

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Masques"

Written by

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BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

"Masques"

FADE IN:

1 INT. - CATHY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

1

The room is filled with steam. Through the frosted glass of the shower stall, we glimpse Cathy rinsing her hair. She turns off the spray, reaches out and takes a bath towel off the rack. She emerges, the towel wrapped discreetly around her as the doorbell RINGS.

CATHY

Coming...

The camera FOLLOWS as she pads barefoot through her apartment to the front door. As the bell RINGS AGAIN, she opens the door a crack.

2 CATHY'S POV

2

Three young children in Halloween costumes stand there with trick-or-treat bags open hungrily.

CHILDREN

(shout in unison)

Trick or treat!

3 CATHY

3

takes a couple of miniature candy bars from a bowl near the door, and drops them into the bags.

CATHY

Happy Halloween.

The two older kids run down the hall, but the smallest little girl lingers a moment.

LITTLE GIRL

Thank you.

As she scoots after the others, Cathy's father CHARLES CHANDLER arrives, dressed like Robert E. Lee in Confederate uniform, white beard, and sword. Cathy admits him.

CHARLES

Am I early, are you late, or is that your costume?

Cathy gives him a quick KISS, shuts the door.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

CATHY
I'm late. I'm sorry, Dad. I lost track of time at the office.

CHARLES
(teasing)
You never lost track of time when you worked for me.

CATHY
(teasing back)
Course I did -- every morning.
(beat)
If you can hold the trick-or-treaters at bay while I get dressed, I think we'll be just in time to be fashionably late.

Cathy retreats towards her bedroom as Charles seats himself on her sofa to wait, the scabbard of his mock sword making the motion awkward.

CHARLES
A likely story. I figure an hour and a half.

CATHY
That was the old Cathy. I'll be ready in fifteen minutes.

Charles doesn't believe a word of it.

CUT TO:

4 INT. - FATHER'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

4

We PAN slowly across the floor, where a dozen children from the underground sit listening as Father tells them a story. They're of various ages, from three to sixteen, and a few are dressed in lovely, home-made costumes, but all of them are engrossed. It's a ghost story, so their eyes are wide, and sometimes one of them shivers.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

FATHER

... and from that day forward, John always kept a light burning in his window by night, so that Deirdre might find her way back to him. And in the deepest part of winter, when the snows lay thick against the walls of his cottage and the cold wind came shrieking from the north, he would take down his bow and walk through the forests, calling her name until his voice grew hoarse and his tears froze hard on his face. But she never answered, and till the end of his days, John never saw her again.

We MOVE IN on Father as he concludes the tale, and FIND Vincent standing behind him, listening as raptly as the children. Vincent is dressed more formally than usual (perhaps in something reminiscent of the Beast's costume in the Cocteau film). Four BOOKS are piled on the table beside him (contemporary hardcovers, not leather-bound). When the story ends, the children REACT with enthusiasm.

ELLIE

That was a good one.

KIPPER

Tell us another one, Father...
The one about the Headless
Horseman.

*
*

DAVID

Yeah, tell us that one.

FATHER

You've had enough ghosts for one night. Go on, now. Mary told me she needs help to carve up some jack-o-lanterns...

That does it. The kids STAMPEDE out of the room, each of them eager to get there first.

VINCENT

Every year, they ask for the same stories. By now they must know them better than you do.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

FATHER

(chuckles)

Old stories are like old
friends... every so often, we need
to drop in on them again, just
to see how they're doing.

(beat, fond smile)

And one little boy I remember
would never have let a mere
jack-o-lantern deny him a visit
to Ichabod Crane.

They exchange a smile of shared memory, and then Vincent
rises. Father's mood turns serious.

FATHER

You're determined to go, then?

(off Vincent's nod)

I wish you'd reconsider.

VINCENT

Father, surely on this night of
all nights, I can walk among them
in safety.

*

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (3)

4

FATHER

Vincent, Vincent... there is no safety up there. For you or anyone else.

Vincent NODS gravely, acknowledging the sad truth of Father's statement. His fingers absently brush against the books on the table beside him.

VINCENT

Sometimes we must leave our safe places, Father, and walk empty-handed among our enemies.

FATHER

Those are her words.

VINCENT

(nods)

Our lives have been so different... and yet, somehow, I feel as though we understand each other. I will not lose this opportunity. I must see her, talk to her...

Father frowns, shakes his head in helpless surrender.

FATHER

Go, then. If you're set on it, I can't very well stop you.

(Vincent starts for door)

Vincent...

(Vincent pauses)

Be careful.

Vincent nods and EXITS. Wearily, Father slumps back in his chair, and lays his hand upon the stack of books. We CLOSE IN and PAN SLOWLY down the stack, reading the titles on the spines. There are FOUR books, titled Too Many Heroes, Three Hundred Days, A Terrible Strength, and Fables and Fantasies, all written by BRIGIT O'DONNELL.

CUT TO:

5 INT. - CATHY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

5 *

Charles is waiting when Cathy comes out, beautiful in a Marie Antoinette/French Courtesan Costume.

*
*

CHARLES

Fifteen minutes... I don't believe it. My little girl has changed, hasn't she?

CATHY

I'm trying... very hard.

CHARLES

You don't know how pleased I am that you let me talk you into this. Since you quit the firm, I hardly ever get to see you.

CATHY

They keep me pretty busy... but I've missed you too, Dad.

CHARLES

Now, don't be shy about leaving me to fend for myself. I'm not so old that I don't remember how romantic these affairs can be. A lot of your old friends will be there tonight.

