s here. Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome that still- lovely princess of the palace… Cinderella! (PAT holds up “Applause” sign; STUDIO AUDIENCE claps.)

CINDERELLA: (ENTERS DOWN LEFT as if on a float, waves and smiles to the CROWD. Stops short when she sees the STEPSISTERS.) You! Oh, I am out of here. (Tries to bolt OFF LEFT.)

HOST: (Jumps up and stops her.) No, no! Come here! Wait! (As HOST wrestles a very uncomfortable-looking CINDERELLA into the chair.) We’ll be right back after this message from our sponsor. Ha, ha! Calm down, Cinderella, please! (PAT holds up “Applause” sign; STUDIO AUDIENCE claps. PAT EXITS UP CENTER, leaving the “Applause” sign behind for next use. A bit of MUSIC PLAYS, then FADES OUT.)

End of Scene One

NOTE: The scene breaks are only to indicate a shift from the TV show to a commercial or vice versa. The action should flow continuously, and the actors involved in the TV show should remain onstage during the “commercial breaks.”
Scene Two

A TV commercial. BETH ENTERS UP CENTER, dressed as a princess, and paces. We hear the VOICE OF SAM from “above.”

VOICE OF SAM: Hey, you down there. (BETH looks up.) What's the matter? (BETH shrugs.) Has being a princess got you down? (BETH nods.) Too much to do, right? (BETH nods.) Not enough time to do it? (BETH pouts and shakes head “no.”) I'll bet it seems you’re always on the go. (BETH nods.) Well, I know just what you need. (BETH looks encouraged.) It’s the Practical Princess Crown from Fool’s Gold Enterprises. (BETH smiles brilliantly as PAT ENTERS UP CENTER and places an enormous crown on BETH’S head with many objects inside.)

SAM: (Strolls IN UP CENTER and talks to the STUDIO AUDIENCE. [Or addresses the AUDIENCE—See PRODUCTION NOTES regarding commercials.] PAT pulls out each product as it is announced and demonstrates messily.) With the Practical Princess Crown, you’ll have all the accessories you need at the ready, right off the top of your head. There’s our special Red Red Rose Lipstick, guaranteed to inspire a sonnet or two, Portable Powder Puffs for that Snow White complexion, Rapunzel Brand Hairbrushes—the ultimate detangler, one can of our patented Evil-B-Gone Wicked Witch Repellent, and if you act now, we’ll even throw in, absolutely free, a pair of our special flame-resistant sunglasses for run-ins with those pesky fire-breathing dragons. So how do you feel now, Princess? (BETH smiles and opens her mouth to speak, but SAM interrupts her.) That’s great! And would you believe it? The entire set sells for just $19.95. (BETH and PAT gasp.) I know! The Practical Princess Crown from Fool’s Gold Enterprises… because a princess doesn’t use a purse. To get yours, head over the hill and see King Midas—just remember not to shake his hand. Ha, ha! We now return you to your regularly scheduled programming. (SAM, PAT and BETH EXIT UP CENTER with props.)

End of Scene Two

Scene Three

The talk show again. CHEESY MUSIC PLAYS for a moment and then FADES OUT.

HOST: We’re back with Cinderella and her two ugly—

STEPSISTER #1: Ahem.

HOST: Ah, her two… beauty-impaired family figures. Cinderella, how do you feel about seeing these two after all these years?
CINDERELLA: I told them I never wanted to see them again. They only want to patch things up with me so they can come over and hit on the prince, ride in my limo, swim in my pool, eat my food—

STEPSISTER #1: That simply isn’t tr—!

STEPSISTER #2: (Interrupts, with urgency.) Wait, you have a limo?

HOST: Let’s take a few questions from the audience. (Runs to STUDIO AUDIENCE.)

AIRHEAD: (Raises her hand; HOST holds up the microphone.) Ummm, my question is for the girl in the gown.

HOST: Cinderella.

AIRHEAD: Yah.

HOST: Could you stand, please?

AIRHEAD: (Stands.) I was just wondering, um, when the Fairy Godmother said that you must be home by midnight, wouldn’t you like, keep your eye on the clock? I mean, I know I would. I just think it’s weird that you, like, totally lost track of time. (To HOST.) Isn’t that weird?

CINDERELLA: Yeah, well, that was a long time ago.

STEPSISTER #1: You had a Fairy Godmother? So that’s how you did it! Jeez, I’ve been racking my brain for 20 years trying to figure out how you managed to pull that whole stagecoach-pumpkin scam!

HOST: So what about it, Cinderella? Why the sudden lapse in temporal consciousness, anyway?

AIRHEAD: Yah. Tem—tempor—um, what he said.

CINDERELLA: (Smiles dreamily.) Well, he was pretty charming, that prince of mine…

AIRHEAD: Okay, but still. Even if he was the most totally yummy guy in the history of the universe, like, ohmigosh, your stagecoach is about to turn into a pumpkin! Get a watch or something. Do you know what I mean?!

HOST: All right, moving along. Next question. (AIRHEAD sits. LOUDMOUTH stands. HOST runs to him and holds the microphone up. This pattern continues whenever a member of the STUDIO AUDIENCE poses a question.)

