

QUEEN. No?

PEACEFUL. But I can make things very much better. And as you might guess, I have a very peaceful idea. (*Goes to cradle.*) Not death, but an enchanted sleep of one hundred years.

KING. One hundred years!

PEACEFUL. Only to be awoken by the kiss of a true Prince.

KING. But –

PEACEFUL. But it might help if you pass a law banning all spinning wheels. In the meantime, sweet Aurora –

Fear not the wicked fairy's curse
For peaceful sleep and nothing worse
Will keep you safe through thick and thin,
Till your true Prince's kiss you win.

(PEACEFUL touches baby with wand. MUSIC ting.)

There. I'll be back in eighteen years. And don't worry,

QUEEN. Why not?

PEACEFUL. I've not lost a princess yet!

(PEACEFUL exits R, with BEAUTIFUL, THOUGHTFUL and GRACEFUL.)

QUEEN. Oh, Nobby. A sleep of one hundred years!

KING. They'll have to go - all the spinning wheels, all the spindles!

BILLY. But Your Majesty, this is Woollycombe, the land of sheep and spinning wheels – and no one's invented the loom!

QUEEN. What's the loom?

BILLY. I don't know. No one's invented it!

KING. Silence! Let this proclamation be made public forthwith. Nothing must threaten the well being of our darling daughter.

All spindles, all spinning wheels throughout the land
Are forbidden, banished and totally banned!

(BLACKOUT.)

SCENE 2.

The Palace Gardens. Frontcloth or tabs.

QUEEN. *(Entering L.)* Hello there, how are you all? I just thought I'd pop on to let you know that eighteen years have passed. Eighteen years! It just flies by, doesn't it? And do you know, I don't look a day older. I can still wear the frock I had for dear little Aurora's christening. Isn't that amazing? It's just as well, because we've had to make all sorts of cut backs since getting rid of all our spinning wheels – and who would have thought of *that* eighteen years ago? But today's a very special day, because today is Princess Aurora's eighteenth birthday. Aah, to think my little baby is eighteen! She's a lovely girl, you know - and the very spit of me. She is! Beautiful, graceful, and sings like a nightingale

(The PRINCESS is heard singing off L.)

What a coincidence! That's her coming just now. But I must dash, because I want to bake her a surprise birthday cake for tonight. I'll see you later. Bye! *(Exits R.)*

PRINCESS. *(Off) Mum? (Entering)* Are you there, Mum? That's funny. I thought I heard her.

(KITTY peeps on up of R arch.)

Oh, was it you, Kitty! Don't be shy. I want someone to talk to. It's not every day you have an eighteenth birthday party and I'm really excited.

(KITTY nods and points to herself.)

Are you excited too, Kitty?

(KITTY nods.)

But it's a bit nerve wracking, because Mum and Dad have invited all these princes to be my suitors. I've never even had a boyfriend before and now I've got to choose a husband! Maybe I won't like any of them, or maybe I'll meet the man of my dreams! I wonder what he'll be like.

(KITTY strikes a pose and struts across the stage, whips off an imaginary hat and bows to the PRINCESS.)

How romantic!

(KITTY takes the PRINCESS in her arms and whirls her around the stage in an exquisite waltz. This is interrupted by the PRINCE, who enters L.)

Oh, who are you?

(KITTY cheekily pushes the PRINCESS towards the PRINCE and exits R.)

Kitty! *(To PRINCE.)* Excuse me.

PRINCE. What a remarkably well trained cat you have.

PRINCESS. Yes... yes she is, isn't she.

PRINCE. I'm Prince Orlando.

PRINCESS. Really?

PRINCE. Yes, I got here a bit early. I'm one of the suitors for the Princess Aurora. My father wants me to get married, you see. Who are you?

PRINCESS. I'm, er - I'm the Princess Aurora.

PRINCE. Oh... Gosh. So, I suppose –

PRINCESS. My father wants me to get married too?

PRINCE. No! I mean, yes. Well, that is, if you want to.

PRINCESS. And what about you? Do you want to?

PRINCE. Well, I hadn't really thought about it much, until now.

PRINCESS. Neither had I, until now.

PRINCE. I suppose it all depends on –

PRINCESS. What sort of person –

PRINCE. Wants to -

PRINCESS. Marry –

BOTH. Me!

(A pause.)

PRINCE. Yes...

PRINCESS. Do you like animals?

PRINCE. *(slightly confused)* Yes.

PRINCESS. And cats especially?

PRINCE. Yes!

PRINCESS. And log fires and children and starry nights?

PRINCE. Yes!!

PRINCESS. Gosh...

PRINCE. Yes... Gosh...

(They laugh. NUMBER, at the end of which they exit R, holding hands.)

MUSIC. CARABOSSE and SPINDLESHANKS enter L. SPINDLESHANKS carries a spinning wheel. CARABOSSE apes the last line of the previous song.)

CARA. Ugh! What a horrible song!

SPINDLE. But if he loves her –

CARA. And she loves him –

SPINDLE. It'll be even more tragic –

CARA. When she pricks her finger on the spindle and dies –

BOTH. Tonight!!

CARA. Come on, Spindleshanks, let's go and sneak into the castle!

(They laugh fiendishly and exit L.)