CATHY

I'm going to this party to be with you.

CHARLES

(playful)

You're going to this party to meet Brigit O'Donnell, just like everyone else.

CATHY

(smiles)

Well... that too.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

He reaches out and takes her hand, squeezes it.

CHARLES

(soft, sincere)

Have I told you how beautiful you look?

(beat)

Sometimes you remind me so much of your mother...

Deeply touched, Cathy leans over, kisses him.

CATHY

Happy Halloween.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. - COSTUME SHOP - NIGHT

7

A modest storefront, its window lettered to read MOE'S MASQUERADE CITY - COSTUME RENTALS. The sign in the door says OPEN, but as we watch a hand flips the sign to CLOSED just as MICHAEL -- a big, heavy-set man in his late fifties -- appears at the door. A folded NEWSPAPER sticks from a pocket of his rumbled raincoat.

MICHAEL pushes the door open and finds MOE, the short, balding proprietor, standing in his way.

MOE

Sorry, I'm closed.

MICHAEL

(Irish accent)

I must have a costume. If it's money you're wanting, I've got it.

He pulls a handful of crumpled fifties from the pocket of his coat. Moe looks at them, hesitates, and then admits him to the shop and locks the door behind him.

8 INT. - COSTUME SHOP - NIGHT

8

Very little but bare hangers remains on the racks up front; the shop has been picked clean. Moe gestures around at his depleted merchandise.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

MOE

Tomorrow, you come back, you could have your pick -- Jesse James, Darth Vader, King Arthur, whatever you want. Closing time on Halloween night... well, maybe I can find something in back. You can't mind a little frayed, maybe a missing button?

MICHAEL

That doesn't matter.

Moe shuffles through a curtain into the back in the shop. Michael takes the newspaper out of his pocket and is glancing down at it as Moe re-emerges carrying a rather tattered 19th century British army "red coat" uniform.

MOE

Here, this will maybe fit...

A look of absolute fury crosses Michael's face. He drops the paper on the counter, reaches across with a meaty fist, and seizes Moe by his shirtfront.

MICHAEL

Are you having a bit of fun with me, is that it?
 (shakes him, furious)
 Get that damnable rag out my sight and get me something decent.

He shoves him back contemptuously. Moe stumbles against the wall, and the costume falls to the floor. Scared, Moe hurries through the curtain again. We HEAR him fumbling around and he returns with a cheap clown costume -- oversized, covered with polka dots, the mask a plastic clown-face secured around the head by an elastic band.

MOE

Here... so, it's too big, there's nothing else... if this doesn't suit you, take your business elsewhere.

Michael takes the costume from him with a frown.

MICHAEL

It will do.

MOE

Changing booths over there --
 (gestures)

9 INT. CHANGING ROOM 9

Michael nods; we FOLLOW him into one of the changing room. He hangs up the costume, strips off the raincoat and his suit jacket; we SEE the butt of a REVOLVER jammed into his belt as he begins to change.

10 ANGLE ON MOE 10

as Michael reemerges, dressed in the clown outfit.

MOE

That'll be twenty for the rental,
and fifty for the deposit. You
bring it back by six tomorrow or
I gct to charge you another day.

Michael tosses two crumpled fifties onto the counter.

MICHAEL

Keep the money. I'll be keeping
the costume.

He EXITS the shop, the bell RINGING as he opens the door. Moe shakes his head in disgust, rings up the sale, and grabs the bills. The folded newspaper, forgotten, lies beside them on the counter. Moe picks it up.

11 INSERT - THE NEWSPAPER 11

The paper is open to a small item on the society page. The headline reads MASKED BALL TO FETE IRISH PEACE ACTIVIST.

12 BACK TO THE SCENE 12

Moe shrugs, drops the paper in the trash, and begins to count out his cash drawer for the night.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. - FASHIONABLE APARTMENT - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING 13

A high-rise on Central Park West, obviously lavish and expensive, with a penthouse and roof garden atop it.

14 INT. - BRENNAN PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

14

A pair of elevator doors OPEN, and we FOLLOW Cathy and her father out into a cloakroom/ ANTECHAMBER (note -- it should be established here that TWO elevators travel to the penthouse level). A BUTLER (whose extremely proper face has been done up with green make-up and false antennae to transform him into an alien) bows to them, accepts the crisp white invitation offered by Charles and admits them through a set of ornate wooden doors. They enter a huge, high-ceilinged BALLROOM where the party is in progress.

This ball is a major function of a very high social set -- everything should be extremely upscale. The room is quite large and filled with people, the dance floor crowded with costumed socialites while others chat, flirt, eat, and drink on the peripheries. Ornate chandeliers hang from the high ceiling, but the lighting is dim, hazy, romantic. Across the width of the room, a series of French doors open onto a ROOF GARDEN.

A band is playing from a stage at one end of the room, while servants (wearing their customary uniforms, but with their faces MADE UP in various exotic ways) circulate with trays of champagne, hors d'oeuvres. The costumes tend toward the elaborate and fanciful. Everyone wears masks or make-up, ranging from simple dominoes to elaborate headpieces that completely hide the face.

We FOLLOW Cathy and Charles as they enter and make their way through the throng of partygoers. Charles snatches two glasses of champagne from a passing tray, hands one to Cathy. They CLINK their glasses together.

BRENNAN (O.S.)

Charles. Is that you... and...
surely not Cathy!

Their host, BRENNAN, a man of Charles' age costumed as a KNIGHT, comes up and pumps Charles' hand, smiling. He's trailed by a group of Cathy's OLD FRIENDS, in various costumes, holding drinks. Cathy recognizes one woman, LAUGHS with delight. They HUG, begin to talk.