LOUDMOUTH: What a buncha whiners! You make me sick! Y’all are pathetic! You! The ugly ones! Y’all need ta quit moochin’ off yer sister!

STEPSISTER #2: Yeah, yeah, go back to Oz with the other screwballs, fella.
LOUDMOUTH: And what’s the prima donna’s name? Linder Eller? You need to stop bein’ so selfish!

CINDERELLA: Well, I—

LOUDMOUTH: (Interrupting, turns on HOST.) And you. You’re the biggest disgrace to a talk show I’ve ever—

HOST: (Interrupts.) Thank you! Ha, ha, ha... do you have a question, sir?

LOUDMOUTH: Only this, why’d I waste my time comin’ here today, Monty?

HOST: Why, indeed? (LOUDMOUTH sits.) Anyone else? (OLD WEEPING LADIES stand.) Ah! (HOST runs to them with the microphone.) Do you have a question, ladies?

OLD WEEPING LADY #1: Hello, Milford.

HOST: Monty.

OLD WEEPING LADY #1: We think it’s so sweet that these two sisters, these beautiful ladies—

HOST: Beautiful ladies?

OLD WEEPING LADY #2: These beautiful ladies—

HOST: (To STUDIO AUDIENCE.) They say the eyesight is the first to go.

STEPSISTER #1: Hey! I heard that!

STEPSISTER #2: Yeah!

OLD WEEPING LADY #1: It’s so beautiful that these beautiful ladies would reach out...

OLD WEEPING LADY #2: After all these years...

OLD WEEPING LADY #1: And... and...

OLD WEEPING LADY #2: (Overlaps.) And... and... (They collapse on each other, sobbing.)

HOST: Touching indeed. Well, we need to take another break, but stay tuned, because when we come back, we’ll meet someone here to confront her greatest enemy. Plus, we’ll get an expert opinion. Right after this. (PAT holds up “Applause” sign; STUDIO AUDIENCE claps as HOST returns to chair. A bit of MUSIC PLAYS then FADES OUT.)

End of Scene Three

End of script preview.
PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES

ONSTAGE: Table, perhaps draped with a white cloth, bleachers or chairs for STUDIO AUDIENCE, eight chairs for GUESTS, comfortable chair for HOST.

BROUGHT ON, Scene One:
“Applause” sign (PAT)
Cordless microphone (HOST)

BROUGHT ON, Scene Two:
Enormous crown with lipstick, powder puffs, hairbrush, can of aerosol air freshener and sunglasses inside (PAT)

BROUGHT ON, Scene Four:
Stack of dishes, sponge (SAM)
Dirty clothes (BETH)
Vacuum cleaner or carpet sweeper (PAT)

BROUGHT ON, Scene Five:
Bagel (STEPSISTER #2)

BROUGHT ON, Scene Six:
Twelve-inch male doll, gold-painted screwdriver (PAT)

BROUGHT ON, Scene Seven:
Tissue (HOST)

SOUND EFFECTS

Cheesy music, “God mic” to hear SAM’s voice from above, light music, drum roll, fanfare.

COSTUMES

HOST: a suit.

SNOW WHITE: a classic high-collar costume.

CINDERELLA, EVIL QUEEN, STEPSISTERS, JIMINY CRICKET: traditional fairy-tale costumes. STEPSISTERS should wear quite large shoes.

MIRROR: reflective cardboard rectangular panel with cut-out for face, perhaps silver face makeup (take care to use only color approved for facial use; other paints are dangerous).

BETH: princess attire for Scenes Two and Six.

SAM, BETH: black T-shirts in Scene Five.

EMMETT: black turtleneck and khakis. Green, scaly “frog” sleeves run from the elbow down to cover his forearms. These should be made from tight fabric such as spandex and can have thumb
“hooks” that run between the thumb and index finger, as EMMETT enters with his hands in his pockets. They should stay on when he pushes his sleeves up, and pull off easily at the end.

STUDIO AUDIENCE may wear contemporary clothing.

STUDIO AUDIENCE
The studio audience can be made up of as many extras as you wish. There are four speaking parts in the studio audience, and if you do not have extras you may simply paint an audience on the backdrop behind four chairs. These characters should be seated at a bit of a distance from each other (except for the OLD WEEPING LADIES, who sit together), so that the HOST may run between them during audience comments.

COMMERCIALS
Commercials are played UP CENTER in the area between the STUDIO AUDIENCE and the GUESTS. They may be staged as on old-fashioned TV shows where the commercials were “performed” as part of the show; in this case all lights remain up and STUDIO AUDIENCE members and GUESTS may react subtly to the commercials. Alternatively, for a TV-commercial effect, you may wish to bring the lights down on the STUDIO AUDIENCE and GUESTS and bring lights up only on the commercial playing area UP CENTER, then reverse the lights for the transition back to the show.

The MoneyCard commercial spoofs a current popular advertisement. Feel free to update this commercial with a different spoof or commercial if desired.
We hope you’ve enjoyed this script sample.

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