CUT TO:

15 INT. - ELEVATOR SHAFT - NIGHT

15

Vincent climbs on top of an elevator, gazes up the shaft, and braces himself as the car begins to ascend.

CUT TO:

16 INT. - BALLROOM - NIGHT

16

The party rages on. The camera TRACKS PAST Cathy and her friends as they discuss the guest of honor.

JEFF

Have you met Brigit yet? She's astonishing...

MARIE

Ravishing is what he really means.

CATHY

Last time I heard, it was still legal to be both.

GREG

You know she sold Three Hundred Days to Hollywood?

MARIE

Romeo and Juliet with Irish accents... I don't see what all the fuss is about.

JEFF

Oh, I thought it was a wonderful story. *

GREG

She's got guts, you have to give her that. This peace thing has gotten her death threats from both sides. Her mother and her husband were both murdered, you know.

JEFF

Her father's IRA. Wanted for one of those bombings in London.

John Brennan, with Charles beside him, interrupts the animated conversation.

BRENNAN

Cathy, I was going to introduce your father to Brigit. Care to come along?

CATHY

I'd love to.

Brennan leads them across the crowded room. Ahead of them, the throng of costumed admirers surrounding the guest of honor suddenly LAUGH at some witticism. Muttering apologies, Brennan pushes through until CAVANAUGH, a big man costumed as a Viking, stops Charles.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

CAVANAUGH
 (Irish accent, brusque)
 Hold up there.
 (when Charles stops)
 Let's have a look here...

He reaches down, PULLS Charles' sword partly out of its scabbard, tries the edge with his thumb, nods.

BRENNAN
 (apologetic)
 I'm dreadfully sorry, Charles.
 Mister Cavanaugh here is one of
 Brigit's bodyguards.

CAVANAUGH
 No edge to it. Very good.
 (slides the sword back)
 No offense, sir, but there's been
 threats... Orangemen, Croppies,
 what have you...

CHARLES
 (confused)
 Croppies, did you say? I'm afraid
 I don't understand.

BRIGIT (O.S.)
 (Irish accent)
 No reason you should...

17 ANGLE ON BRIGIT

17

as the crowd parts for her. Brigit O'Donnell is around thirty, beautiful, sophisticated, with a playfulness to her eyes and her mouth, a hint of the tomboy and the rebel. This is a stubborn, free-spirited, passionate woman who has gone her own way all her life. Her costume, while different from Cathy's, is enough alike so that the same vague description might be applied to both, and the OWL MASK she wears is identical to Cathy's.

BRIGIT
 It's from an old war... an Irish
 Catholic rising against the
 British and their Protestant
 allies. The rebels had short-
 cropped hair, you see.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

CATHY

That was... what, two hundred
years ago?

(off her nod)

A long time to remember a
haircut...

BRIGIT

(impressed)

We Irish have long memories. My
father taught me all the songs
about the brave Croppy boys when
I was still in the cradle, and
every year we'd hear the Orangemen
march past, banging their Lambeg
drum and singing how they put the
Croppies down.

CHARLES

(gallantly)

I stand instructed... I'm afraid
history was never my subject, and
most of what I did learn I've
managed to forget.

BRIGIT

Forgetting is a trick that Ulster
could stand to learn.

(smiling, to Cathy)

I like your mask. I wrote a story
about an owl-woman once... just
a little fable, for children...

CATHY

... children of all ages. I found
it just last year, and loved it.

BRIGIT

Did you now? It's not easy to
find, that one...

CATHY

You have a real gift. I wish you
wrote more children's stories.

BRIGIT

I wish I could... but there are
darker things than ghosts in
Ireland now, and you can't hear
the fairy music for the gunfire.
Which is another way of saying,
I'm not the innocent I was then.

CUT TO:

18 EXT. - ROOF GARDEN - NIGHT

18

A chill October wind is blowing, and the roof garden is deserted, forlorn. Past the stone parapet overgrown with ivy, we SEE the city lights and the roof of a second building. Vincent APPEARS on the roof of the second building, and LEAPS, landing with cat-like grace atop the parapet. He steps down onto the roof garden. We FAINTLY HEAR the music from the party drifting across the roof. Vincent stands with the wind snapping at his cloak, tentative, knowing that he is about to cross over into another world. Then he strides through the garden to the penthouse and its French doors. He touches the doorknob, hesitates just a moment, then OPENS THE DOORS. The SOUNDS of music and conversation grow MUCH LOUDER.

CUT TO:

19 INT. - BALLROOM - NIGHT

19

Cathy and Brigit are still talking when both of them SHIVER in the the blast of cold air from outside. Cathy looks up.

20 CATHY'S POV

20

The width of the ballroom is between them, but for an instant she SEES Vincent clearly, standing framed in the doorway. Two costumed dancers move past her in f.g. blocking her view, and they're gone, the doors are closed again and Vincent is gone.

21 CATHY

21

can't believe what she's seen.

BRIGIT

Catherine? What's wrong?

CATHY

Nothing, I... I thought I saw
someone I know. Please, excuse
me...

Brigit smiles politely as Cathy starts across the dance floor. The party is dimly-lit and crowded, costumed dancers swirling all around her, waiters crisscrossing with trays. She fights her way through with increasing urgency as she's jostled and blocked, and strange costumed faces loom up at her out of the crowd, offering her drinks, canapes, dances. As she struggles across the floor, she glimpses here a SWIRL

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

OF CLOAK, there a FLASH OF LONG HAIR, and but each time the apparition is gone as swiftly as it appeared. A man in a HOODED CLOAK stands by one of the tables, and Cathy rushes up behind him, thinking he's Vincent... but when he turns, it's a stranger's face made up as DRACULA.

Finally she reaches the doors, looks around in confusion. There's no sign of Vincent. Cathy flings open the doors and steps out onto the roof garden.

22 EXT. - ROOF GARDEN - NIGHT

22

Cathy moves through the garden, calls out.

CATHY
(softly)
Vincent!
(more loudly)
Vincent!

She waits for a long beat, listening, looking around, but there's no answer but the wind.

23 INT. - BALLROOM - NIGHT

23

Vincent moves slowly around the periphery of the party. He's clearly ill-at-ease and discomfitted; he's never experienced anything remotely like this in his world below. Yet there's a certain fascination in his eyes as well. He's taking it all in with a wonder that's almost childlike in its innocence, and a wariness that's all too adult. A WAITER appears beside him with a tray, covered with a mound of caviar and an array of tiny pancakes.

WAITER
Caviar, sir?

VINCENT
Caviar...
(smiles)

WAITER
It's Beluga, sir.

VINCENT
(with awe)
... from Russia...

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

He makes no move to take any of the caviar, but looks at the silver tray with fascination, until Brigit dances past, waltzing in the arms of her bodyguard, Cavanaugh. Vincent NOTICES HER, and follows her with his eyes. We INTERCUT between his face and Brigit's, as she whirls around the floor. Near the end of the dance, her eyes meet Vincent's; he LOOKS AWAY at once. When the music stops, Brigit LOOKS AROUND THE ROOM as Cavanaugh leads her off the dance floor.

CAVANAUGH

What is it? Trouble?

(looking around)

Brigit spies Vincent again, and clearly she senses something extraordinary about him.

BRIGIT

No, Edward... it's all right.

(exasperated by his
suspicion)

Oh, go on with you now. This is a party... not every man who looks at me is wanting to lay me in my grave.

She walks away from him, straight to where Vincent stands, half in shadows.

VINCENT

Brigit O'Donnell...

BRIGIT

Herself.

She SMILES and offers Vincent her hand. He hesitates for a LONG SOLID beat, very tentative, and then finally reaches out and takes it lightly.

CUT TO:

24 CATHY

24

as she re-enters the ballroom. For an instant she's certain that she chased an illusion. Then she SEES Vincent and Brigit at that precise instant when their hands meet. Off her REACTION, we

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

25 INT. - BALLROOM - NIGHT

25

ANGLE ON VINCENT AND BRIGIT

VINCENT

I did not mean to intrude... if
I disturbed you, I'm sorry.

BRIGIT

No need. A little disturbance
is good for the soul.

(studies his face)

What extraordinary make-up...
you look as though you might have
ridden with Cuchulainn, sailed
with Theseus...

Self-conscious, Vincent turns slightly away, shadowing his
features, and adjusts his hood.

VINCENT

Only in my dreams... and sometimes
in books like yours.

(beat, awkward)

Your writing has... helped me
through dark times... you've
touched me, made me think...

(beat, awkward)

I just wanted... to tell you...
to thank you.

Brigit is obviously moved by his sincerity.

BRIGIT

Come. Thank me outside, before
I die from the smoke and noise
in here.

She LINKS ARMS with Vincent, who is clearly discomfitted and
unsettled by this easy acceptance. He begins to SHY AWAY,
then catches himself, and lets Brigit draw him toward the
doors. We PULL BACK from them, across the room, to reveal
CATHY watching them exit together.

26 CLOSE ON CATHY

26

She's uncertain, worried, perhaps a little jealous. A
man's gloved HAND enters frame and taps her on the shoulder.
A tall, dark-haired stranger stands behind her. He's
wearing a PIRATE's costume.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

A knotted bandanna serves as his mask, a ragged short cape hangs to his waist, and on his belt is a large curved KNIFE SHEATH, very piratical, studded with phoney costume gems.

DONALD

Masks make life so interesting.
Under those feathers, you might
be anyone -- a childhood friend,
an old lover... help me now, am
I getting warm?

CATHY

(smiles)
I'm afraid not...

DONALD

A famous writer, then?

CATHY

(laughs)
You're getting colder.

DONALD

Oh-oh. Have I just tripped over
my sword again? The butler's the
real pirate -- I slipped him a
ten-spot to tell me what the guest
of honor was wearing.

CATHY

(amused)
I don't think you'll get a refund.
Brigit's wearing an owl mask too.

DONALD

I'll consider it money well spent.
I'm Donald Phillips.

CATHY

Cathy Chandler.

DONALD

Well, Cathy Chandler, can I run
up a jolly roger and steal you
away for this dance?

Cathy HESITATES, and glances back over her shoulder, but Vincent and Brigit are out of sight now. She turns back to Donald, confused, and forces an uncertain smile.

CATHY

Why not?

He sweeps her out onto the dance floor.

CUT TO:

27 EXT. - ROOF GARDEN - NIGHT

27

Brigit leans against the parapet as they talk, the wind in her hair, looking out over the city. Vincent has moved a few steps away from her. We can still HEAR the music from inside, but now it's mingled with city sounds from the streets below. Brigit takes a deep breath of the night air.

BRIGIT

The night has a special magic to it, don't you think? This night especially.

VINCENT

Halloween?

BRIGIT

In the old religion, they called it Samhain (SAOWEN) -- the night when the walls between the worlds grew thin, and spirits of the underworld walked the earth... a night of masks and bonfires, when anything is possible and nothing is quite as it seems.

(beat)

Your city has its own magic as well... the lights, the towers ... listen to it...

They share a moment of silence, as we HEAR traffic, horns, a police siren in the distance, etc.

BRIGIT

In Derry, the night has a darker music... bombs, gunfire, the screams of dying men...

VINCENT

Yet you always return. The whole world is open to you... you could choose to live anywhere.

BRIGIT

Oh, I've thought of leaving... but Derry's my home. Whatever else I might be, I'm still a Bogside girl, my father's daughter, my husband's widow.

VINCENT

When you wrote of Ian in Three Hundred Days, I felt as though I knew him... you made him live again with your words.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

When Brigit looks at Vincent, he instinctively TURNS HIS HEAD away so his features are hidden. She has tears in her eyes, but a fierce, stubborn smile on her lips.

BRIGIT

(proudly)

I know. Aye, he's dead, but I will not forget him, or let him be forgotten. It's been two years since he got into that car, and an hour hasn't passed that I haven't spoken of him, written of him, thought of him.

VINCENT

I don't want to waken painful memories...

BRIGIT

Oh, it hurts, it hurts... but such a sweet pain.

(beat)

Ian and I were born six blocks apart... and yet, in different worlds. A stiff-necked Orangeman and a Croppy girl from Bogside, we were -- daft enough to fall in love, but not so big a pair of fools to think that he could live in my world, or me in his. So we tried to create a new world that we could share together... well, you know how that ended.

VINCENT

(compassionately)

Yes. And I know you built a bridge together, you and he. Your work, and his, will help to heal your people. The Ian you wrote of would think that as good a memorial as any man could want.

BRIGIT

(bitter smile)

Sure, and he'd better, for it's the only sort he's likely to get. Every time I raise a stone over his poor sweet head, some bastard knocks it to pieces... even the dead are spared none of the hate...

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

Brigit turns, rests her arms on the parapet, and gazes out over the city in silence for a moment.

BRIGIT

It could have been me, you know...
and there are times I wish it had
been.

(very softly, begins
to recite)

She is far from the land where
her young hero sleeps...

OVERCOME WITH MEMORY AND EMOTION, Brigit cannot continue. But Vincent remembers the poem, and picks up the recitation where she left off.

VINCENT

(reciting)

...and lovers are round her, sighing:
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and weeps,
For her heart in his grave is lying.
She sings the wild song of her dear native plains,
Every note which he lov'd awaking;
Ah! little they think who delight in her strains,
How the heart of the minstrel is breaking.

Brigit TURNS to face him as he recites, and silently MOUTHS the last few words along with Vincent. She's deeply touched, and when he's done she smiles sadly.

BRIGIT

(very softly)

Thank you.

CUT TO:

28 INT. - ANTECHAMBER - NIGHT

28

ANGLE ON ELEVATORS

as the doors open and Michael steps out in his cheap clown costume. The butler accosts him.

BUTLER

Your invitation, sir.

MICHAEL

My... aye, I've got it here
somewhere...

(pats his pockets)

Damn... I'm thinking I lost it
somewhere. I had one, I swear.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

BUTLER
I'm afraid I can't admit you
without an invitation.

MICHAEL
(angrily)
I'm telling you I was invited!
Are you calling me a liar now?

29 ANGLE ON CAVANAUGH

29

standing by the bar, not far from the doors to the
antechamber. He HEARS Michael's raised voice, and
RECOGNIZES the sound of the Irish accent. At once he slams
down his mug of beer, and moves toward the door.

30 BACK TO THE SCENE

30

BUTLER
Mister Brennan's instructions were
quite firm. Perhaps I should
summon him.

Michael REACTS with obvious alarm.

MICHAEL
No... no, you needn't bother
yourself... I'm thinking I just
remembered where I left it, the
very place... I'll just get it
and come back.

BUTLER
Very good, sir.

Michael moves away toward the elevators. The doors open to
disgorge a group of partiers dressed like Henry VIII and
his six wives. Michael watches them as they move toward
the entrance... he sidles in behind them... The Butler is
caught up in the swirl of feminine pulchritude... trying
to check all the invitations... Michael SLIPS INTO THE
ROOM, unnoticed... *

He nearly collides with CAVANAUGH as the bodyguard bursts
into the anteroom, shoves past Michael to GRAB Henry VIII by
his ermine collar... *

CAVANAUGH
Hold it!

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

HENRY VIII
(nasal NY voice)
What's the meaning of this?

The bodyguard releases him with a look of disgust.

31 CATHY AND DONALD

31

The camera FOLLOWS them as they dance. Donald is smiling, but Cathy is distracted, pensive, her mind on Vincent.

DONALD

A penny for your thoughts...

(off her silence)

or maybe you'd prefer a tax-free municipal bond?

(beat)

Hey, I can't be that bad a dancer.

CATHY

(wan smile)

You're not. I'm sorry. I'm not very good company at the moment, I realize.

DONALD

I'll be the judge of that.

Donald LEADS her off the dance floor, snares two champagne glasses from a passing waiter, hands one to her. Cathy accepts it, but she GLANCES back over her shoulder. Donald picks up on it at once.

DONALD

He's a lucky rogue, whoever the hell you're looking for...

CATHY

I'm sorry. I'll try to be a bit more sociable.

Charles Chandler ENTERS, smiling, pleased to see Cathy in the company of a gentleman.

CHARLES

(playfully, to Cathy)

Don't I know you from somewhere?

(off her smile)

Having a good time? Who might this be?

CATHY

Donald Phillips, my father, Charles Chandler.

(they shake)

CHARLES

Donald Phillips? Not the Donald Phillips of Gernsback, Campbell, and Phillips, surely.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

DONALD
(brief hesitation)
Ah... actually, yes.

CHARLES
(with enthusiasm)
I never dreamed you'd be so young.
Bert Prasker is one of my
partners. He's still nursing his
wounds from that licking you gave
him in the Scott case.
(to Cathy)
Be careful, Catherine, this one
isn't as harmless as he seems.
How do you two happen to know
each other?

DONALD
We don't, actually...
(beat, smile)
...but I'm trying to rectify that.

We PAN OFF Cathy and Donald to FIND MICHAEL across the
room, watching... Now he moves through the crowd, eyes
searching, probing... WE should sense tension and danger in
his presence...

*
*
*
*

CUT TO:

32 EXT. - ROOF GARDEN - NIGHT

32

Brigit and Vincent walk together through the garden. They
do not touch, but there is a closeness between them.

BRIGIT
My father used to tell me of New
York, when I was just a little
girl. He came here a dozen
times... never quite legally, of
course... raising money for the
cause, collecting for the widows
and the orphans... and for the
weapons to make more of them.
He always promised that one day
he'd take me with him, across the
ocean...

(sadly)
... one day...

*
*

VINCENT
He never did?
(beat)

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

BRIGIT
(painfully)
My father cast me out. Three
years ago, it was. My wedding
day. He came to the church,
called me a traitor and an
Orangeman's whore. I've not seen
him since.

(beat)
By rights, I ought to hate him.

VINCENT
There's no hate in you... only
grief...

BRIGIT
Aye... How can you hate the man
who taught you what love meant?

Brigit SHIVERS visibly in the wind.

VINCENT
Are you cold? Perhaps we should
go back inside...

BRIGIT
Cold? No... why, it's naught but
a brisk fall day...

(beat, mischievous)
... but I'd borrow your cloak,
if you're willing to lend it.

VINCENT
My cloak?

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

32

BRIGIT

Edward and the others, they'd give their lives for me, and I love them for it. But sometimes, I want nothing so much as to get away from them for a few hours.

VINCENT

They only want to keep you safe.

BRIGIT

I'm sick unto death of safety. I look at that city out there, and I want to touch it... to walk its streets and meet its people and listen to its music. I want to see all the things my father told me of... and I can't. Can you imagine how that feels?

Vincent knows how it feels very well.

VINCENT

(softly)

Yes...

*
*

BRIGIT

To hell with the risks!

(grin)

Sometimes we must leave our safe places, Vincent, and walk empty-handed among our enemies.

33 CLOSE ON VINCENT

33

Responding to the echo of his own words to Father, he SMILES slowly, then unfastens his cloak and whips it about Brigit's bare shoulders.

CUT TO:

34 INT. - BALLROOM - NIGHT

34

A cloaked, hooded figure RE-ENTERS the party through the French doors, alone. It's Brigit, hidden in the voluminous folds of Vincent's cape. She moves quickly through the costumed crowds toward the door.

35 EXT. - ROOF GARDEN - NIGHT 35

as Vincent LEAPS from the parapet across to the next roof, then clambers down over a ladder and begins to swiftly descend a series of fire escapes.

36 INT. - BALLROOM - ANGLE ON CAVANAUGH 36

He scowls, drains the mug of beer in his hand, and stalks toward the French doors, worried about Brigit. The cloaked figure PASSES within a foot of him as they hurry in opposite directions, but Cavanaugh fails to make the connection and storms by without a second glance.

37 ANGLE PAST DONALD ON CATHY 37

as she SEES Brigit heading toward the elevators, and recognizes Vincent's cloak.

CATHY
(to Donald)
Excuse me.

She hands him her drink, rushes after the cloaked figure.

DONALD
Hey! What the...

37A ANGLE - MICHAEL (THE CLOWN) 37A *

watches the hurried departures, knows something's up. He hurries out after them, roughly elbowing a couple of people aside in his haste...

38 ANGLE ON ELEVATORS 38

as Brigit enters, Cathy rushes to the doors.

CATHY
Vincent! Wait!

Brigit turns, PUSHES BACK THE HOOD, smiles, and puts a finger to her lips. Donald RUSHES UP behind Cathy as the doors shut.

DONALD
Brigit O'Donnell, right?

CATHY
Something very strange is going on...

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

The second elevator arrives, its door CHIMING as it opens. Cathy enters quickly.

CATHY

... and I'm going to find out what. I don't mean to be rude, but --

Before the doors can shut, Donald enters as well, and hits the button for the ground floor.

DONALD

Hey, no problem. It's been years since I've gone elevator racing...

MICHAEL watches the elevator doors close; both elevators are in use. He frantically looks around, takes off to find the stairs...

*
*
*

CUT TO:

39 EXT. - FASHIONABLE APARTMENT/PARK - NIGHT

39

Central Park is across the street. The DOORMAN opens the door for some newly-arrived guests, and holds it open as Brigit makes her exit, the cloak folded neatly over her arm. She pauses on the sidewalk, looks around. Vincent STEPS OUT of the shadows. Brigit smiles and returns his cloak, which he accepts with a grave, courtly bow. They CROSS THE STREET and ENTER THE PARK.

*

EXT. - APARTMENT - ANGLE ON DONALD AND CATHY

as they emerge from the doorway.

CATHY

(to doorman)

Did you notice a woman wearing a black cloak? Red hair, wearing a mask like mine...

DOORMAN

Yeah. Sure. A looker like that, I'd have to be dead not to notice. She met this guy in a cat mask, gave him the cape.

CATHY

Which way did they go?

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

DOORMAN

They come, they go... I'm supposed to remember?

Donald pulls out his wallet, peels off a couple of bills, slaps them into the doorman's hand.

DOORMAN

Now that I recall, they walked off into the park... north, I think...

CATHY

(to Donald)

I have to go after them. I can't explain, it's a... a personal thing. Look, I appreciate your help, but there's no need for you to leave the party.

DONALD

Do you hear me complaining? Besides, what would your father think if I let you go walking in the park alone?

CATHY

I'll be fine. Really.

DONALD

My car's close by. You'll stand a lot better chance of finding them...

Cathy hesitates, then NODS. Donald grins, and they hurry off to his car.

PAN OFF Donald and Cathy to FIND MICHAEL hanging back, close enough to have overheard the conversation with the Doorman. He slips away...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

40 EXT. - CENTRAL PARK RESERVOIR - NIGHT

40

Vincent and Brigit walk slowly along the shore. Moonlight reflects off the water beside them, and an air of melancholy hangs over Vincent. Brigit REMOVES HER MASK, smiles.

BRIGIT

I'm beholden to you, Vincent.
You cannot know what this means
to me...

(off his smile)

... or perhaps you can at that.

(beat, very gently)

Will you be telling me about her,
then?

VINCENT

(sharp, surprised)

... about who?

BRIGIT

Your lady. The one who's breaking
your heart. Do you think I'm
blind?

(beat)

You didn't come to me just to say
you liked my books. Something
about Ian and me struck close to
home.

Vincent TURNS sharply away from her. He struggles visibly as he tries to decide what to tell her. Finally, with great difficulty, he begins to speak.

VINCENT

She brings me... such joy... and
such pain... as I have never
known. I have no place in her
world, and she has none in mine...
our bond endangers...
everything... people I love,
secrets I am sworn to keep, the
beliefs I've lived by...

BRIGIT

Aye, that sounds like Ian and
myself, sure enough. They do not
understand, do they? The way my
father raged...

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

VINCENT

Yet you went on... despite everything...

BRIGIT

Oh, yes... we went on... till he died for it.

(beat)

Are you asking me for counsel, then? Forget you ever knew her, and both of you will be happier. If you want what's best for her, take care you never see her again. If Ian and I had never met, he might still be alive.

VINCENT

You wrote... that the price of your love had been high, but you would pay it willingly until the end of your days... that you would change nothing, regret nothing...

BRIGIT

That's damned unfair, you know, quoting my own words back at me, after I gave you all that good advice!

(smiles, softer)

Your brain tells you all the sensible things to do... but the heart knows nothing about sense, and the heart is as stubborn as the Irish.

Vincent is about to reply when he suddenly HEARS a nearby footfall and looks up sharply.

BRIGIT

(alarmed)

What is it?

CUT TO:

41 EXT. - CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

41

We FOLLOW Michael as he leaves the roadway and moves stealthily through the undergrowth toward the lagoon. His pistol is drawn, and he moves from shadow to shadow, crouching, concealing himself behind trees and rocks, listening to Brigit and Vincent talk. The sound of their VOICES grows steadily louder.

42 CLOSE ON MICHAEL

42

as he presses against the side of a large tree. Listens. Hears only silence. Spinning, he WHIRLS around the trunk of the tree, gun in hand, and runs smack into Vincent as he STEPS OUT from behind the other side of the tree.

43 CLOSE ON VINCENT

43

His face contorts in a ferocious SNARL. Michael brings up the gun to fire. Vincent ROARS and attacks. The gun FIRES and is sent spinning from Michael's grasp as Vincent SEIZES hold of him.

CUT TO:

44 DONALD'S CAR - PARK

44

as it turns a corner, its headlights piercing the darkness. He and Cathy REACT to the sound of the gunshot and Vincent's ROARS. Donald BRAKES as Michael comes flying across the roadway, and SMASHES HARD against the wrought iron post of a streetlamp.

DONALD

What the hell...

They leap out of the car. Donald kneels over the clown.

CATHY

Is he...?

DONALD

(opening Michael's eye,
checking pulse)

Out cold, but he'll live. Maybe
a concussion.

But Cathy isn't listening -- she's SEEN Vincent.

45 CATHY'S POV

45

of Vincent, standing beneath the great tree several feet away, his form draped by the shadows. As we watch, Brigit STEPS OUT of the foliage to stand beside him. She looks shaken, stares at the scene and crosses herself.

46 VINCENT

46

tears his eyes away from Cathy with difficulty, and REALIZES he must leave, much as he might wish otherwise. There will be police and doctors to deal with, questions to answer. He cannot stay. He gives Cathy one last, heartfelt look, turns, and MELTS AWAY into the shadows.

47 CATHY

47

reacts with dismay as Vincent vanishes, calling after him.

CATHY

Vincent!

But he's gone. Cathy turns away, confused and heartsick. Brigit looks from Cathy to the spot where Vincent fled, back again. Clearly, she grasps the situation. She moves toward the others as Donald RISES.

DONALD

Brigit O'Donnell, I presume...
where'd the other guy go?

BRIGIT

He had... promises to keep.
(touches Cathy's arm,
lightly)
... though I'm thinking he'd
rather have stayed...

Cathy looks up, gives Brigit a grateful smile, regains control of the situation.

CATHY

Brigit, are you all right? What
happened here?

BRIGIT

I'm fine... but it's not for want
of him trying.

She LEANS OVER Michael's unconscious form, reaches down, and PULLS OFF his plastic clown mask. We MOVE IN CLOSE on Brigit when she sees his features. She REACTS STRONGLY, surprised and dismayed.

CATHY

Brigit... what's wrong? Do you
know him?

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

BRIGIT
 (angry, thoughtless)
 Oh, him and his sort, I've known
 them all my life. Michael
 MacBride, his name is. He's a
 good...
 (hesitation)
 ... a good IRA man.

48 ANGLE ON DONALD

48

as he REACTS with a tight, quirky smile, BRIEFLY seen and
 then gone again.

49 THE SCENE

49

CATHY
 It's all right now. We'll call
 the police.

DONALD
 No need. Actually, I can handle
 it from here, thank you.

CATHY
 (surprised)
 You?

DONALD
 (sheepish smile)
 I'm afraid I wasn't quite, ah,
 honest with you, Cathy.

He reaches under his pirate costume, pulls out a wallet,
 flips it open for Cathy's inspection.

50 INSERT - THE WALLET

50

One side displays a BADGE, the facing half a photo ID with
 "Donald's" face and the INTERPOL name and insignia.

51 THE SCENE

51

Donald closes the wallet again, shrugs apologetically.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

DONALD

(to Cathy)

I thought your father was about to blow my cover for a moment there back at the party, all that lawyer talk.

(to Brigit)

My apologies, Mrs. O'Donnell. We'd received a tip that an attempt would be made on your life, and I was supposed to stay close to you. Unfortunately, I, ah, hooked up with the wrong owl...

BRIGIT

It's perfectly all right. All owls look alike by night.

52 DONALD

52

searches around, finds Michael's pistol, unties his bandanna, and uses it to pick up the gun.

DONALD

Evidence. Got to be thorough.

He deposits the bandanna-wrapped gun in the trunk of his car, slams it shut, continues.

DONALD

We'll drop you back at the party. No reason everyone's Halloween needs to be ruined.

CATHY

No. I'll see it through.

(beat)

As long as the masks are coming off...

(removes her mask)

I'm with the District Attorney's office, Donald.

DONALD

(taken aback)

Are you? This is a night for surprises.

(beat)

Well, if someone will help me load sleeping beauty into the car...

CUT TO:

53 EXT. - CENTRAL PARK - NIGHT

53

We FOLLOW as Vincent walks alone through the darkness, his face grave, melancholy. There are a lot of people in the park tonight, far more than usual. Vincent HEARS voices ahead of him -- laughter, footsteps -- and for a moment, old habits take hold. He stops, steps back warily into the shadows. Then he REALIZES what night it is. After a brief hesitation, he STEPS OUT, walks forward.

He strides down a footpath into a large grassy CLEARING in the park. A huge, roaring BALEFIRE burns in its center, surrounded by costumed people talking, laughing, drinking, dancing as an old man dressed as a GRASSHOPPER fiddles from atop a large rock.

54 VINCENT

54

stares at the fire and the people, the flames throwing flickering light across his features. A couple of the dancers notice him, approach LAUGHING, dance around him. We INTERCUT between Vincent's face and their masks. One of them, a sexy young woman done up as an ELF, tries to draw him into the circle, to join in the good times, but he resists. He has no place here, no part in this fellowship -- without Catherine, this easy acceptance is hollow, meaningless. Finally the elf-woman shrugs, lets go, runs off back to the others. Vincent walks away from the fire. People are coming and going all around him, all of them in costume. A man dressed as a HAMBURGER pedals past on a bicycle, and nods to him gravely.

When he approaches the DRAINAGE PIPE that opens onto the underground, he finds a MIME is performing in front of a small group of costumed people. Vincent begins to edge around them. The mime BARS his way, begins to pantomime around him, making Vincent part of his performance. For a brief moment Vincent allows it, then...

55 CLOSE ON VINCENT

55

as he bares his fangs and gives the mime a terrifying, ferocious SNARL.

56 BACK TO THE SCENE

56

as the startled mime scrambles back out of the way, and trips over his own feet. Vincent sweeps past him, into the darkness of the drainage pipe, as the people APPLAUD.

57 INT. - DRAINAGE PIPE - ANGLE ON VINCENT

57

as he opens the secret door to the underworld. Briefly, he pauses, listening, and faint and far off we HEAR the sound of music -- the fiddler at the balefire, echoing over the hills. Vincent SMILES a swift, sad smile, steps through the door, closes it behind him. When the secret door slides shut, the distant music CUTS OFF SHARPLY. Vincent lowers his head and begins his descent.

CUT TO:

58 INT. - DONALD'S CAR - NIGHT

58

Donald drives, Brigit beside him in the front, while Cathy shares the back seat with the unconscious Michael. They're moving down a major avenue, weaving in and out of cabs. Michael begins to MOAN. Brigit looks back.

CATHY

He's coming to.

Donald's eyes flick quickly to the rear-view mirror, as he turns the wheel hand-over-hand. They drive down a series of dark side streets, turning several times.

MICHAEL

Oh, god... where...

(winces, touches head)

... my head hurts something fierce.

BRIGIT

You ought to be grateful it's still attached to your shoulders, Michael MacBride.

MICHAEL

Ah, don't be taking that tone with me, woman. You know I'd never harm you. Damn it, it was Sean sent me.

BRIGIT

(cold, angry)

And am I supposed to care? He made it quite clear to me, he does not have a daughter.

(CONTINUED)